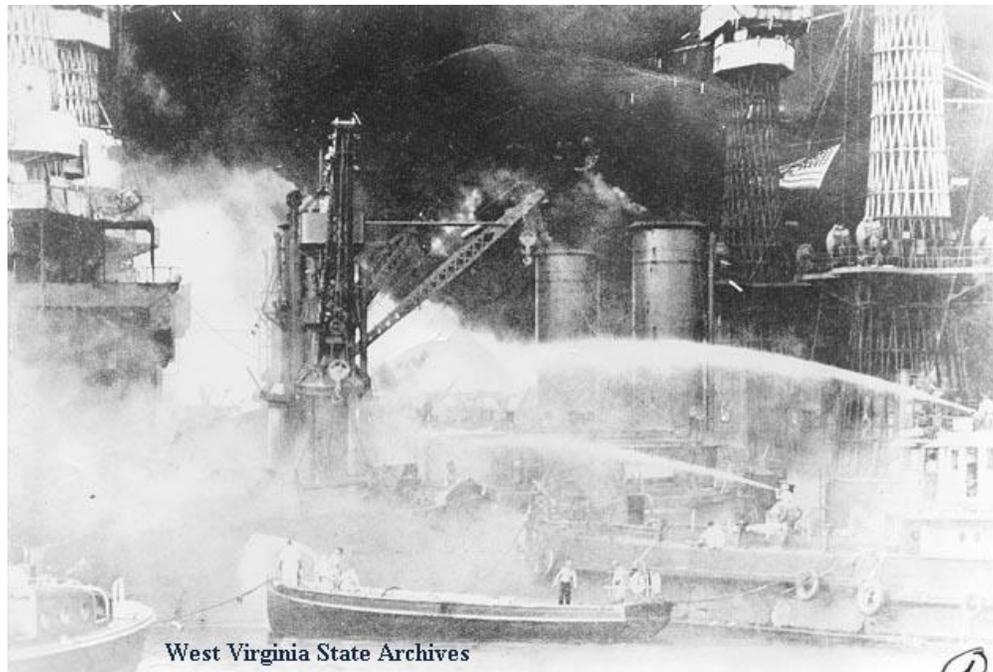


### ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY DECEMBER 7



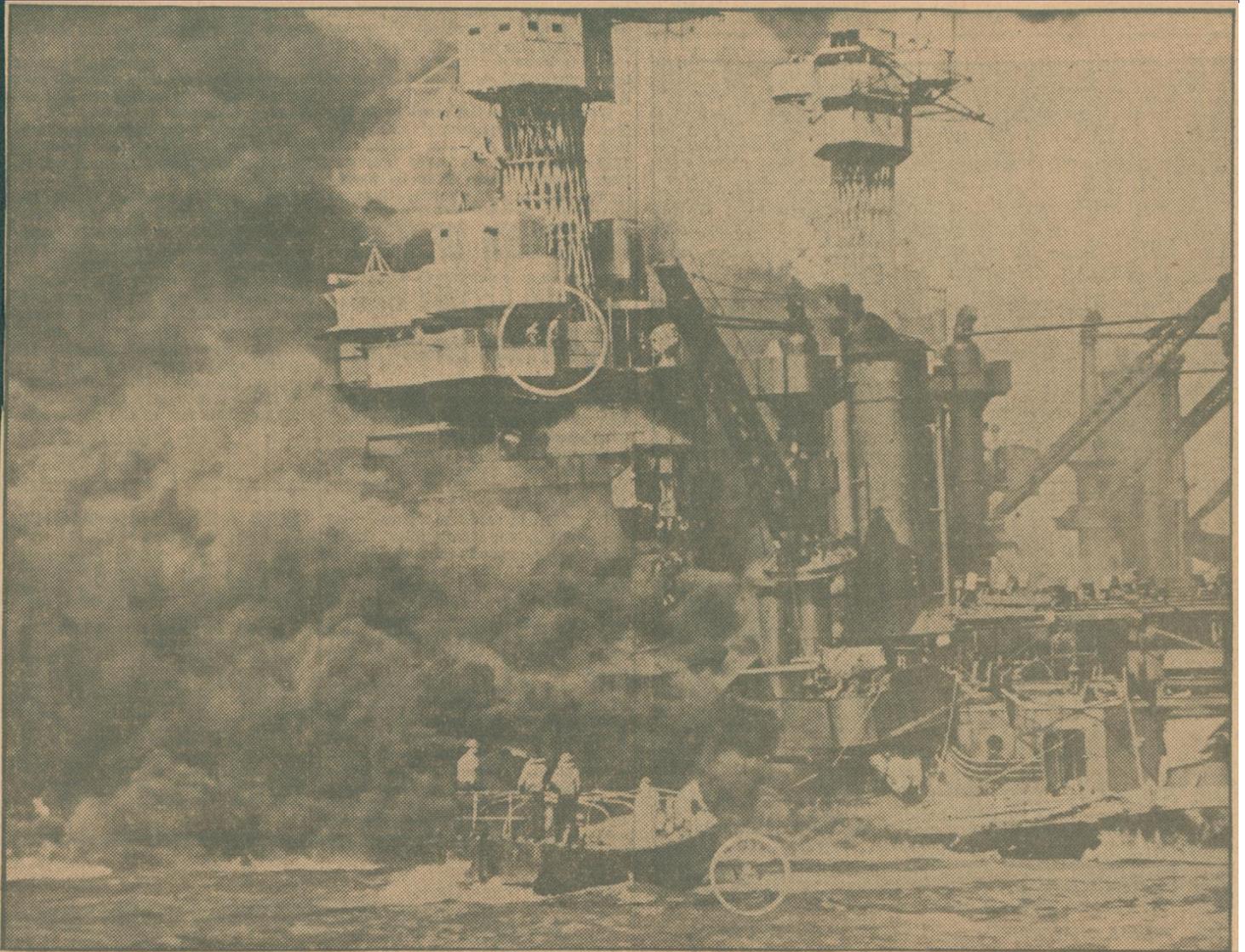
On December 7, 1941, a Japanese attack on the United States naval base at Pearl Harbor initiated American entry into World War II. One of the ships sunk on that day was the USS *West Virginia*.

