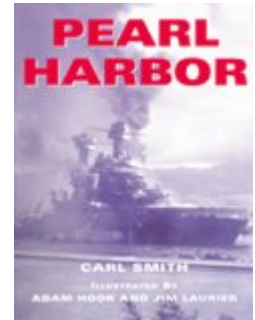


**Carl Smith.** *Pearl Harbor: Day of Infamy.* Oxford and New York: Osprey Publishing, 1999. 104 pp. \$17.95, paper, ISBN 978-1-84176-075-9.



**Reviewed by** Charles C. Kolb

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Pearl Harbor: A Concise Assessment of the Day of Infamy/Operation Z

Hundreds of books and thousands of journal articles have been written about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor -- what the Imperial Japanese Navy called Operation Hawaii (also called Operation Z) and what President Franklin Delano Roosevelt termed "the date which will live in infamy." By this meticulously planned and conducted attack by Japanese air and naval forces, the Japanese Empire destroyed or decimated a major portion of the United States Pacific Fleet while sustaining minor losses. What is it that makes this new entrant into the literature so engaging and compelling? Certainly it is a new and up-to-date telling of the story of that fateful day which brought America legally and forcefully into World War II.

Carl Smith, a writer for popular military magazines who has a life-long fascination with the events of 7 December 1941, begins with a two-page introduction providing essential background, geophysical locations, and an evaluation of the political situation. In the succeeding chap-

ter entitled "Opposing Commanders," mini-biographies of six American and five Japanese leaders are presented. Admiral Husband E. Kimmel (1882-1968), a 1904 graduate of the United States Naval Academy was CINCPAC (Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet) at the time of the attack. His counterpart, Lieutenant General Walter C. Short (1880-1949) a University of Illinois graduate commissioned into the United States Army in 1901, was the Commander of the Hawaiian Department at the time of the attack. Both the Army and Army Air Force were under his direct command.

Smith does not tell the reader, but Kimmel had succeeded Admiral Joseph Richardson as CINCPAC on 1 February 1941, in the main, because Richardson had questioned the wisdom of the decision to move the Pacific Fleet more or less permanently from San Diego to Pearl Harbor. Since this was a presidential decision backed by the Chief of Naval Operations as a move to deter Japanese activities in the South Pacific, Richardson was replaced. However, Smith does note that Kimmel objected to the transfer of three battle-ships (Idaho, Mississippi, and New Mexico), the

aircraft carrier Yorktown, 4 cruisers, 17 destroyers, and 16 support ships (especially 3 oilers [tankers]), to the Atlantic Fleet to assist our allies-to-be. The British were already benefiting from the Lend Lease Agreement of 3 September 1940 (50 loaned American destroyers for leases of British naval bases) and the thinking in Washington was that Hitler's Nazi Germany would be the impending enemy.

Smith reports that there were eight separate military or congressional investigations of the attack; actually there are nine (Knox, Roberts, Hart, Army, Navy, Clarke, Clausen, Joint Congressional, and Dorn). The Dorn Report completed on 15 December 1995 by Undersecretary of State Edwin Dorn concluded that Kimmel and Short were accountable for their actions and inactions and that "no official remedy" is possible. Your reviewer would point out that there are two diverse positions taken by military and diplomatic historians and the informed public on these investigations. One is that the American desire to keep secret that U.S. cryptanalysts had successfully decrypted the Japanese diplomatic code (the Purple MAGIC code by Lt. Col. Friedman) and were working diligently on the Imperial Japanese Navy's codes (specifically JN-25), therefore Kimmel and Short were denied information about volatile Tokyo-Washington diplomatic events in late November and early December 1941. Coupled with secrecy was the slowness of transmitting vital information to Hawaii on 7 December, hence, the commanders are regarded as "scapegoats." Retired U.S. Navy Captain Edward L. Beach, a pro-Kimmel advocate, authored *Scapegoats: A Defense of Kimmel and Short at Pearl Harbor* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1995), a clear assessment of the controversy. Smith does not cite this important work. The general conclusion is that Kimmel and Short, both of whom had retired from the military and had participated actively in the hearings, were guilty of errors of judgement rather than dereliction of duty. This is the position Smith takes.

