



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

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VFW Post 8555 Newsletter/Calendar

'A Date Which Will Live in Infamy'

President [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) addressed a joint session of the U.S. Congress on December 8, the day after the crushing attack on Pearl Harbor.



Why Japan Attacked Pearl Harbor

- The Japanese plan to attack Pearl Harbor was devised by [Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto](#), a former student at Harvard University who had served as Japan's naval attaché in Washington. Yamamoto knew that the United States had far greater resources than Japan, and that his country could not win a protracted war. As Steve Twomey details in his 2016 book *Countdown to Pearl Harbor: The Twelve Days to the Attack*, Yamamoto believed that Japan's only chance for success was to stage a surprise assault that would knock the U.S. fleet out of action for a year or more.
- Japanese forces [trained for about a year](#) to prepare for the attack. They added wooden fins to their aerial torpedoes and made other modifications, so that they could work on short runs at the 45-foot average depth of Pearl Harbor.
- The Japanese Foreign Ministry wanted to present the United States with a declaration of war prior to the attack, so that they wouldn't violate international law. But they were blocked by the Japanese military, which didn't want to jeopardize the operation.
- The Japanese attack force—which included [six aircraft carriers and 420 planes](#)—sailed from Hitokappu Bay in the [Kurile Islands](#), on a 3,500 mile voyage to a staging area 230 miles off the Hawaiian island of Oahu. According to Twomey, the Japanese sailed without radar or reconnaissance planes overhead, in an effort to avoid detection.



<https://Pearl Harbor: Photos and Facts from the Infamous WWII Attack | HISTORY>



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VFW Post 8555 Spotlight



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40th anniversary of Beirut bombing that killed 241 US troops comes amid fears of another war in Lebanon

By J. P. Lawrence Stars and Stripes 23 October 2023

Monday marked the 40th anniversary of a suicide bombing on a barracks at the Beirut airport that killed 241 U.S. troops in what was the deadliest day for the Marine Corps since the battle of Iwo Jima in 1945.

The bombing, which killed 220 Marines, 18 sailors and three soldiers, took place during a civil war in Lebanon that killed tens of thousands and left almost a million people displaced.

"In a matter of seconds, a cowardly act of terrorism robbed these American servicemen of their bright futures," U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Dorothy Shea said Monday at a memorial in Beirut.

Some 58 French troops and six civilians died in a separate suicide bombing a few minutes afterward.

Monday's memorial was held amid fears of a new war in Lebanon. Clashes between Israeli forces and Hezbollah in southern Lebanon have increased in recent weeks, in advance of a looming ground offensive by Israel into Gaza. Unrest in the Middle East after Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, leading to an Israeli aerial bombardment campaign in Gaza, has raised concerns of a regional war between Israel and militant groups tied to Iran, including Hezbollah. Shea addressed those fears in her speech Monday remembering the Beirut barracks bombing, which she said was conducted with Iran's support.

"Today, we reject, and the Lebanese people reject, the threats of some to drag Lebanon into a new war," Shea said. The service members killed during the Beirut barracks bombing attack 40 years ago were part of an international peacekeeping force. Troops from the U.S., the United Kingdom, France and Italy arrived at the invitation of the Lebanese government in 1982. The move came after Israel invaded southern Lebanon to attack the Palestine Liberation Organization, and during the Lebanese civil war.

American forces gained enemies in the region after the U.S. Navy shelled anti-government militias in support of the Lebanese government, an official Marine Corps history of the event published in 2013 said.

On Oct. 23, 1983, a suicide bomber drove a truck carrying 12,000 pounds of explosives into the U.S. military barracks at the Beirut airport. The building collapsed into rubble almost instantly.



Imad Mughniyeh, a Hezbollah terrorist suspected of involvement in planning the attack, was reportedly killed in 2008 in Damascus, Syria, when his vehicle exploded from a car bomb.

https://www.stripes.com/theaters/middle_east/2023-10-23/beirut-bombing-anniversary-lebanon-11802324.html



The devastation left survivors in shock, said U.S. Marines who were evacuated to medical hospitals after the attack, in interviews with Stars and Stripes in 1983.

"The first thing I remember was there was a giant concrete slab looming over me, six inches away. It was like a dream, like a coffin. I didn't know what happened," said Renard Manley, a lance corporal at the time who was asleep on the fourth floor of the headquarters building.

The U.S. withdrew troops from Lebanon in 1984. After 18 months in the country, 238 Marines had died and 151 had been wounded, the Marine Corps' official history of the conflict said.



NOVEMBER 2023

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|-----|-------------------|-----|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| | | | 1 Food Distribution | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 Marine Corps Birthday | 11 Veterans' Day VPR Veterans Day |
| 12 | 13 VFW Meeting | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 Thanksgiving | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |

DECEMBER 2023

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|-----|---------------------|-----|------------------------|------------------------------|-----|-----|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 Food Distribution | 7 VPR Pearl Harbor Day | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 VFW Meeting | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 Christmas Day | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | | | |