



INTRODUCTION

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese military launched a surprise attack against the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, killing more than 2,400 Americans. When President Franklin Delano Roosevelt went before Congress the following day to ask for a declaration of war against Japan, he delivered a six-minute speech that had gone through multiple revisions in the preceding 24 hours. The president faced a monumental task: How would he calm and reassure a shocked nation? How would he clarify and explain events that occurred in a distant territory that was unfamiliar to many Americans? And, perhaps most importantly, how would he prepare the American people for war? In this lesson, students will compare Roosevelt's speech with a secondary source about the Pearl Harbor attack in order to evaluate how historical actors and historians use facts to craft narratives.

OBJECTIVE

By examining Roosevelt's "Day of Infamy" speech alongside a secondary source about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, students will be able to evaluate how historical actors and historians use facts to craft narratives.

GRADE LEVEL






7–12

TIME REQUIREMENT

1–2 class periods

ONLINE RESOURCES

ww2classroom.org

-  **Primary source documents included in this lesson plan**
-  **Harold Ward Oral History**
-  **Japanese Expansion Video**
-  **Extent of Japanese Occupation Map**
-  **Recording of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Pearl Harbor Address, December 8, 1941**

STANDARDS

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.8

Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.9

Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HISTORY

CONTENT ERA 8, STANDARD 3A

The student understands the international background of World War II; therefore, the student is able to analyze the reasons for the growing tensions with Japan in east Asia culminating with the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

HISTORICAL THINKING STANDARD 2

The student is able to reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage by identifying who was involved, what happened, where it happened, what events led to these developments, and what consequences or outcomes followed.

The student is able to identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses and the purpose, perspective, or point of view from which it has been constructed.

The student is able to differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations but acknowledge that the two are related; that the facts the historian reports are selected and reflect therefore the historian's judgment of what is most significant about the past.

HISTORICAL THINKING STANDARD 4

The student is able to interrogate historical data by uncovering the social, political, and economic context in which it was created; testing the data source for its credibility, authority, authenticity, internal consistency, and completeness; and detecting and evaluating bias, distortion, and propaganda by omission, suppression, or invention of facts.

The student is able to formulate historical questions from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.

PROCEDURES

1. Have students read the **Pearl Harbor Overview Essay** either silently or aloud as a whole class, underlining the most important statements of fact and circling the most important statements of opinion/interpretation. Inform students that the essay presents one view of the conflict between Japan and the United States, reminding them that historians choose to include or exclude facts and to stress or downplay certain points based upon their interpretation of what is most important about the past.

Differentiation: Based upon your students' reading levels, you may want to limit your focus to the first three sections of the essay (Introduction, The Roots of the Attack, The Impending Crisis).

To orient students to the geographic locations discussed in the essay, you may want to play the **Japanese Expansion Video**, explaining that the video shows how the Japanese viewed Pearl Harbor as a gateway to broader expansion to the Dutch East Indies and beyond. The **glossary** and **online map** showing the June 4, 1942, extent of Japanese occupation may also be helpful.

2. After using the **discussion guide** to check for students' understanding of the essay and the difference between facts and opinion/interpretation, introduce Roosevelt's "Day of Infamy" speech by explaining that presidential speeches are primary sources that can help us understand past events, how presidents thought about those events, and how they wanted the American public to understand them. Note that during the speechwriting process presidents make decisions about both content and structure—what to include, what to exclude, and how to present information.
3. Play the **recording of Roosevelt's address to Congress** as students follow along with the **transcript**. Explain that the words that are underlined or in parentheses in the transcript indicate material that was not in the final written draft of the speech. The underlined words are those that Roosevelt added to the speech, and the parentheses enclose either words that he omitted or references to applause and reaction from Congress.
4. As students read (or reread) the **transcript**, have them underline the most important statements of fact and circle the most important statements of opinion/interpretation.
5. Use the **discussion guide** to check for students' understanding of the speech and to identify what they found to be most important. Push them to consider why Roosevelt stressed certain facts and opinions and not others.
6. Have students complete the **Venn diagram worksheet** (page 49) comparing Roosevelt's speech and the overview essay.
7. Have students engage in a historical discussion comparing and contrasting the insights they gained from the primary and secondary sources. Ask them to compare the decisions that historians and historical actors make when including, omitting, or emphasizing facts.

