

SEPTEMBER 10, 1981

SEATTLE CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

JACL - REDRESS

I AM A FIRST GENERATION NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN BORN AND REARED IN SEATTLE AND FIRST BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH THE JAPANESE-AMERICANS THROUGH THE AMATEUR BASEBALL SPORTS PROGRAM WHICH WAS SO POPULAR DURING THE DAYS OF MY YOUTH.

MY NEXT CONTACT CAME AS A YOUNG SEAMAN WHILE SHIPPING TO THE ORIENT DURING THE MID-TWENTIES AND AGAIN IN 1940 AND 1941.

MY FIRST KNOWLEDGE THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG BOTH THROUGH OBSERVATION AND THE PRESS WAS THE ECONOMIC BLOCKADE - SCRAP METAL AND FUEL OIL - THAT OCCURRED ABOUT 1938. SUBSEQUENT BOOKS SUCH AS THE FINAL SECRETS OF PEARL HARBOR, WEDEMEYER REPORTS, AMERICA'S CONCENTRATION CAMPS, NISEI, THE BAMBOO PEOPLE, NUMEROUS NEWS AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES PLUS THE MOTION PICTURE TORA - TORA - TORA REAFFIRMED AND IMPROVED MY KNOWLEDGE OF A DASTARDLY PERIOD IN OUR HISTORY.

MY SECOND KNOWLEDGE THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG OCCURRED ABOUT NOVEMBER 1ST IN 1941 - FIVE WEEKS BEFORE PEARL HARBOR - WHEN AS A YOUNG CHIEF OFFICER OF ONE OF THE ORIENTAL FREIGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN MAIL LINE, WE WERE ORDERED OUT OF THE DOCK

AT CEBU, PHILIPPINES BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT AN AIR ATTACK WAS IMMINENT FROM JAPAN.

ONE WEEK LATER WHILE DEPARTING THE PORT OF LEGASPI WE HEADED SOUTHEAST THROUGH TORRES STRAIT, AUSTRALIA IN TOTAL BLACKOUT UNDER WAR TIME CONDITIONS 2,000 MILES OUT OF OUR WAY AND HAD TO PUT INTO PEARL HARBOR FOR FUEL OIL IN ORDER TO CARRY ON TO LOS ANGELES WHERE WE ARRIVED JUST ONE DAY BEFORE THE SO-CALLED "SNEAK ATTACK".

TO REVIEW JUST A LITTLE. THE ECONOMIC BLOCKADE WAS INTENDED TO PREVENT JAPAN FROM BEING THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE IN THE ORIENT.

EUROPE WAS ALREADY AT WAR AND WE WERE ISOLATIONIST AND DEFINITELY DETERMINED NOT TO GET INVOLVED OVERSEAS.

SOME OF YOU PEOPLE PRESENT WILL RECALL THAT WHEN PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT RAN FOR THE UNPRECEDENTED THIRD TERM IN 1940 HE SAID THAT "NONE OF OUR BOYS WILL FIGHT ON FORIEGN SOIL."

THEREFORE, PEARL HARBOR, DESPITE THE FACT THAT IT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED, WAS THE CATALYST THAT GALVANIZED THIS COUNTRY INTO ACTION IN ORDER TO SAVE ENGLAND.

THE SAD THING IS THAT A STRONG CHARISMATIC PRESIDENT-LEADER OF MEN- COULD JUST AS WELL HAVE PROTECTED THE 120,000

JAPANESE-AMERICANS FROM THE INDIGNITY OF INCARCERATION.

ONCE WE WERE AT WAR - WHATEVER THE REASON - PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT SHOULD HAVE SET THE EXAMPLE- RATHER THAN CREATE AN ALL TIME PRECEDENT IN CASTIGATING A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE.

DESPITE SUCH ODDS - SUCH DISGRACE AND EMBARRASSMENT - THESE WERE THE MEN THAT CREATED THE FAMED 442ND BATTALION, THE HIGHEST DECORATED FORCE IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

MANY OF THESE YOUNG MEN DID NOT RETURN WHILE OTHERS CAME HOME BADLY INJURED.

WHEN ONE CONSIDERS A BATTLE FIELD SACRIFICE PLUS THE RIGORS OF CAMP LIFE OR CONCENTRATION, THEN THE GOVERNMENT, IN ORDER NEVER TO MAKE THIS MISTAKE A SECOND TIME SHOULD ADEQUATELY REDRESS THE VICTIMS FOR THEIR PAIN AND SUFFERING.