**CSO: SS.8.25, ELA.8.1**

**Investigate the Document:** (John J. Morris Collection of USS West Virginia and Pearl Harbor materials, publications, drawings, 1922-1961, Sc89-51acc)

1. President Roosevelt's letter dated December 6, 1941, imploring Emperor Hirohito to avert war was the final attempt at diplomacy with the Japanese, regarding hostilities in the Pacific. What would occur the following day?
2. How would you describe President Roosevelt's disposition in his letter to Emperor Hirohito? Was it hostile? Affable?
3. According to the news clipping, the U.S.S. West Virginia lost \_\_\_\_\_ crew members during the attack on Pearl Harbor.
4. What was the nickname given to the U.S.S. West Virginia?
5. Was the U.S.S. West Virginia able to return to battle again, following the attack on Pearl Harbor?

**Think Critically:** Why did the Japanese decide to plan a surprise attack at Pearl Harbor? Had the United States entered the war yet? How long do YOU think it took for President Roosevelt to learn the details about the Pearl Harbor attack? How does the speed of news reporting and information in 1941 compare with that of today? In addition to the U.S.S. West Virginia, how did West Virginia aid the country in the war effort?



While smoke rolled out of the stricken 31,800-ton battleship West Virginia, sailors in a small boat rescued one of the ship's seamen (foreground circle). Two men may be seen in the superstructure (upper circle). The mast of the battleship Tennessee can be seen beyond the burning West Virginia. Battleships were the main targets of the Japs during the attack.

### Gallant Giant On Last Voyage

SUNSHINE that broke through clouds to salute battleship USS West Virginia on her final voyage glints off great gray hull of warrior as two of five escorting Foss Launch and Tug Co. boats guide her gently in toward Harbor Island pier where she will be

dismantled by Todd Shipyards Corp. Cranes swing gondolas full of workmen over approaching ship, and in background, Seattle skyline emerges from mist.

—(Post-Intelligencer Photo by Harvey Davis)

BY DON PAGE

**A** MIGHTY warship that shrugged off death and destruction at Pearl Harbor coursed across Elliott Bay yesterday to her doom. She is the battleship West Virginia. In the next year-and-a-half torches and shears at the Todd Shipyards here will accomplish what bombs and torpedoes could not do to her 19 years ago.

Six aerial torpedoes and two bombs sent the 32,000-ton Weevee to the bottom of Pearl Harbor in that sneak attack. Of her crew, 105 perished.

**FIVE MONTHS LATER** she was raised. Her rebirth at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton took two years. The Weevee was ready for the Battle of Surigao Strait in October, 1944, though. There, in vengeance

for her Pearl Harbor wounds, she destroyed a Japanese battleship.

From Surigao the Weevee sailed on to Mindoro, Luzon, Iwo Jima, Okinawa. On Sept. 2, 1945, when Japan signed her surrender, the Weevee was the only warship in Tokyo Bay bearing the scars of Pearl Harbor.