ASSESSMENT

You will be able to assess students' understanding of the relevant standards through the notations they make on the assigned texts, the worksheet, class discussion, and the homework assignment.

EXTENSION/ENRICHMENT

- For homework, have students write the speech they would have delivered to Congress had they been president of the United States on December 7, 1941.
- Have students compare the first draft of Roosevelt's speech (pages 50–52), with the version he delivered (pages 46–48), asking them to hypothesize why he made changes to the speech and whether those changes strengthened or weakened it.
- Have students learn more about Pearl Harbor through the oral histories that are part of the Museum's Digital Collections. Students can find relevant oral histories by searching the Collections at <http://www.ww2online.org/advanced>. Of particular note is the oral history with Kermit Tyler, who was officer in charge at the Communications Center at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.
- Have students explore the website for The National WWII Museum's special exhibit, *Infamy: December 7, 1941*, which includes oral histories, interactive maps, images of artifacts, and propaganda posters related to the attack on Pearl Harbor. The link is: <http://infamydecember1941.org/>.

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR OVERVIEW ESSAY

1. What is one of the statements of fact that you underlined? Why do you think this fact is important?

Possible answers include: Japan "sought to imitate Western countries such as the United States, which had established colonies in Asia and the Pacific"; the Japanese military murdered "between 100,000 and 200,000 helpless Chinese military prisoners and civilians"; Roosevelt froze "all Japanese assets in the United States on July 26, 1941"; "While diplomatic talks continued between the United States and Japan, neither side budged." Student explanations may vary.

2. What is one of the statements of opinion or interpretation that you circled? Why do you think this statement is important?

Possible answers include: the roots of the Pearl Harbor attack "stretched back more than four decades"; "the conflict between the US and Japan stemmed from their competing interests in Chinese markets and Asian natural resources"; "the ineffectual Stimson Doctrine guided US policy in Asia for the next decade." Student explanations may vary.

3. According to the essay, when and why did tensions between Japan and Western nations such as the United States begin to increase?

Students may respond that the tensions began during the late 19th century as Japan tried to gain control of markets and resources that Western nations controlled through their Asian and Pacific colonies.

4. According to the essay, what was one of the main sources of the conflict between the United States and Japan?

Students may respond that access to Chinese markets and Asian natural resources were a primary source of tension between the United States and Japan.

5. How did the United States initially respond to Japan's expansion into China? According to the essay, how effective was this response?

Students may respond that the United States responded with the Stimson Doctrine, which the essay characterizes as ineffective.

6. Why did Japan attack Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941?

Possible answers include that the US decision to freeze Japanese assets prompted Japan to act; that Japan attacked as part of its quest for more land and resources; that Japan attacked because the United States acted too forcefully/not forcefully enough to block Japanese aggression.

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR FDR'S "DAY OF INFAMY" SPEECH

1. What is one of the statements of fact that you underlined? Why do you think this fact is important?

Possible answers include: "Yesterday, December 7, 1941, . . . the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan"; "The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces"; "At the solicitation of Japan, [the United States] was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific"; "Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya."

2. What is one of the statements of opinion or interpretation that you circled? Why do you think this statement is important?

Possible answers include: "The facts of yesterday and today speak for themselves"; "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"; "During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace."

3. In the second paragraph, Roosevelt added the words "the American island of" before referring to Oahu. Why do you think he made this on-the-spot change?

Students may answer that Roosevelt added this phrase since Americans may not have known where Oahu was or that it was technically part of the United States. Oahu is one of the Hawaiian Islands, and Hawaii was a US territory in 1941.