The opposing view is that the commanders were guilty of not taking more appropriate means to protect the Hawaiian naval and military bases particularly after several War Warning messages had been sent. For example Short was concerned about sabotage by Japanese nationals among others, hence, aircraft were lined up in tight formations on airfields to facilitate security rather than being dispersed as a counter to potential air attack. The possibility of espionage and presence of Japanese agents such as Otto Kuhn was of concern to Short but is not mentioned by Smith. Naval experts felt that Japanese torpedo planes could not function in the shallow water of Pearl Harbor because torpedoes plunge 60-75 feet when dropped initially and the harbor at Pearl was only 40 feet deep. Rear Admiral Patrick Bellinger, Pearl Harbor's Air Defense Officer, actually predicted an attack. The successful British torpedo attack against the Italian fleet at Taranto on 11 November 1940 presaged the strategy and tactics employed at Pearl Harbor. A Japanese naval attack on Pearl Harbor was postulated by Hector Bywater in *Sea Power in the Pacific* (1921) and *The Great Pacific War: A History of the American-Japanese Campaign of 1931-33* (1925), as well as in a 21 January 1930 *Saturday Evening Post* article by Lieutenant Stephen Jurika Jr. in which a simulated attack on Pearl Harbor by aircraft from USS Saratoga was reviewed.

In *Pearl Harbor and the Kimmel Controversy: The Views Today* edited by David Winkler and Jennifer Lloyd, proponents for exoneration (Retired U.S. Navy Captain Beach), for accountability (Retired U.S. Navy Captain Larry Seaquist), for the status quo (U.S. Naval Academy historian Robert Love, Ph.D.), and for promotion (Retired Vice Admiral David Richardson) presented their cases appropriately on 7 December 1999 to a panel of naval historians (David Rosenberg, John Prados, and Norman Polmar) and an audience of naval officers and civilians. A third extreme position of the "guilty" view is currently espoused by revisionist historians such as Henry Clausen and

Bruce Lee in *Pearl Harbor: Final Judgment* (1992) mentioned by Smith, and in books by James Rusbridger, *Betrayal at Pearl Harbor* (1991), and Robert Stinnett, *Day of Deceit* (2000), among others. They often see a political plot by Roosevelt to engage America in World War II and/or cover up their own diplomatic or strategic mistakes. See Frank Mintz's *Revisionism and the Origins of Pearl Harbor* (1985) for details.

The other Americans profiled In "Opposing Commanders" include the Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Harold Stark (1880-1972), General George C. Marshall (1880-1959) the Army Chief of Staff, Secretary of State Cordell Hull (1871-1955), and Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945) who Smith states "served four consecutive terms" 1933-1945 (p. 13). Actually he was "elected" to four consecutive terms but died during the fourth on 12 April 1945.

Emphasis is placed on Fleet Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto (1884-1943), a naval school graduate wounded at the Battle of Tshushima (sic. Tsushima, 27-29 May 1905) during the Russo-Japanese War. He became head of a naval aviation training base, served as naval attache to Washington, was Vice Minister of the Imperial Japanese Navy, championed the use of aircraft carriers, and planned the Pearl Harbor attack, but died in April 1943 during the battle for Guadalcanal when American aircraft shot down his transport plane. Commander Mitsuo Fuchida (1902-1956), a Japanese Naval Academy graduate who espoused naval air power and was an expert in torpedo attacks, coordinated that part of the attack. Commander Minoru Genda (1904-1989), another Naval Academy graduate, was air operations officer. Vice-Admiral Chuichi Nagumo (1887-1944) was commander of the First Air Fleet at Pearl Harbor and later served in the Dutch East Indies, Indian Ocean, and at the Battle of Midway where he lost four aircraft carriers. He committed suicide in 1944. Author Smith's other choice as a commander is Ambassador Kichisaburo Nomura

(1877-1964), a graduate of the Naval Academy and former Commander (rank of Admiral) of the Third Fleet, who was Japanese Ambassador to Washington and delivered the message breaking off the diplomatic negotiations after the attack had begun. Prime Minister Hideki Tojo, Special Envoy Saburo Kurusu, and Emperor Hirohito are not profiled.