**AFTER LIVING** out her appointed span, the West Virginia was purchased out of the Bremerton mothball fleet last year. Her price: \$781,289.89. Since then the Learner Corp. has moored her at Winslow, awaiting the time when Todd would

be through scrapping the Weevee's sistership, the USS Colorado, here.

Just before Christmas, Todd lifted the last crane-load of metal from the dry-dock where the Colorado had lain. Yesterday five Foss Launch and Tug Co. boats met the Weevee at Winslow.

**WHEN THE WARSHIP** and her little convoy left Winslow yesterday morning, fog shrouded them like a ghost funeral cortege. Midway across the Sound, though, the clouds broke up. The battleship that would not die finished her final voyage in brilliant sunshine.

## **President Roosevelt's Unanswered Letter to the Emperor Hirohito**



On December 6, 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, addressed a courteous and statesmanlike letter to His Imperial Majesty, Emperor of Japan. The letter was written in a final effort to avert war between the two countries and was forwarded to His Imperial Majesty through the usual diplomatic channels. The letter was never answered. It is unthinkable that any Japanese would be guilty of the gross discourtesy of ignoring a polite and important letter. On December 7, 1941 the Japanese armed forces attacked the United States in Hawaii. It is therefore quite obvious that the letter from President Roosevelt was never delivered to the Emperor. Had it not been kept from him, the war might well have been averted. The letter appears within.

日本天皇陛下に捧呈された  
ルーズベルト大統領の親書

發行所 亞米利加政府

去る一九四一年十二月六日ルーズベルト大統領は天皇陛下に鄭重にして政治家らしい親書を捧呈したが此のメセジは日米國交の斷絶を避ける最後の手段として書かれたものである而して此の親書は通常の外交機關を通じて陛下に捧呈せられたのであるが、陛下からは何の回答も無かつた。

日本人が斯くも禮儀を盡した且つ重要な親書を無視する程失禮であるとは考へられない。所が日本の海軍は昭和十六年十二月七日布哇を攻撃し、我が米國合衆國に對して戦闘を開始したのであつた。

故にルーズベルト大統領の親書が天皇陛下に傳達されなかつた事が明らかである。若し陛下の風耳に達してゐたならば今日の日米戦争を防止することが出来てゐたであらう。  
ルーズベルト大統領の親書を内側に紹介しやう。



His Imperial Majesty Hirohito, Emperor of Japan:

"Only in situations of extraordinary importance to our two countries need I address to your Majesty messages on matters of state. I feel I should now so address you because of the deep and far-reaching emergency which appears to be in formation. Developments are occurring in the Pacific area which threaten to deprive each of our nations and all humanity of the beneficial influence of the long peace between our two countries. Those developments contain tragic possibilities.

"The people of the United States, believing in peace and in the right of nations to live and let live, have eagerly watched the conversations between our two governments during these past months. We have hoped for a termination of the present conflict between Japan and China. We have hoped that a peace of the Pacific could be consummated in such a way that nationalities of many diverse peoples could exist side by side without fear of invasion, that unbearable burdens of armaments could be lifted for them all, and that all peoples would resume commerce without discrimination against or in favor of any nation.

"I am certain that it will be clear to your Majesty, as it is to me, that in seeking these great objectives both Japan and the United States should agree to eliminate any form of military threat. This seemed essential to the attainment of the high objectives.

"More than a year ago your Majesty's Government concluded an agreement with the Vichy Government by which five or six thousand Japanese troops were permitted to enter northern French Indo-China for the protection of Japanese troops which were operating against China further north. And this spring and summer the Vichy Government permitted further Japanese military forces to enter into southern French Indo-China for the common defense of French Indo-China. I think I am correct in saying that no attack has been made upon Indo-China nor that any has been contemplated.

"During the past few weeks it has become clear to the world that Japanese military, naval and air forces have been sent to southern Indo-China in such large numbers as to create a reasonable doubt on the part of other nations that this continuing concentration in Indo-China is not defensive in its character.

"Because these continuing concentrations in Indo-China have reached such large proportions and because they extend now to the southeast and the southwest corners of that peninsula, it is only reasonable that the people of the Philippines, of the hundreds of islands of the East Indies, of Malaya and of Thailand itself are asking themselves whether these forces of Japan are preparing or intending to make attack in one or more of these many directions.

"I am sure that your Majesty will understand that the fear of all these peoples is a legitimate fear, inasmuch as it involves their peace and their national existence. I am sure that your Majesty will understand why the people of the United States in such large numbers look askance at the establishment of military, naval and air bases manned and equipped so greatly as to constitute armed forces capable of measures of offense.

