

President franklin d.  
delano's address to  
the americans on  
pearl harbor attack  
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The Pearl Harbor address made by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt is considered as one of the most famous speeches of all time. Superbly written matched by effective delivery, the speech achieved its numerous purposes—to inform the nation of the predicament of the country and at the same time, to rouse and rally the people to defend democracy itself. The immortality of this speech carved in the history of mankind employed several techniques worthy of further analysis. These attributes include the credibility of the speaker, the purpose of the speech, and all the various appeals that the speaker made throughout the speech. On the other hand, this discussion will also include fallacies, if any, which may have lessened the value of the speech.

The speech can be divided into two parts, with the President assuming different roles. The first part saw the President as a reliable informer, relating to the entire nation as well as the world on what had happened on that fateful day of December 07, 1941. He conveyed that the country was even "...at peace" with the Japanese Empire, working on maintaining peace in the Pacific rim. In fact, even when bombings started in Oahu, the ambassador's reply to an American inquiry presented "no threat or hint of war or of armed attack." And since Hawaii is close to Japan, the President explicitly stated that the attack was premeditated and hidden under the cloak of deception. He then enumerated all the other places that were victimized by this gross betrayal of trust. On the second part of the speech, he assumed the role of an able leader. He said that defense resources had been mobilized, and assured the people that they will get "through to

absolute victory," not by merely defending the country but by ensuring that the treacherous attack " shall never again endanger us."

The biggest factor influencing the effectiveness of the speech is the inherent trust vested on President Roosevelt by his audience. On 1940, President Roosevelt was inaugurated for an unprecedented third term as the head of the most powerful nation in the world. As such, he commanded an audience in the American people as well as all the free citizens of the world when the Pearl Harbor attack occurred. With this factor, the people had known that he was the most reliable source to receive formal information from, and the very person whose decision would save them. However, President Roosevelt is not merely a politician bereft of direct knowledge of warfare. Illuminating the President's reliability is his service as the Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1920 under President Woodrow Wilson, which had made him more capable in handling and dealing with the Pearl Harbor situation as he had experienced military service in the United States. With an established credibility, the people found it easier to trust him with their very lives.

Short the speech may be, the President managed to employ several techniques to magnify his appeal to the American people. First, he presented enough detail to convey to the United States of America and whole world the situation brought by the Pearl Harbor attack, making his opinion in congruence with that of the Congress and the people. By enumerating both American and British colonies in the Pacific area that were attacked, the President was implying that it was tantamount to attacking the mainland as well. It should be noted that Great Britain is a staunch ally of the United States, and since Malaya and Hong Kong were <https://assignbuster.com/president-franklin-d-delanos-address-to-the-americans-on-pearl-harbor-attack-essay-sample/>

British colonies, the President was also assuming responsibility for their safety. In a way, the President was telling the invaded peoples of the world that it would provide help in all fronts of the war.

The speech likewise contained several examples of pathos. Pathos is referred to as an attribute or quality that induces sadness or pity. Pathos, in rhetoric, is the emotion of a speaker or writer, which he or she hopes to prevail upon the audience. In the speech of President Franklin Roosevelt, pathos was considered as the most recurring appeal. In the beginning of the speech, the former president said, "Yesterday, December 7th, 1941 - a date which will live in infamy - the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan." His statement that this day will be forever remembered by every citizen of the United States of America had definitely affected and appealed to the emotions of the people. Another effective appeal to pathos was the former president's statement, "The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. I regret to tell you that very many American lives have been lost." This statement had effectively appealed to pathos due to the mention of death, which can definitely affect anybody. A lot of people were greatly affected by the Pearl Harbor attack. It touched many emotions of people even those who are not Americans. President Roosevelt had mentioned in the middle of his speech that the Japanese Empire had also attacked other countries including the Malaya, Hong Kong, Guam, the Philippine Islands, Wake Island, and Midway Island. Again, it was an appeal that touched the emotions of people specifically those with families or friends who lived in those countries.