4. What is the central idea of the speech?

A potential response is that Roosevelt argues that the Japanese attack was a treacherous act that required the United States to respond with a declaration of war against Japan.

5. After reading and listening to the speech, what more do you want to know about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor?

Student responses may vary.

6. If you were president at the time of the attack, what would you have included in your address to Congress that Roosevelt did not? What sentences or passages would you have cut from Roosevelt's speech?

Student responses may vary.

#1400

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
BROADCAST FROM THE CAPITOL, WASHINGTON, D.C.
December 8, 1941 -- 12.30 P.M., E.S.T.

MR. VICE PRESIDENT, AND MR. SPEAKER, AND MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES: (TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:)

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 United States was at peace with that nation and, at the
solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its Government and
its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed,
one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in the American
Island of Oahu, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his col-
league delivered to (the) our Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent
American message. And while this reply stated that it seemed useless to con-
tinue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint
of war or of armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes
it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks
ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately
sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions
of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe
damage to American naval and military forces. I regret to tell you that
very many American lives have been lost. In addition American ships have
been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against

(Image: Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.)

- 2 -

Malaya.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.

Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

And this morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday and today 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.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

But always will (we) our whole nation remember the character of the onslaught against us. (applause)

No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to (loud and prolonged cheers and applause) absolute victory.

I believe that I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again (endanger us) endanger us (again). (applause)

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger.

With confidence in our armed forces -- with the unbounding determination of our people -- we will gain the inevitable triumph -- so help us God. (applause)

(Image: Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.)

- 3 -

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December seventh, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire. (loud and prolonged cheers and applause).

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE,

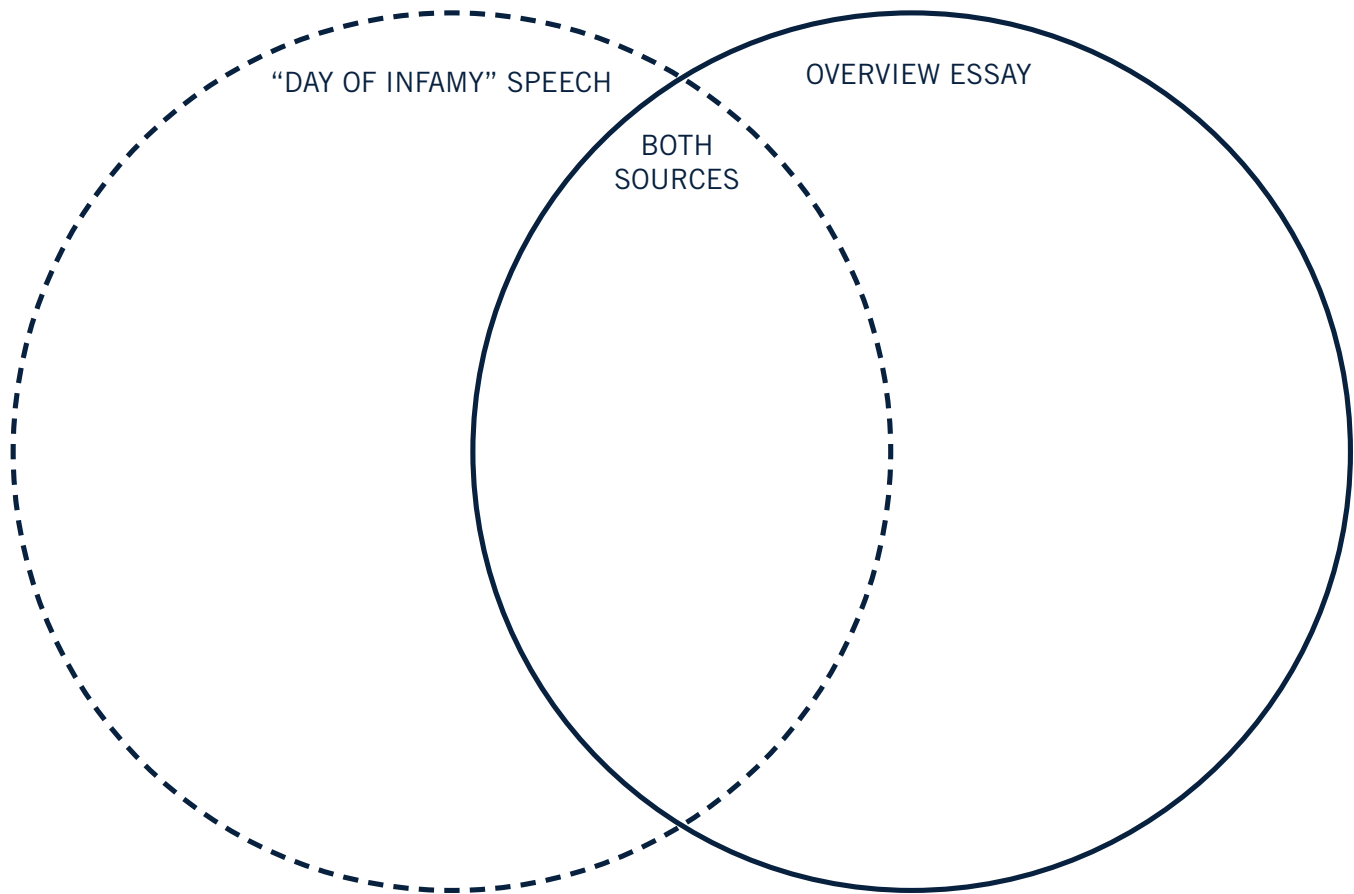
December 8, 1941.

