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The Japanese Version of the Black Chamber

(The story of the Naval Secret Chamber)

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The Birth of the Naval Secret Chamber

The Japan-China warfare, which started from the sparks of the Manchurian Incident, burst into flames at SHANGHAI in January 1932. "K" about this time was experiencing a most distressful time by having to attend uninteresting lectures from day to day as an upper-classman at the Naval Communications School in YOKOSUKA. Then, all of a sudden, he received orders to report to the Naval General Staff.

There were friends who said, "Hey, you're doing all right. I'll bet you'll be going to SHANGHAI. You'd better treat us if you win the Order of the Golden Kite," and there were others who ridiculed him, "Oh, he's one of those who doesn't study and has no possibility of improving his record, so he's being asked to withdraw from school, ostensibly for some good reason." At any rate, proud and with great expectations of having more fun than falling asleep in lecture halls, he reported to the red brick building, weatherbeaten by 60 years of exposure to wind and rain, in KASUMIGASERI.

It was during the Shanghai Incident, so there was a great bustle and rushing up and down the corridors. When he fearfully stood before the adjutant of the Naval General Staff, he was greeted bluntly, "Oh, Lt (Senior Grade) "K". You are to report to Section 4, Special Chamber."

Thinking "what a fearful and forbidding place this is," he knocked on the door of the Special Chamber of Section 4 and was abruptly blasted by Captain "N," the Chief of the Special Chamber, "As you are now about to work here, you must pledge that you will never disclose the nature of the work done here, to your parents or brothers and sisters or even to those working within the Navy General Staff who have no direct connections with the work you are doing."

"K" became completely dispirited at the sternness of the statement.

This was the true nature of the Naval Secret Chamber that finally sprang up about this time, after having a bitter time because of its past failure in that its designs were seen through by the UNITED STATES at the Washington Conference. It was a very small establishment, consisting of Capt "N", three Lt (Senior Grade), one clerk, and three typists. What meager personnel in comparison to the 40th Secret Chamber of the British Navy or YARDLEY's Black Chamber! It was truly an easy-going job consisting of deciphering and reading US telegraphic messages, intercepted at the Tachibana Kura Receiving Station (on the banks of the TAMA River), which were brought in twice a day, in the morning and at night. Among the telegrams intercepted, the simple cipher of the American Navy was already decipherable about this time, but research on the code of the US State Department had just begun.

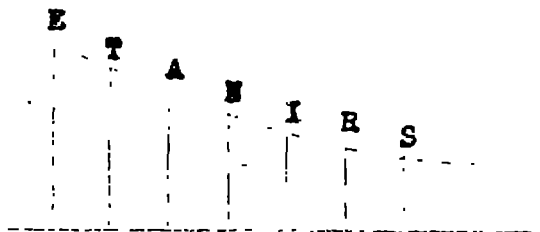
Room 40
or 40 O.B.

This was written by a former
member of the Japanese
Black Chamber and submitted
by him in May 1951 for permission
to publish. Translation made in F. K. C.

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The American simple cipher is a code in which the original wording is replaced by other letters so that at first glance it is difficult to tell whether the message is in English or in another foreign language. The US Navy used a rotation system in which a different code was adopted daily on an eleven day cycle.

According to methods of code deciphering, this system is the easiest and the simplest to decipher. As a general rule, the frequency with which the letters of the English alphabet appear is ETOANIRS.....et cetera. To chart this, it would appear as:



(The O is given in the alphabet list in the text but is omitted in the chart in the original document.)

Take one code message and, upon examining the frequency of certain code keys, if the order of appearance is in the form of the above chart then it can be presumed that simple cipher has been used. Then letters ETOANIRS.... are applied to the keys in order of frequency and if part of an English word appears, the rest can easily be deciphered because of the characteristics of English words.

For example, from the peculiarities in the position of letters in words such as information, division, and agency, the first clue is found. Particularly if the telegram is military or diplomatic in nature, a clue is easily found because of the use of diplomatic or military terminology. When specific proper names, such as place names, personal names, or unit identifications appear, letters for the message aside from these principal words may be found easily. Even typists who have no technical knowledge can easily decipher messages if they become accustomed to the work. Even if the ciphering table is changed, one day is practically all that is necessary for deciphering.

