

# A Day That Changed America

*December 1941: 31 Days That Changed America and Saved the World* is Craig Shirley's reconstruction of just that, based on media coverage from the time. It's a fascinating way to experience the look and the feel, the reactions and the emotion, the strategy, and the painful surprises of those 31 days. Shirley, author of two books on the Reagan years, including *Rendezvous with Destiny*, talks to National Review Online's Kathryn Jean Lopez about his book and that month.

KATHRYN JEAN LOPEZ: You write that the month of December 1941 was "surely one of the most important and decisive and nation-altering thirty-one days in the history of the American Republic." You even go on to name some days that "rank with December 7," but Sept. 11, 2001, isn't among them. Am I being way too short-sighted in wondering why? We were, after all, attacked . . .

CRAIG SHIRLEY: September 11 is certainly a landmark event but, to help put the reader in the moment, I only mentioned seminal days that occurred before Dec. 7, 1941. There are actually many similarities between the ways the country reacted to December 7 and September 11. They unified the country dramatically.

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