Apart from making use of pathos, President Franklin Roosevelt had also incorporate ethos. Ethos is referred to as the characteristic spirit of a community or culture that is represented in aspirations and attitudes. Contrary to pathos, logos is the character or emotions of a speaker or writer, which is expressed in an attempt to convince or persuade an audience. President Franklin Roosevelt had mentioned in speech that, " as commander in chief of the army and navy, I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense." This statement depicts that he is a credible person to be able to say such being the commander in chief. President Franklin Roosevelt had the credibility to make all the decisions, which he desires to make. The statement is an effective appeal to ethos due to the fact that only President Roosevelt with his credibility could have made the decision to declare war between the United States of America and the Empire of Japan.

President Franklin Roosevelt had also utilized logos for the last appeal on his speech. Logos is referred to as a principle of reason and judgment. The former president had stated that many lives of Americans had been lost. He had mentioned in his speech, " It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago." Such statement made by the former president is an example of an effective use of logos being very logical.

In addition, President Franklin Roosevelt had also referred to God's help in his speech. In his statement, "...so help us God..." the audience is able refer and recall the commanding phrase " In God We Trust," which is printed on the national currency in order to remind all Americans that God moves around and pervades all levels of official survival in the entire nation. The <https://assignbuster.com/president-franklin-d-delanos-address-to-the-americans-on-pearl-harbor-attack-essay-sample/>

former president had discerned that for most Americans, God has been a source of identifying and confirming their participation or involvement in the nation.

On another note, as much as President Franklin Roosevelt had made the people aware of the situation, through delivering his speech, he was also imputing fear to the Japanese Empire by indicating in his speech that the latter would suffer the consequences of putting the United States of America in danger. The former president had desired his people to know that the country would obtain triumph through confidence as well as determination. His words had implied righteous resentment. President Franklin Roosevelt had managed to communicate through keeping his voice in a calm tone but with confidence in order for the audiences and other Americans all over the world not to panic. The former president had made use of words in order to stimulate the emotions of his audiences that made the entire nation want to fight back. At the same time, President Franklin Roosevelt did not fail to use the right words to give his people hope.

Ultimately, the speech of President Franklin Roosevelt, which he presented to the people of the United States of America, had been well-written, credible, and reasonable. The former president had utilized a combination of logic and emotion in his speech to persuade the people that declaring war with the Empire of Japan was the right thing to do. He had known most of his audiences feared for their lives. As such, he had let them know that all measures would be ready for the defense of the whole nation. He had established a successful argument for declaring war through all the various appeals he made in his speech. The former president had made a number of <https://assignbuster.com/president-franklin-d-delanos-address-to-the-americans-on-pearl-harbor-attack-essay-sample/>

statements, which could have only been said by someone who had the knowledge of the current situation. President Franklin Roosevelt had proven to the people that he did know what he was talking about and that everyone who had listened to him should believe him.

The speech had given sufficient amount and pertinent information with the purpose of letting people know what the current situation was. The speech did not give out exaggerated remarks or too much detail that may cause confusion to listeners. The speech had made the audiences aware of a declaration of war because the attack on Pearl Harbor had caused great damage; was deliberately done; and had put the nation into serious danger.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Pearl Harbor Address to the Nation was very successful and convincing in the way the facts and ideas were put together, written, and presented. The speech has been considered a success because the author had managed to declare war without infusing too much fear to the audiences and the entire nation. Although the thought of entering a war can put panic or fear in the thoughts of those who heard, the former president had assured everyone that every step would be taken in order to protect and defend the nation.

In the end, President Franklin Roosevelt did not commit any logical fallacies in the speech he gave out to the entire nation. The speech had strictly focused on the facts and events, which had taken place. As such, being without any logical fallacies, the speech of President Franklin Roosevelt has been credible and a successful argument.

**WORK CITED:**

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