State Department codes are based upon the Code Book and speaking from the viewpoint of the principles of deciphering, it is a type of substitution. There are two forms, the one volume system and the two volume system. The key and interpretation of codes in the one volume system is listed in alphabetical or i-ro-ha sequence. Thus from this one volume alone both making up of code messages and rendering interpretations can be accomplished. In the two volume system, volumes for receiving and sending messages are bound separately. Code keys and original texts are arranged in alphabetical order or in I-RO-HA sequence and the corresponding interpretations and code keys are aligned irregularly. By applying specially prescribed methods to this base code, a more complicated message can be constructed. This is the code system used by all nations for important communications.

The innumerable amount (endless combinations can be created from the number code: in order to increase the difficulty in deciphering) of alterable combinations in the prescribed methods makes this type one of the most difficult codes to decipher.

At about this time the UNITED STATES State Department was utilizing the one volume system. This was the easiest form to decipher. In deciphering this form of message, first of all, code keys of the telegram are arranged and a mutilation table made. Then based upon this table, a blank card in which code keys are set in alphabetical order is made. The combining of keys to the code was in the "consonant vowel (Y was included as a vowel) consonant, vowel, consonant" order or "consonant, vowel, consonant, consonant, vowel" order. Then on the created blank code the frequency of appearance of code keys in the intercepted message is marked. After doing this the word "HADED" appeared very frequently. Therefore it was discovered that it represented a period. Next in order of frequency were codes representing commas, and common words such as is, that, et cetera. It was quite difficult work but deciphered keys were continually marked on the blank cards.

Now and then there were times when a request to the Kempeitai would bring an interpreted manuscript and keys to the code message from a wastepaper basket of a US Diplomatic office. There were times when the US Ambassador sent a memorandum from the State Department to the Japanese Foreign Office. In such a case the first step in deciphering was grasped by comparing the memorandum with the State Department telegram intercepted immediately before. It was quite often the case that clues to a great number of keys were deciphered in this manner.

During the height of the Shanghai Incident, Commander in Chief General SHIRAKAWA (白川) once issued a statement. The American Consul General in SHANGHAI immediately sent a code telegram to the State Department. It was presumed that this was the English translation of the statement, and after working on it awhile, it was discovered that it was exactly so and we were rewarded by very fruitful results. In this way, by the time the Shanghai Incident came to a close, as much as 5,000 words were decipherable. Thus the general meaning of all State Department telegrams using this form of code was easily read. The total number of words capable of being created in a code message under the one volume system surpasses 100,000. Therefore it is truly a work of patience to work out the code in the grinding aforementioned manner.

It is even more true when deciphering difficult code messages, and the hardships confronted cannot be imagined and all concerned had to endure intense painstaking labor. If after painstaking efforts a clue to deciphering is within one's grasp, code keys flash across one's eyes whether he is awake or asleep. Even while lying in bed, confused ideas about the codes flash across one's mind until finally the cock's crow is heard. When an inspiration does pop up one may jump out of bed even in the middle of the night to get to work but the hint which one thought he had may again fade away like a dream. It is said that practically all men who work earnestly on this work suffer from nervous breakdowns.

"K" had thought that such a job was not worthwhile and came to the conclusion that there was nothing else for him to do but to go out somewhere and commit theft. Thus he came to eye the American Consular Office in KORE. However, this type of stealing is the most difficult of all classes of robbery. To steal alone is not good enough. It is important that the opponent not learn of any loss of documents. This is because if the loss is discovered, the code will be changed and all the past hardships will be in vain.

Stealing of Code Books

In the early part of 1933, a certain tailor commenced to go in and out of the American Consulate in KOBE. He was a canny person, and would perform various miscellaneous chores if asked to do so. First of all, he was mannerly and thorough, and he was very honest. He soon gained the trust of the consulate staff members and became an accepted regular consulate tradesman.

Eventually, the beautiful fragrance of spring flowed through the mountains and vales, and the season of warmth and beauty that entices drowsiness arrived.

On a certain Saturday in April, the Consul, in high spirits, went to view the cherry blossoms in full bloom at SAGA and ONURO, and thence spent the night in merry making at a GION geisha house. On this same night several burglars crept into the consulate, and the safe in the consul's office room was opened, and the entire code book was stolen. When the consul returned Monday morning, the safe was locked and found in proper order as before, and no tail-tale marks were left behind.

