

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Blackwell, Morton: Files
Folder Title: [Pearl Harbor Commemorative Society]
Box: 45

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 8, 1983

MEMORANDUM TO: FAITH WHITTLESEY
THROUGH: Jack Courtemanche
FROM: Morton C. Blackwell
SUBJECT: Pearl Harbor Commemorative Society

Attached is a letter I have drafted for your signature in response to the December 1st letter from Norman Bennett.

It is interesting to note that the Pearl Harbor Commemorative Society is shown as a Division of something called the Armed Forces Distributing Corporation. Sounds to me like a commercial operation.

MCB:jet

1 Attachment a/s

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 8, 1983

Dear Mr. Bennett:

Thank you very much for your letter of December 1, regarding the establishment of the first or second Sunday in December as a national commemorative day.

While there is a considerable amount of news coverage and commentary each year about Pearl Harbor on or around December 7th, the suggestion has been made repeatedly that there be a day specially designated in commemoration of December 7th, 1941.

As you may know, the procedure by which days are set aside is well established. The practice is that the House and the Senate pass a bill authorizing and requesting the President to declare a specific day be set aside for a specific purpose.

Because that is the way special days, weeks, etc., are set aside, I strongly suggest that your proper course of action is to get appropriate legislation introduced in both Houses.

Your idea obviously has merit, and I believe you should have no difficulty in finding Congressional support.

Sincerely,

Faith Ryan Whittlesey,
Assistant to the President
for Public Liaison

Mr. Norman Bennett,
Director
PEARL HARBOR COMMEMORATIVE SOCIETY
U.S.M.M. Building
5055 Nicholson Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

PEARL HARBOR COMMEMORATIVE SOCIETY
DIV. OF
ARMED FORCES DISTRIBUTING CORPORATION

U.S. Merchandise Mart Building
Wash. D.C. Area P.O. Box 2334, 20852

MS. FAITH RYAN WHITTLESEY
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20500

mt.

DEC 6 - 1983

DECEMBER 1, 1983
CERTIFIED NO. 150002

DEAR MS. WHITTLESEY:

THIS IS A LAST DITCH EFFORT TO BRING THIS MATTER TO YOUR ATTENTION BECAUSE IT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF OUR PRESIDENT. EFFORTS EARLIER THIS YEAR PRIOR TO YOUR APPOINTMENT WERE UNSUCCESSFUL.

PRESIDENT REAGAN AS WELL AS MEDIA EXPERTS GEORGE WILL AND HUGH SIDNEY HAVE MADE FREQUENT REFERRALS TO PEARL HARBOR IN CHARACTERIZING RECENT TRAGIC EVENTS OF CONSEQUENCE TO OUR COUNTRY. HOWEVER, THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PEARL HARBOR ATTACK IS UNKNOWN TO YOUNGER GENERATIONS.

WE ARE CONTINUING THE RANK AND FILE VETERAN-SUPPORTED EFFORT TO ESTABLISH THE FIRST OR SECOND SUNDAY IN DECEMBER AS A NATIONAL COMMEMORATIVE DAY THAT AMERICANS SHOULD PAUSE AND REMEMBER THAT THE ONLY DETERRENT TO ATTACK IS A STRONG AND VIGILENT DEFENSE.

MOST HAVE VIRTUALLY IGNORED THE MOST COMPELLING REASON TO JUSTIFY A STRONG DETERRENT DEFENSE, WHILE JAPAN COMMEMORATES THE TRAGEDY OF HIROSHIMA WITH ANNUAL SIGNIFICANT NATIONAL AND WORLD-WIDE ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS DAILY FILM EXHIBITS FOR THE PUBLIC.

PEARL HARBOR IS A SYMBOL OF THE NECESSITY FOR PERPETUAL PREPAREDNESS THAT MOST OF OUR YOUNGER GENERATIONS HAVE FORGOTTEN.

THIS DAY OF COMMEMORATION CAN BE ENSHRINED IN AMERICAN HISTORY BY PRESIDENT REAGAN TOGETHER WITH HIS EFFORTS TO PROVIDE A STRONG AND EFFECTIVE DETERRENT DEFENSE TO SAFEGUARD DEMOCRACY.

REPLY REGIONAL OFFICE
U.S.M.M. BUILDING
5055 NICHOLSON LANE
ROCKVILLE, MD 20852
(301) 881-3050

SINCERELY YOURS,
Norman Bennett
NORMAN BENNETT, DIRECTOR
PEARL HARBOR COMMEMORATIVE SOCIETY