Today in History:

On Dec. 7, 1941, the Imperial Japanese navy launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii as part of a pre-emptive strike by Japan. The United States was caught off guard and on the defensive for the next seven years.

In 1987, 43 people were killed after a gunman aboard a Pacific Southwest Airlines jetliner in California apparently opened fire on a fellow passenger, the pilots and himself, causing the plane to crash. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev was on a U.S. visit for the first time, arriving for a Washington summit with President Ronald Reagan.

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