That business-like tailor was actually a cleverly disguised Japanese kempai. After winning over the consulate staff members and conducting an exhaustive and thorough search, he learned the whereabouts of the code book, and that the key was constantly in the Consul's possession and was never separated from him.

However, if a continual watch for an unguarded moment is kept, that opportunity is bound to come. One day a consulate staff member, who had been bribed by this tailor, was summoned by the consul to his office. Immediately upon entering the consul's office, the bribed consulate staff member noticed the safe key laid carelessly on a desk. Curbing his throbbing heart, he approached the consul's desk and nonchalantly placed his left hand over this key, and with bowed head listened to the consul's orders. When the bribed consulate staff member left the consul's office after completing the business at hand, in the palm of his left hand, which had been daubed with wax, was an exact imprint of the safe key. A duplicate key was made, and one day when the key was tried after the consul had returned home, it fitted exactly. All was in readiness, and this fact was immediately wired to the Tokyo Kempital. A person in charge of the safe cracking operation was dispatched from the secret chamber of the Naval General Staff, and when the consul was engaged in merry making, the much-awaited silent drama, the pilfering of the code book, was performed.

Immediately thereafter the Kobe Kempital organized a special team to undertake similar special assignments.

Members of this team became apprentices in safe manufacturing companies and thoroughly familiarized themselves with the construction and methods of opening safes. Others disguised themselves as merchants and conducted searches within the consulate or engaged in bribing the consulate staff members. There were photography technicians among them who immediately photographed the stolen code books without any loss of time. Some persons shadowed and exercised surveillance over consulate staff members, or engaged in communication and liaison work. Yet others were judo-men whose ominous assignment was to patrol and guard the consulate compounds and to start

a fight and temporarily knock out the unknowing consulate staff members should they by chance return to the consulate during an operation.

In such a manner, every team member was given a definite assignment, and exhaustive training was undergone.

The code book that was stolen on this night belonged to the State Department and had been compiled after many years of research after the Shanghai Incident, and was formally called the "Gray Card."

After that, this method was used whenever requested by the General Staff Headquarters and the Naval General Staff, and not only the code book of the American State Department, but the diplomatic code books of various other nations were obtained. Thus the difficult task of deciphering was greatly alleviated.

The Progress of American Codes

Around this time, the Special Chamber of the Fourth Section of the Naval General Staff was renamed the Eleventh Section, Fourth Department, and its facilities were substantially expanded to meet the increased need for research on the UNITED STATES, GREAT BRITAIN, and CHINA. On 7 Jul 37, the American Naval Attache in PEIPING wired an emergency message to the Chief of Naval Operations in WASHINGTON DC. This message was intercepted by the ONADA radio receiving station, and after decoding, it started "According to reliable information" and went on as follows: "At 1700 hours tonight, the Chinese army will attack the Japanese forces." This intelligence message was even presented in court as defense evidence at the International War Crimes Tribunal in TOKYO.

In the latter part of 1937, an American State Department courier came to KOBE to distribute a new code book. This was a double code system called the "Brown Code," and when it began to be used the following year, a code identical to the original was already in our secret chamber safe.

As the China Incident became more aggravated by the day, and Japanese-American relations became more tense, the American State Department, in 1938, began to use a difficult code called the "Strip Cipher." A part of this code was stolen and a photographic copy was even sent to "K." However, because the all important code key was missing, the method of use could not be learned. After a paper pattern had been made and intensive research conducted on this code, a proper noun "Major BARNET" appeared in one of the intercepted messages. A clue had been found, and the code was thence deciphered.

The following is a diagram of this code.

I	1	23	X	F	Z	A	H	Q	S	U	E	-----	Y	(26 letters)
II	5				5	C	Y	A	H	Z	E	-----	O	-----
III	7						7	R	Z	F	E	-----		-----
IV	11							11	S	O	H	-----		-----
V	25							25	F	A	H	Z	U	Y
VI	3	(Instructions) The various strips are slid into place so that for example the word "ENEMY" appears on a perpendicular. Thence the letters UZFGU, SHSZ, CAREH, become code words.												
XIV		The order of arranging the slides differs each day according to the code key.												