SOME OF YOU ARE AWARE THAT I HAVE ADDRESSED THIS SUBJECT IN THE PAST THROUGH OUR LOCAL PRESS AND PACIFIC CITIZEN.

IF TIME PERMITS I WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS THE FACTORS INVOLVED THAT COULD HAVE PREVENTED PEARL HARBOR AS REPORTED IN THE DAILY PRESS AND SUBSEQUENTLY BACKED BY SOME OF THE BOOKS PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED.

BRIEFLY THEY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. THE JAPANESE CODE WAS OBTAINED OR BROKEN IN JANUARY 1941 ELEVEN MONTHS BEFORE PEARL HARBOR.

2. THE JAPANESE FLEET WAS KNOWN TO BE AT SEA, BOUND EASTWARD, DAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE ATTACK.

3. ADMIRAL NOMURA AND AMBASSADOR KURUSO ARRIVED IN WASHINGTON, D.C. THREE DAYS BEFORE THE EVENT CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF AVOIDING WAR AT ALL COSTS.

4. THEY WERE PREVENTED FROM SEEKING AN AUDIENCE WITH CABINET MEMBERS, STIMSON AND HULL, LET ALONE THE PRESIDENT. IF MY MEMORY SERVES ME CORRECTLY THEY WERE ALSO PREVENTED FROM SEEING GENERAL OF THE ARMIES, MARSHALL.

5. HAD THE INITIAL SURPRIZE ATTACK BEEN FOLLOWED UP BY A STRONG LANDING FORCE, SUCH ACTION MAY HAVE EXTENDED THE ASIATIC WAR BY ANOTHER YEAR OR MORE.

6. AFTER THE ATTACK, JAPANESE ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET, YAMAMOTO WHO HAD STUDIED BOTH AT HARVARD AND CAMBRIDGE, STATED, "I AM AFRAID THAT WE HAVE AWAKENED A SLEEPING GIANT."

7. WEDEMEYER REPORTS IS QUOTED TO THE EFFECT THAT ALL

DURING THE WAR IN EUROPE, AFTER THE INITIAL SET BACK IN 1942, JAPAN WAS BEING DEFEATED WITH ONLY 15 PERCENT OF OUR MANPOWER AND EQUIPMENT.

8. WHICH IS ALL THE MORE REASON THAT THERE WAS NO NEED TO DROP THE ATOMIC BOMB IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT IT WAS KNOWN BY OUR GOVERNMENT THAT JAPAN WAS ACTUALLY SUING FOR PEACE IN JANUARY OR MARCH OF 1945.

9. A NAVAL BLOCKADE OF THE JAPANESE HOMELAND COULD HAVE PREVENTED THE FINAL HOLOCAUST BY WHICH AMERICA WILL BE JUDGED FOR CENTURIES TO COME.

10. AND FINALLY BACK TO OUR OWN REDRESS. IS IT ASKING TOO MUCH TO ADEQUATELY COMPENSATE A DISPOSSESSED PEOPLE IN THE SAME MANNER WHICH GERMANY HAS MADE RESTITUTION FOR THE ABOLITION OF SIX MILLION.

GUNNAR OLSBORG

CAPTAIN OLSBORG IS A LONG TIME SEAFARER, OCEAN MASTER/MARINER, PUGET SOUND PILOT AND MEMBER JAACL. IN ADDITION TO TREMENDOUS INTEREST IN WORLD WAR II DURING THE PAST 40 YEARS, OLSBORG HAS ALSO ATTENDED A NIGHT CLASS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON ON JAPANESE-AMERICAN RELATIONS CONDUCTED BY DR. JAMES MORISHIMA.

ADDENDUM

IN THE FIELD OF MODERN COMMUNICATIONS, PEARL HARBOR MAY HAVE ALSO CREATED A PRECEDENT WHEN AN UNCODED LAND WIRE FROM WASHINGTON, D.C. THROUGH WESTERN UNION ARRIVED IN HAWAII TWO HOURS AFTER THE EVENT.

THE STRANGE THING IS THAT ONLY THE JAPANESE-AMERICAN PEOPLE ON THE PACIFIC COAST WERE AFFECTED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER 9069.

THOSE OF SIMILAR BIRTH LIVING IN HAWAII WERE NOT AFFECTED BECAUSE TO HAVE DONE SO WOULD HAVE INTERFERRED WITH THE WAR EFFORT. THESE WERE THE SAME PEOPLE WORKING ON THE DOCK AND LOADING SHIPS. DESPITE THIS NOT ONE ALLIED VESSEL SUFFERED SABOTAGE.