(Image: Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.)

YOUR NAME:

DATE:

DIRECTIONS: Record the details that only appear in Roosevelt's speech in the outer portion of the circle on the left, and record the details that only appear in the Overview Essay in the outer portion of the circle on the right. Record the details that are in both the speech and the essay in the section where the two circles overlap. After recording this information in the circles, respond to the questions below.



1. What did you learn from the speech that you did not learn from the essay?
2. What did you learn from the essay that you did not learn from the speech?
3. If you were the teacher and could only assign one of the sources to your students, which source (the speech or the essay) would you pick? Why would you pick this source?

DRAFT No. 1

December 7, 1941.

PROPOSED MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS

Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in ^{infamy} ~~world history~~,
 the United States of America was ^{suddenly} ~~simultaneously~~ and deliberately attacked
 by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan. ~~that morning~~

The United States was at the moment at peace with that nation and was
~~still in~~ continuing the conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking
 toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after
 Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in ^{Oahu} ~~Hawaii~~ and the Philippines,
 the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered
 to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a ^{recent American} ~~former~~ message, from the
~~Secretary~~. ^{While} ~~This reply contained a statement~~ ^{started} ~~that diplomatic negotiations~~ ^{it seemed useless}
~~must be considered at an end, but~~ ^{or} ~~contained no threat and no hint of an~~ ^{war or}
 armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance ~~of Manila, and especially of~~
 Hawaii, from Japan makes it obvious that these attacks ^{was} ~~were~~ deliberately
 planned many days ^{or even weeks} ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Govern-
 ment has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false
 statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

(Image: Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.)

DRAFT NO. 1

-2-

The attack ~~yesterday on Manila and on the Island of Oahu~~ *the Hawaiian Islands* *has*

caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition American ~~ships~~ ships have been torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya.

Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.
Japan has, therefore, undertaken a "surprise offensive" *the Philippines* extending

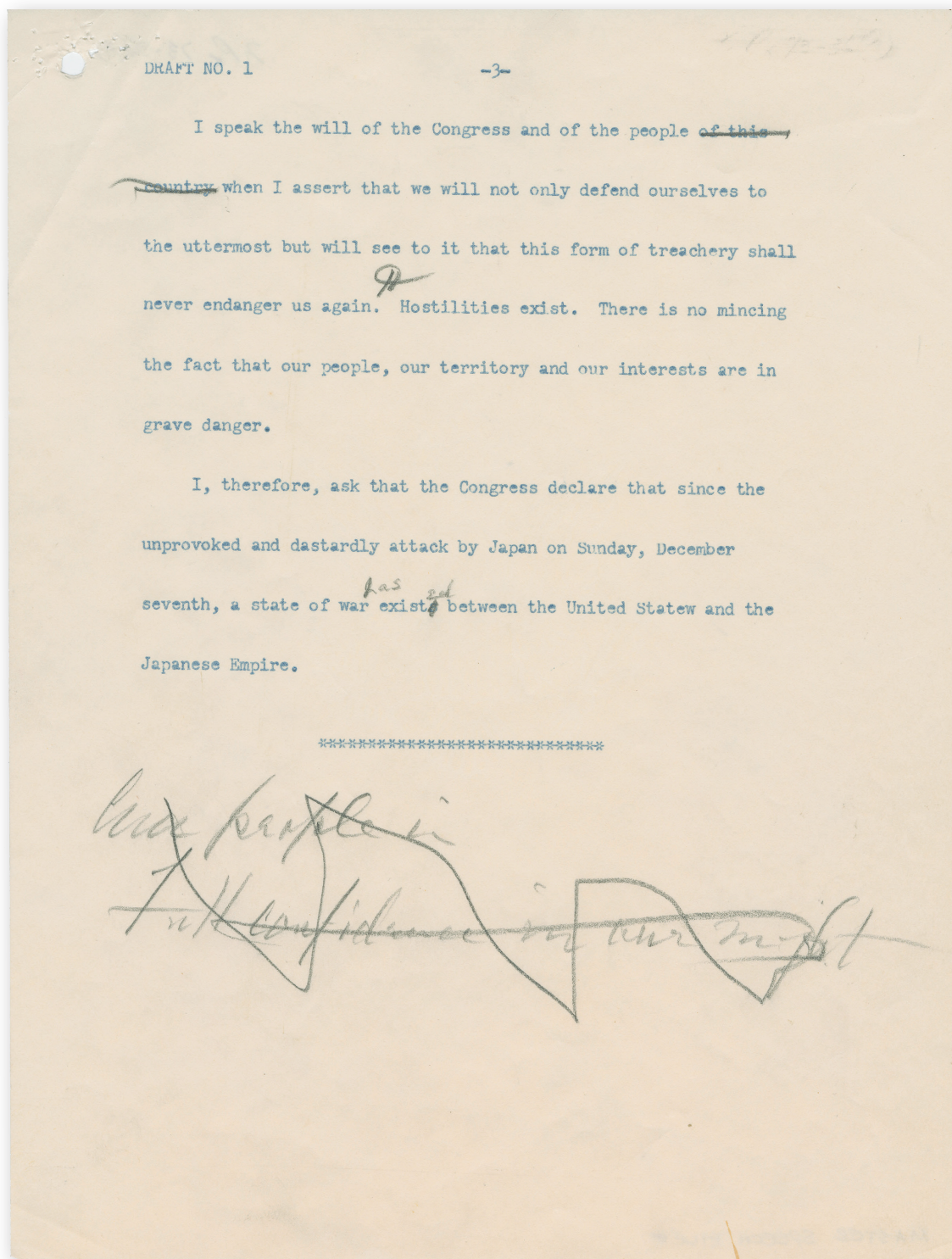
throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications ~~these attacks~~ *to very* *Islands* *on* the safety of our nation.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy I have, ~~of course,~~ directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

Long will we remember the character of the onslaught against us.

(A) No matter how long it may take us to overcome this permitted invasion the American people will in their righteous might win through to absolute victory.

(Image: Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.)



(Image: Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.)