This code was quite simple to use, but because of the many code variants and variations, it could not be deciphered through conventional methods. Also, this code was extremely complicated in that it could be altered endlessly by changing the code key and the arrangement of the strip letters.

Although the American State Department code book could and was stolen in such a manner, a similar code which the American Navy commenced to use could not be obtained by such methods, and thus temporarily, no information could be intercepted from them. However, because they were also using another simple code called the "Simple Cipher," such important information was obtained from this source.

Spied on US Fleets

The outbreak of the first Shanghai Incident rapidly put a strain on Japanese-American relations. Deciding to put pressure on JAPAN, the United States Government assembled the Pacific Fleet, which at the time was on maneuvers in Hawaiian waters. The vessels of both the United States and British Far East Fleets hurriedly assembled near SHANGHAI. Thus silent pressure began to be applied on JAPAN.

The Naval General Staff, in a state of tension as dark clouds hovered over the PACIFIC, began to make plans in earnest for operations against the UNITED STATES. However, confronted with actual work, it realized that nothing was known at all about the United States Navy.

Of course, the number of ships by type, their speeds, armaments, et cetera could be learned from "Jane's Fighting Ships" or a statistical study of United States budgets for military purposes. What was unknown was the fighting skill of the United States fleet. Without knowing this, it was impossible to estimate the enemy situation. Admiral TOGO didactically warned when he disbanded his combined fleet after the end of the Russo-Japanese war that naval training should be based on the principle that a gun which never misses its target is the equal of a hundred guns which must fire a hundred shots before hitting their mark. Tangible strength and intangible strength, such as pointed out by Admiral TOGO, combined to make

actual fighting strength. Then what was the intangible strength of the United States Navy?

Japanese living in the UNITED STATES could no more supply information than trivially say, "American warships carry women dressed as men," or "Since these men in the Navy have volunteered in the service just to have a free round-the-world trip, they will take to their heels when a war breaks out." The naval attache in WASHINGTON, DC could learn nothing. The Naval General Staff began to get restless. It could not make plans without having the information.

Square-jawed, goggle-eyed TAGAMI (田 神), 35 or 36 years old and clad in a shabby suit, was aboard the CHICHIBU Maru which sailed from YOKOHAMA in September 1937. He had a young attendant, whose head, with ungreased hair, looked like that of a HOKAIBO (TH bogeyman).

In the ships passenger list Lt Comdr TAGAMI's position was given as inspector of the Naval Technical Department and his attendants as clerk at the inspector's office. They had been secretly ordered to learn the real power of the United States fleets by means of radio. TAGAMI's attendant was an expert radio man hand-picked for the job. Listening to the radio was not illegal in the UNITED STATES and anybody was free to do it. TAGAMI and his assistant were very eager for the job, since it was an unheard-of attempt to steal secrets of the UNITED STATES Navy by radio. They had exchanged cups of water with their families for the final parting, and left JAPAN with solemn and heroic feelings.

The two countrymen spent a half year, which it took them to become accustomed to American life, in WASHINGTON, DC, studying methods to intercept the United States Navy's communications. Then, they bought a high-power receiver on the pretext that it would be loaded on a NYK boat, but which instead, they installed in their car.

After finding out what the United States Navy's annual events were, they began an itinerary of the UNITED STATES. They roamed up and down the East and West coasts like nomads, visiting naval training bases.

Posing as convalescents they spent leisurely days at an apartment house in LONG BEACH within a stone's throw of a fleet anchorage. At another time they get jobs as caretakers at a wealthy family's country-house. While TAGAMI outwardly took it easy, going fishing or cutting grass, his clerk would lock himself up in his bedroom or a shed, listening intently to radio messages of a fleet in training. When the night came and the training was halted, TAGAMI would grapple with a mountain of radio messages, staying up all night absorbed in his work.

They learned that the United States and Japanese Navy used approximately the same type of fire control messages. For instance, a spotter plane reporting a shell which fell 500 meters short of the target, sent the message U (up) 5 in the United States Navy. It was S (short) 5 in JAPAN. With this piece of knowledge, they could determine the accuracy of fire by listening to the radio away from the scene of naval gunnery. They could compute the range by measuring by a stop watch the time elapsed between the firing signal from the ship and the report of the impact.

