

## IMPERIAL RESCRIPT

WE, by grace of heaven, Emperor of Japan, seated on the Throne of the line unbroken for ages eternal, enjoin upon ye, Our loyal and brave subjects:

We hereby declare war on the United States of America and the British Empire. The men and officers of Our Army and Navy shall do their utmost in prosecuting the war, Our public servants of various departments shall perform faithfully and diligently their appointed tasks, and all other subjects of Ours shall pursue their respective duties; the entire nation with a united will shall mobilize their total strength so that nothing will miscarry in the attainment of our war aims.

To insure the stability of East Asia and to contribute to world peace is the far-sighted policy which was formulated by Our Great Illustrious Imperial Grandsire and Our Great Imperial Sire succeeding Him, and which We lay constantly to heart. To cultivate friendship among nations and to enjoy prosperity in common with all nations has always been the guiding principle of Our Empire's foreign policy. It has been truly unavoidable and far from Our wishes that Our empire has now been brought to cross swords with America and Britain. More than four years have passed since the government of the Chinese Republic, failing to comprehend the true intentions of Our Empire, and recklessly courting trouble, disturbed the peace of East Asia and compelled Our Empire to take up arms. Although there has been re-established the National Government of China, with which Japan has effected neighborly intercourse and cooperation, the regime which has survived at Chungking, relying upon American and British protection, still continues its fractricidal opposition. Eager for the realization of their inordinate ambition to dominate the Orient, both America and Britain, giving support to the remaining [Chungking] regime, have, under the false name of peace, aggravated the disturbances in East Asia. Moreover, these two Powers, inducing other countries to follow suit, increased military preparations on all sides of Our Empire to challenge us. They have obstructed by every means our peaceful commerce, and finally resorted to a direct severance of economic relations, menacing gravely the existence of Our Empire.

Patiently have We waited and long have We endured, in the hope that Our Government might retrieve the situation in peace. But our adversaries, showing not the least spirit of conciliation, have unduly delayed a settlement; and in the meantime, they have intensified the economic and military pressure to compel thereby Our Empire to submission. This trend of affairs would, if left unchecked, not only nullify Our Empire's efforts of many years for the sake of the stabilization of East Asia, but also endanger the very existence of Our

nation. The situation being such as it is, Our Empire for its existence and self-defence has not other recourse but to appeal to arms and to crush every obstacle in its path.

The hallowed spirits of Our Imperial Ancestors guarding Us from above, We rely upon the loyalty and courage of Our subjects in Our confident expectation that the task bequeathed by Our Forefathers will be carried forward, and that the sources of evil will be speedily eradicated and an enduring peace immutably established in East Asia, preserving thereby the glory of Our Empire.

The 8th day of the 12th month of the 16th year of Showa.

HIROHITO

(Imperial Sign Manual. Imperial Seal)

December 8th, Showa 16, [1941]

Hideki TOJO, Prime Minister, and Concurrently Minister of Home Affairs and War Minister

Kunihiko HASHIDA, Minister of Education

Teiichi SUZUKI, Minister without Portfolio

Hiroya INO, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry and Concurrently Minister of Overseas Affairs

Chikahiko KOIZUMI, Minister of Welfare

Michiyo IWAMURA, Minister of Justice

Shigetaro SHIMADA, Minister of the Navy

Shigenori TOGO, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ken TERASHIMA, Minister of Communications

Okinori KAYA, Minister of Finance

Nobusuke KISHI, Minister of Commerce and Industry

Yoshiaki HATTA, Minister of Railways.