Smith provides a very clear and useful "Chronology" of the key events starting in 1936 (one event), but especially from 1939 to February 1942. He next considers the "Japanese Plan" including Japanese expansion, the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, American embargoes, Japanese-American diplomatic negotiations by Nomura, the infamous 14-part diplomatic message, the three phases of Operation Hawaii, preparations (attack plans, torpedo modifications, and American ship positions). Smith mentions that three MAGIC decoders were sent to London (p. 28); I recall that only one was sent. The Japanese task force composition is considered, including the six aircraft carriers (Akagi, Kaga, Hiryu, Soryu, Shokaku, and Zuikaku). "The First Wave" -- the period from 0750-0810 hours -- is recounted, including the attack on the fleet, Ford Island / Pearl Harbor Naval Air Station, and Hickam Field Army Air Base (0755-0920 hours).

"The Second Wave" relates attacks against Ewa Marine Air Corps Station, the Army's Bellows and Wheeler air fields, Schofield Barracks at the latter, and Kaneohe Naval Air Station. "Aftermath" is a unique and compelling review of Japanese damage assessment perceptions and the actual American losses -- more than 3,400 casualties, ships (8 battleships sunk or heavily damaged [USS Arizona, California, Maryland, Nevada, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and West Virginia], 3 cruisers and 8 destroyers damaged), aircraft (169 lost [92 Navy and 77 Army] and another 150 damaged [31 Navy and 128 Army]) -- note that the latter figures do not total (p. 73). Japanese losses are also documented but minimal attention is

paid to the two-man Japanese submarines that were to penetrate the U.S. naval base.

"Further Reading" contains a list of 43 books; there are additional sources that might have been included: S.E. Morison's classic third volume of *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II: The Rising Sun in the Pacific, 1931-April 1942* (1948), John Prados's *Combined Fleet Decoded* (1995), and Stanley Weintraub's *Long Day's Journey into War* (1991). In "Wargaming Pearl Harbor" Smith notes that there is no simulation board game. He is in error; "Pearl Harbor: The War Against Japan, 1941-1945" (Designers' Workshop, 2nd ed. 1979) is a strategic-level game designed by John Prados and developed by Marc Miller and John Astell. "Pearl Harbor Today" provides information how to visit Pearl Harbor and the National Park Service's Visitor Center at USS Arizona, dedicated in 1962, which hosts 1.5 million visitors per year. Smith fails to mention that since 22 June 1998, the USS Missouri (on which the documents of surrender were signed on 2 September 1945, ending the Pacific War) is currently anchored at Pier F-5 on "Battleship Row" in Pearl Harbor pending transfer to a permanent site at F-2 and F-3 in 2002. Eight appendices (pp. 90-103) provide important documentation not found in similar publications: U.S. Fleet Order of Battle (223 ships tabulated), Japanese Fleet Order of Battle (66 ships), Japanese Aircraft at Pearl Harbor (specifications on seven types), U.S. Aircraft at Pearl Harbor (specifications on 18 types), Japanese First Wave Attack Formation (16 units), Japanese Second Wave Attack Formation (10 units), Japanese Organization, and U.S. Organization.

As a relatively inexpensive, comprehensive synthesis, Smith's book updates and expands *Pearl Harbor* by A.J. Barker. Smith's volume has 67 monochrome and 16 color illustrations. The latter include magnificently detailed political maps and attack plans -- the best in any compendia about the attack. The well-chosen illustrations, chronologies, and detailed appendices with its

wealth of materials and data are significant contributions to the general literature, making this volume especially valuable as a basic resource despite the shortcomings noted..

Although successful in destroying or disabling the major capital ships of the Pacific Fleet, the Japanese plan had fatal flaws, especially that the American aircraft carriers were not in port and escaped attack, and the plan neglected to include the destruction of vital oil tanks and naval repair facilities at Pearl Harbor. The shallow harbor at Pearl aided in the resurrection of the fleet -- a far different circumstance than if the capital ships had been sunk in the open ocean where they could not be raised and repaired. The destruction of these would have inevitably prolonged the war but not its eventual outcome.

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