Thus, in slightly more than a year of vagabond life, they learned, the fighting skill of the United States Navy fairly well. What they learned was more than they had expected of the United States Navy.

It was doing far better than firing a hundred shots before hitting the target. The conceited self-pride of the Japanese in thinking that intensive seven-days-a-week training was its speciality was completely shattered.

They obtained quite a bit of information on the United States Navy, valuable for the operational planning of the Japanese Navy. Although the US Navy had about the same type of training as the Japanese Navy, it used three times as much fuel and five times as much ammunition for training as the latter. It certainly was the navy of a "have" country. Both navies had their own characteristics in gunnery, and there was little difference in accuracy of fire. The US Navy was far superior in communications and aviation, while the Japanese were slightly better in night fighting. Because of the difference in the training year, the American fighting power reached its maximum in June while ours did in December.

Returning to JAPAN in two years, TAGAMI sounded an alarm that the United States Navy was formidable. He admonished the Japanese Navy for its complacency.

Now that the fighting skill of the United States Navy was known, what kind of plans were being made? It was a top military secret and could not be known easily. The operational plans of the Japanese Navy, which were renewed every year, were first drafted at the First (Operations) Section of the Naval Chief of Staff, written out in "SUMI" by the section chief, and locked up in a safe after being approved. They were never typed or printed. It was not easy to take a look at the document. Anyone would find it difficult to steal it.

At the Naval Staff College at MEGURO, map maneuvers and war games were conducted day in and day out. Students were divided into two groups and were asked to make operational plans with all available data. These plans were examined by instructors, and the students who made the best plans were appointed commanders of two opposing fleets which were engaged in "map battles". These practices, repeated under all conceivable conditions, strangely enough, produced certain logical conclusions. These conclusions were responsible for the estimation that the United States Navy would first come up through the MARSHALLS and the CAROLINES in an attempt to retake the PHILIPPINES and, after cutting off the Japanese Mainland from regions of natural resources and waiting for our fighting strength to be exhausted, close in on the Mainland. This estimation proved to be exactly the same as the UNITED STATES' Operation Rainbow No 5, which was to be executed coinciding with the declaration of war, called for, as explained in "The Rising Sun of the PACIFIC," Captain (Navy) MORRISON's book published after the war.

Among the American literature used as research material was Rear Admiral FROST's "Oversea Campaigns" -- it was not known when this moth-eaten book had been obtained. Ideas contained in this book were almost identical with the plans employed by the United States Navy in the last war. That, of course, was something nobody knew until the war started. Our Navy wanted to find out whether its estimations were correct or not. There were two ways to do it.

The annual maneuvers of the United States Navy generally was a practice of part of its operational plans. The right person who studied the plans of such annual maneuvers could get an idea of the Navy's operational plans.

The Navy has many schools, and tactics and strategy are taught at these schools almost without exception. The instructors, all Naval Staff College graduates, taking a pride in proving the vastness of their knowledge in the manuals of tactics and strategy they wrote, unconsciously added military secrets not necessary for the books. If the Japanese Navy got these books, it could obtain a general idea of the tactics and strategy of the US Navy.

Every time the United States fleets were on maneuvers, the Japanese invariably sent a warship to the maneuver areas or had an oil-tanker bound for or returning from the west coast of the UNITED STATES, equipped with a receiving set, go through the area for the purpose of picking up radio messages containing information regarding the plans and execution of maneuvers.

Lt Comdr "Y" received a letter about 1934 which said, "I am a United States Navy Lt (Senior Grade) on the reserve list and available for your service." "Y" met the sender of the letter and learned that he was a Lt (Senior Grade) placed on the reserve list because of woman trouble and that his wife had filed suit for a divorce. An American husband is a complete loser in a divorce suit filed by his wife, and he must pay high alimony. The Lt (Senior Grade) had approached "Y" when he found himself in financial embarrassment. He told "Y" that the son of a rear admiral holding an important position in the Operations Department was studying to enter the Naval Staff School, using secret documents as study materials; that the admiral's son was a close friend of his, from whom he could borrow books, that he would bring a book to "Y" if he could copy it in one night.

