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by Elias Alias , December 7, 2015

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Roger H. Meyer published a good article on Pearl Harbor a year ago at the American Legion website. I am pleased to repeat a portion of that article here for our readers, with a convenient link to the [*original*](#).

[Photo courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

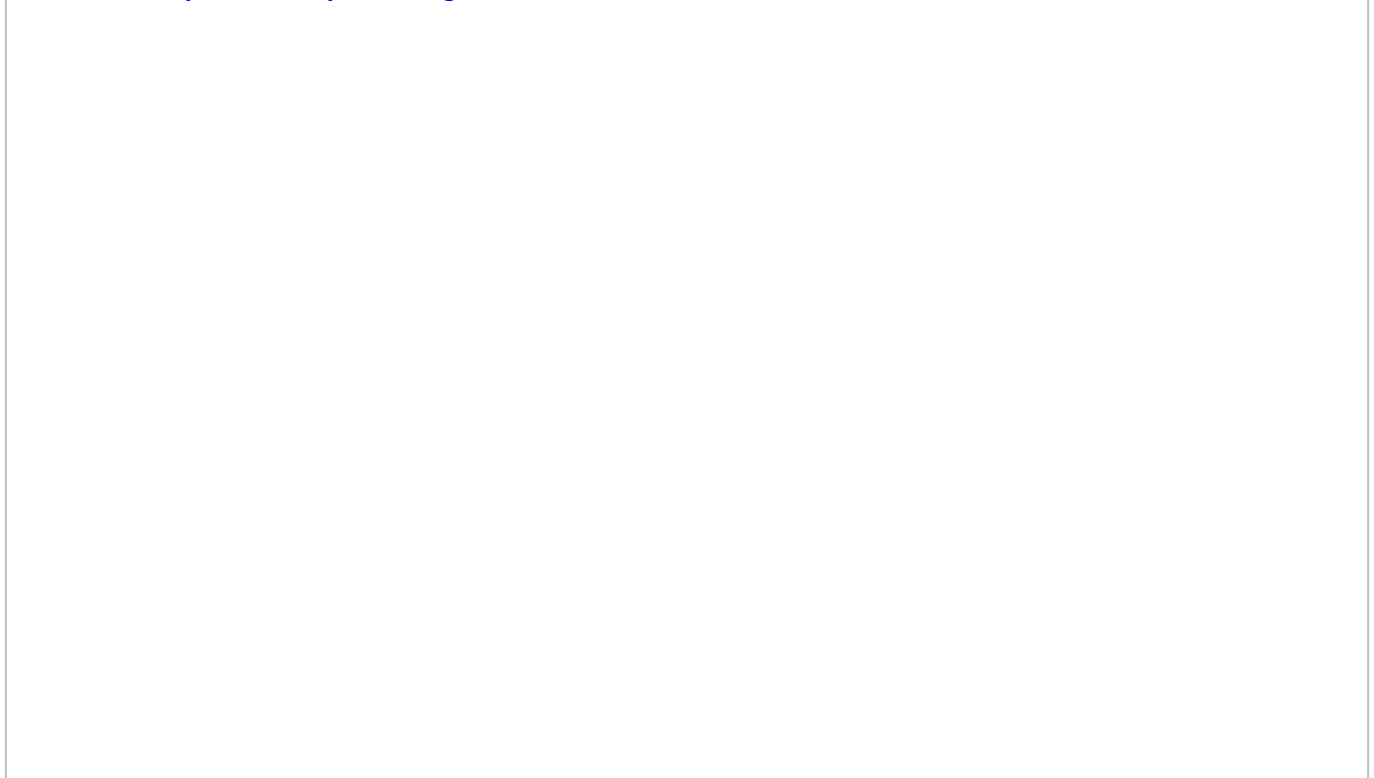


Photo courtesy of Library of Congress

Pearl Harbor: What it meant, why we remember

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor destroyed the U.S. Pacific Fleet, or so many Americans believe. But six months later, that “crippled” fleet defeated a massive Japanese task force at Midway.

Ninety-six ships were in the Navy yard at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. Of these, the Japanese sank or damaged only 18, and 11 were back in service within a year.

The attacking Japanese fleet, led by Vice Adm. Chūichi Nagumo, had six aircraft carriers and two battleships, plus cruisers, destroyers and support ships. It arrived 275 miles northwest of Oahu, and at 6 a.m. launched the first attack wave of 183 aircraft; this was followed by a second wave of 168 planes. The first wave arrived over Pearl Harbor at 7:55 a.m., and the attack continued until 9:45 a.m.

The Japanese pilots were assigned to attack the battleships and aircraft carriers first. Cruisers and destroyers were the next priority. The dive bombers were set to attack ground targets. Fighters were to strafe as many parked aircraft as possible to ensure they did not get into the air to interfere. Staff officers urged Nagumo to launch a third wave to strike the Navy yard, oil tank farms and

submarine base at Pearl Harbor. Military historians say the destruction of these properties would have damaged the capabilities of the U.S. Pacific Fleet a great deal more than losing its battleships. Indeed, “serious operations in the Pacific would have been postponed for more than a year,” said Adm. Chester Nimitz, who later commanded the Pacific Fleet. “It would have prolonged the war another two years.”

(snip)

Read more at the [American Legion website](#). Thank you, and God bless America.

Salute!

Elias Alias, editor

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