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I am analyzing the “War Message” that Franklin D. Roosevelt, proposed to the congress on December 8th, 1941. The message delivered by FDR was used to ask the congress to declare war on Japan, due to Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th 1941. “A date which will live in infamy” (War Message) was the opening and the thesis of FDR’s “War Message”; the president sued this phrase to convey the message to his audience that the United States should remember day as a painful day.

In interpreting the “War Message”, it would be useful to understand the reason that provoked Japanese militia forces to attack Pearl Harbor. In the early 1930’s Japanese imperial forces had been evident based on the “invasion Manchuria 1931”. The invasion help Japan to become the center of the East Asian economy; however, the imperial of Japan had come to direct economics conflicts between the United States in the Pacific region. The conflicts escalated when United States introduced the “Oil Embargo of 1941” to the Imperial Japan “President Franklin Roosevelt seizes all Japanese assets in the United States in retaliation for the Japanese occupation of French Indo-China” (“United States Freezes Japanese assets”). FDR was afraid the Germany and Japan would use the French Indo-China colonies for further invasion into China, the French colonies were 800 miles away from the American bases in Philippines, FDR concerned the American bases would be threading by the Japanese forces, as respond FDR introduced the “Oil Embargo of 1941”.

*“On July 24, Tokyo decided to strengthen its position in terms of its invasion of China by moving through Southeast Asia. Given that France had long occupied parts of the region, and Germany, a Japanese ally, now controlled most of France through Petain’s puppet government, France “agreed” to the occupation of its Indo-China colonies. Japan followed up by occupying Cam Ranh naval base, 800 miles from the Philippines, where Americans had troops, and the British base at Singapore.”* (“United States Freezes Japanese assets”).

Therefore based on this reason the Imperial of Japan decided to “risk” Everything to take out the United States influence in the pacific.

“When the US imposed an oil embargo on Japan, threatening to suffocate her economy, Japan’s response was to risk everything on a massive pre-emptive strike which would knock the US out of the Pacific, clearing the way for a Japanese conquest of resource-rich South East Asia”.( “Pearl Harbor”)

So the Imperial Japan came up with a year plan to attack Pearl Harbor. The next day FDR declared war on Japan with the “War Message”.

In FDR’s “Was Message”, he heavily emphasized that the Japanese had made the plan of attacking the American pacific bases secretly, based on the argument that the Japanese repeatedly gave the false statements of peace with the United States, which in a way, FDR had made the Imperial of Japan as the manipulator and the peace breaker between Japan and the United States.

“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. Very many American lives have been lost. In addition, American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.”(“War Message”)

When FDR stated this paragraph, it was used to get the agreements of the congress that now the Imperial of Japan was the number one enemy of the American nation, because it was logical that no peace keepers would want to uneventfully attack the ones who the peace keepers promised peace to. And then, FDR illustrated another points to declare war on Japan.

“Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against 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.

This morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.”(“War Message”)

FDR repeatedly stated the conflicts Imperial Japan had caused the day after the invasion of Pearl Harbor as the argument that the Japanese had basically declared war with the American pacific allies, which the United States had a responsibility to help the allies and defense itself against Japan. At the end FDR used the argument that the United States is on the right side of the battle, hinting the victory was to come come.

“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.”(“War Message”)

This sentence had purposefully manipulated the readers and the congress that the United States was fighting at the uphill battle; it was the United States’ right to declare war on Japan.

Three well stated arguments, Imperial Japan was deceitful, Imperial Japan was the main Eastern Axis’ forces, and the right of national security. The president had provided enough reason for congress to declare war on Japan.

The “War Message” was well stated with its initial arguments; however, FDR did not admit that the United States was the one who brought troubles upon itself by introducing the “Oil Embargo of 1941”, nor did he not explain the reason that the Pearl Harbor was invaded un altered, which was due to the failure intelligence of the United States unable to translated the deciphered Japanese radio codes.

Works Cited

Presidentialrhetoric.com. “War Message” Franklin D. Roosevelt December 8th 1941

History.com “Pearl Harbor” HistoryStaff March 21st, 2014

History.com “United States Freezes Japanese assets”