Agreement for remuneration was promptly made, and the first book the captain brought was an aviation tactics manual used at the Aviation Cadet school at PENSACOLA. The fact that the book mentioned place names such as the MARSHALS, the MARIANAS and GUAM, which were not needed for explanation of the use of aircraft alone, made the book worthwhile for our research. "Y" was elated.

The retired Lt (Senior Grade)'s subsequent hauls included copies of the Annual Report of Gunnery and the Annual Report of Torpedoes. Thus, "Y"'s work combined with TAGAMI's to enable the Japanese to grasp the fighting skill of the US Navy correctly.

One day "Y" was waiting in his car parked on a corner designated in his promise with the Lt for a street contact, but the Lt, an always punctual man, failed to appear. He was loitering on the sidewalk looking into show window, when he felt the shadow of a man behind him. He had a feeling that he was being shadowed. Startled, he jumped into his car and returned to his quarters. Through his agent he learned that the Lt had been arrested.

The retired Lt, who lived in a hut in a suburb with his children, was said to have been drowning the sting of his conscience in liquor. This attracted attention to his wasteful spending of money and resulted in his arrest. "Y" flew to NEW YORK with his photographic negatives and took passage on a Japanese freighter to beat a hasty retreat to JAPAN.

During the autumn of 1938, the US Pacific Fleet held large scale maneuvers in Hawaiian waters. About this time, the wireless intelligence system of our Navy was highly developed. The wireless direction-finding stations were not only established within JAPAN but

they were constructed throughout the South Sea islands. A wireless network system was extended throughout the entire Pacific Ocean area. After conducting studies on the results of the annual grand maneuvers of our Navy and the large-scale maneuvers of the US Navy, it was possible to obtain fairly accurate estimates of enemy conditions by the use of the wireless direction-finding apparatus and by learning the enemy's communication condition even though the enemy codes could not be read. It was learned that this was very advantageous when making an estimate of battle plans.

The OWADA Mura Signal Unit was stationed in a large white-washed building hidden in the camphor forest of OWADA Mura in a section of MUSASEINO (the Kanto Plain). This became the nerve-center of a large monitoring network. Till the end of the war the OWADA intelligence was regarded as a highly invaluable signal intelligence service and was the parent station. During the first phase of the Shanghai Incident, "K" was employed as a news decoder, and at that time he was a recognized veteran decoder. Since 1937, "K" had held the position of Station Director. He entertained the idea that this would be the best opportunity to test the efficiency of the naval intelligence system and immediately began preparations for the test. The grand maneuvers of the US Pacific Fleet was therefore used as the grand maneuvers of our Naval Intelligence Office.

Radio monitors were placed on oil tankers sailing for LOS ANGELES and the ships were instructed to sail in the vicinity of the US Fleet during the climax of the grand maneuver. Radio operators were also dispatched to the MARSHALL Islands to work at the listening post. A detailed report of the monitoring situation will be omitted due to limited space.

However, by intercepting the communications of the Maneuver Empire Section, the maneuver plans for assimilated overseas operations, the organization of the naval fleets, the progress of the maneuvers, and other minute details which provided excellent materials for operations were obtained, and there were many points which were possible the improvements of our own naval organization.

After the maneuvers, when "K" explained the movements of the Fleets by drawing charts at the Navy Ministry, there were many admirals who were astounded by the vast amount of information which he had been able to obtain.

The Wireless Intelligence Directed Against the US Pacific Fleet

At that time, the German-Polish war had started in EUROPE, and the lightning attacks of GERMANY had shocked the world. The US Government cautiously watched the movements of the Japanese Government and stationed the Pacific Fleet in HAWAII even after the grand maneuvers and silently watched the Far Eastern situation.

In this tense situation, the OWADA Signal Unit prepared for war time emergency, and "K" undertook a detailed study of the simple cipher and the ordinary telegrams, especially of personal messages sent by the crew members of the Fleet, which came in during

the interception of telegrams from the Pacific Fleet. He was able to obtain much interesting information.

