

The Honorable John Dingell, Jr., of Michigan

The Day after Pearl Harbor

Memories of the aftermath of Pearl Harbor.

Interview recorded February 3, 2012

But on December the 8th, which was the day after, it was the Monday after the Sunday on which the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor—the President came up here and made that famous "Day of Infamy" speech. And I had the responsibility—they'd give me these kinds of tours because I was a rather senior Page—the responsibility of tending to a very conservative radio commentator by the name of Fulton Lewis, Jr. And he was, he was permitted to tape the recording of the President's speech. He wasn't permitted to tape the proceedings of the Congress afterwards. And so, but I thought it was, would be useful to history if he was able to tape the proceedings of the Congress. They shut off all of the, the television, not television, but the movie cameras that they had up there recording this. And you'll still hear it played from time to time. There was a woman by the name of Jeannette Rankin from Montana. She voted against World War I, and got defeated. And then she came back here, and she voted against World War II, and got defeated. There's still a statue of her over in the Capitol, and there's a picture. I think her . . . they wouldn't let her speak, and she was just outraged. And they finally let her speak when we declared war on Germany. Hitler . . . Churchill was worried sick about this. Hitler declared war on us a couple days later, and then the United States responded. And the upshot of the whole business was that they let her speak then. And so she made her speech.