"It is clear that a continuance of such a situation is unthinkable.

"None of the peoples whom I have spoken of above can sit either indefinitely or permanently on a keg of dynamite.

"There is absolutely no thought on the part of the United States of invading Indo-China if every Japanese soldier or sailor were to be withdrawn therefrom.

"I think that we can obtain the same assurance from the governments of the East Indies, the governments of Malaya and the Government of Thailand. I would even undertake to ask for the same assurance on the part of the Government of China. Thus a withdrawal of the Japanese forces from Indo-China would result in the assurance of peace throughout the whole of the South Pacific area.

"I address myself to your Majesty at this moment in the fervent hope that your Majesty may, as I am doing, give thought in this definite emergency to ways of dispelling the dark clouds. I am confident that both of us, for the sake of the peoples not only of our own great countries, but for the sake of humanity in neighboring territories, have a sacred duty to restore traditional amity and prevent further death and destruction in the world.

May God have your Majesty in his safe and holy keeping. Your good friend,  
Franklin Delano Roosevelt."



國際問題に關して陛下に親書を捧呈するのは日米國交非常時の場合のみを考へます。難局に直面し今將に重大危機を醸もさんとしつゝあるかの如き日米關係を考察する時、陛下に親書を差上げ御協力を仰ぐべきだと考へたのであります。

太平洋の現時局は永年の日米親善によつて齎された福祉を我が兩國、ひいては全人類から奪ひ、悲惨なる將來を生む可能性を充分に持つて居ります。自國も榮へ、同時に他國の權利も認め、相互扶助の精神で世界の平和は維持されるべきであるを信じてゐる米國民は過去數ヶ月間續行されてゐる日米交渉を熱心に注目してゐるのであります。我々は太平洋に永遠の平和が訪れ人種、文化の相異つた國民が攻撃される怖れもなく安心して生活が營れ、戦備の重荷から解放され、且つ公平平等を基本とせる世界自由貿易の實現されることを念願してゐるものであります。

御賢明なる陛下には日米兩國が此の重大目的を成就する爲に、その手段として武力を用ひないことが上策であることはよくお分りになると思ひます。寧ろこれは日米會談成功の必須條件だとさへもかんがへられるのであります。

日本帝國は約一ヶ年以前、南支那派遣軍援助の爲に北佛印へ五、六千の日本軍を駐屯せしめる協定をフランス、ビシー政府と締結されました。更に今年の春と夏、ビシー政府は佛印共同防衛の爲に日本軍の南佛印上陸を許しました。

然し乍ら此の間佛印が一度も他國から攻撃を受けず、且又侵略を考慮してゐた國は無かつたと云つても過言ではありませぬ。過去數週間日本の陸海空軍が斯くも多數南佛印方面へ派遣されたことは、その目的が防衛のみの爲で無いと云ふ疑を諸國に起さすに至つたのであります。日本軍の佛印派遣軍が増加され、更に佛印の東西兩南端へ日本軍が進駐したことは、比島、蘭印、マレー、タイ諸國の國民に日本軍の次の目標はどの方面に向けられるであらうかと云ふ不安の念を持たすに至りました。彼等が平和擾亂と國家存亡を憂慮してゐる心持は陛下にもお分りになることと存じます。同時に多くの米國民が防衛のみの爲でなく、攻勢な軍事行動を執り得るだけの準備をなすつゝある日本の眞意を知りたいと云ふ氣持もお分りになることと思ひます。

斯かる状態が何時までも續くとはかんがへられません。前に申上げた諸國のどの國民だつて何時までもダイナマイトの上に坐つてゐる譯にはいきませぬ。米國が佛印に侵入する計畫を有してゐないことは確言致します。勿論之は日本軍が最後の一人まで佛印から撤退することを前提としなければなりません。蘭印、マレー、タイ諸國からも同様の保證を得ることが出来ると思ひます。御希望ならば支那からも同様の保證を得る交渉に當る準備があります。

斯くの如くかんがへます時、南太平洋平和の鍵は佛印から日本軍が撤去することだと云ふ結論に達するのであります。暗雲に包まれた太平洋に平和の光明を齎らんとする念願のあまり、余は陛下に此のメッセジを捧呈し、御協力を切望する次第であります。

陛下に余は單に日米兩國のみならず、全友邦諸國民の爲に永年續けられた日米親善關係を回復し、全世界を今日以上の殺人と破壊から救ふ義務を有すること確信するものであります。

陛下の御健康を祈ります。

陛下の良き友

フランクリン・デラノ・ルーズベルト