The stationing of the Pacific Fleet in HAWAII was such a sudden, unexpected move that it appeared to have created quite a confusion among the fleet crew members. Since the population in the vicinity of Pearl Harbor increased suddenly by several tens of thousands, there was a congestion of telegrams inquiring about, the rental of houses and rooms and telegrams calling for the wives and children of the crew members. Also, there was a comical situation where a wife from the UNITED STATES sent a telegram to her husband's commander complaining that her husband had not sent any subsistence allowance to her. There is no difference in human feeling, East or West.

As the stay in HAWAII lengthened, there were signs that the crew members were beginning to get bored. On St Valentine's Day, 14 Feb 40, the following appropriate message was sent by a crew member to his girl friend in SEATTLE, "Blue HAWAII would not be so blue if you would be my Valentine." The homesickness of the crew members could be plainly detected. Also, the weekly training schedule of the US Fleet on LAHAINA Road, using Pearl Harbor as their supply base and rest camp, was easily learned. Every Friday the Paymaster Section of each ship issued an order to have a certain amount of fresh meat and vegetables delivered to a certain pier. By calculating the number of the personnel of a ship with approximately a week's ration, the position of the pier and the ship was generally able to be estimated. Perhaps it is worth making a special note that the basic intelligence for the plans to attack Pearl Harbor had already been in hand over a year and a half before.

During the latter half of 1940, the relationship between the UNITED STATES and JAPAN became worse and the gathering of intelligence on the US Navy became increasingly important. About this time the Naval Secret Chamber had branched out to PEIPING, SHANGHAI, and CANTON, but the necessity of expansion of the wireless intelligence on the US Atlantic Fleet was felt; therefore, an office was established in MEXICO City in the latter part of the year to gather invaluable material concerning movements of the Atlantic Fleet and the movements of the US Battle Fleet.

In TOKYO, where the Headquarters was located, the Naval General Staff, Fourth Department, 11th Section became the Naval General Staff, Special Service Unit, and the organization was rapidly expanded and strengthened.

Hawaii Sea Battle

At dawn on 26 Nov 41, the First Task Force silently left the snow-covered HITOKAPPU Bay of ETOHOFU Island and stealthily approached the northern Hawaiian Waters with all their wireless apparatus under lock and key to maintain absolute silence.

Since summer, the air unit of this fleet had gone through a vigorous training schedule. On the other hand, at the air base in KYUSHU the 12th Combined Air Unit was constantly being trained.

As usual, they were flying from dawn to dusk. The radio station on the base used the calling code of the air-craft carrier. They constantly exchanged useless messages to deceive the eager eavesdroppers of the wireless direction finding stations in far-off HAWAII and HAWAII and lead them to believe that the Task Force was still kept in the SETO Inland Sea.

The wireless operators on the Flag Ship AKAGI of the Task Force were alerted to listen to the reports of the Imperial General Headquarters broadcast from the Tokyo wireless station. Everyday, the anchoring position of each ship of the US Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor was wired accurately and in detail. Even the in-coming and out-going ships, the condition of the security measures, defense balloons, and existence of anti-submarine nets were reported in detail.

Message Number 35 at 00 hours
on 4 December

Report A

The ships anchored in Pearl Harbor on the afternoon of 29 November were as follows.

A Sector (Between the Naval Arsenal and FORD Island)

KT (Naval Arsenal Northwest Wharf.)

Pennsylvania (Battleship)

Arizona (Battleship)

FV (Shore-line post)

California (Battleship)

Tennessee (Battleship)

Maryland (Battleship)

West Virginia (Battleship)

KS (Naval Arsenal Repair Wharf)

Portland (Class-A cruiser)

In dock:

Class-A cruisers 2

Destroyer 1

In other locations:

Submarines	4
Destroyer-tender	1
Patrol-boats	2
Heavy-oil-tankers	2
Repair ships	2
Mine-sweeper	1

B Sector (The sea area from the northwest direction of FORD Island to the vicinity of FORD Island).

FV (shore-line post)

Lexington (air-craft carrier)

Other locations:

Utah (Target-ship)
 Class-A Cruiser 1 (San Francisco type)
 Class-B Cruisers 2 (Omaha type)
 Gun-boats 3

C Sector (East lock)

Class-A Cruisers	3
Class-B Cruisers 2 (Honolulu type)	
Destroyers	17
Destroyer-tenders	2

D Sector (Middle lock)

Mine-sweepers	12
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E Sector (None)

"No change in status, as of the afternoon of December 2. Shore leave for the sailors was allowed as usual. It seems that they are not in a state of preparedness."

(omitted)

Message received at 2300 hours on December 7.

Report A.

"The ships which were at anchor on 6 December are: Nine battleships, three class-B cruisers, three sea-plane carriers, and 17 destroyers, with four class-B cruisers, three destroyers, one

air-craft carrier, and one heavy cruiser in deck, all on stand-by status. Unusual activities in the Fleet could not be detected. OAHU Island was calm and was not blacked out. "The Navy Department of the Imperial General Headquarters is confident of your success."

Who could have been wiring such detailed reports?

According to the post-war publication, the Naval Secret Intelligence Office in WASHINGTON had decoded the telegram which the Japanese Government had sent to the Japanese Consul in HONOLULU requesting the anchored positions of the fleet within Pearl Harbor and its chart. However, they were not able to understand the full significance of the above order.

That is not all. The UNITED STATES had duly deciphered almost all of the messages between the Japanese Government and the Japanese envoy to the UNITED STATES. The UNITED STATES was cognizant of the fact that Ambassador NOMURA (野 村) would submit the last notice at 1300 hours (local time) on 7 December and also the order to destroy the coding machine on 6 December.

It is said that alert wires were sent out to all the armed forces signed by the Chief of Naval Operations and the Chief of Staff. With all these preparations why was the surprise attack on HAWAII carried out so successfully?

It would have been mere play for the US Secret Chamber, which had history and experience since YARDLEY, to learn by wireless the maneuver plans of the Japanese Navy, which were the usual annual practice.

However, the maneuvers of the Combined Fleet, which were repeated year after year, were concentrated on the study of the battle plans to destroy an imaginary overseas attack of the US Fleet. There was no time when they would lead one to believe that they were rehearsing to attack HAWAII. This is because the attack on HAWAII was a new idea which was staged for the first time a few months prior to the start of the war.

It is believed that the US Naval Secret Chamber firmly held to their belief that JAPAN would take the usual course; judging by the training of the Combined Fleet year after year. Would it be a mistake to assume that the negligence of the UNITED STATES was due to their own over-confidence?

Mr. KITA, Fusio (喜 角 久), who was the Consul General in HAWAII during that time, later died of a cerebral haemorrhage in TSINGTAO. It is regrettable that we were not able to learn the true situation of that period from him. It can not be forgotten that there were many hidden, thankless tasks behind the attack on HAWAII.

Southern Operations

At that time, there was an accepted basic rule that in air operations attackers must have three times more fighting strength than the defenders. Needless to say the attackers require three times more airplanes than the defenders. However, before the war, there were 970 Allied Forces' airplanes in the south and if the Chinese airplanes are included there were 1,100.

Against this figure our Army had 591 and the Navy 506. The figure was not three fold but approximately even. However, the defenders were forced to disperse their strength; therefore, it was possible to gain local superiority, but one should not become optimistic. We think that it would be an easy operation. It was our desire to carry out surprise attack, but a bungling and foolish attack might well have spoiled the Hawaii operation, and we did not want this to happen.

Therefore, in the south it was planned that the air force unit would be deployed and prepared in southern FORMOSA to attack as soon as the news of success in HAWAII was reported. Therefore, in order to detect enemy movements in the south, the American and British Section of the "X" organization in SHANGHAI was transferred to the SHENXI (新城) Detachment, TAKAO (高雄) Communications Unit, to listen to enemy communications.

In the latter part of November, patrol planes in the PHILIPPINES were increased suddenly. On 4 December an ordinary message to the effect that all fighter planes would be kept on a 15 minutes alert status was issued by the Philippine-based fighter plane unit commander's conference. This message worried us as it was possible that they had detected our operational plan and might render it impossible for us to carry out a surprise attack.

However, soon afterward from the same base communication a group of flight officers sent a telegram requesting hotel reservations at a hotel in BAGUIO for the 7th and 8th of December stating that they would be there for an over night recreation trip. So, we heaved a sigh of relief.

On the night of the opening of the war, all men were listening to the communications between HONOLULU and the PHILIPPINES when on around 0330 A.M. the Cavite Communications post wired the Secretary of Navy's announcement, "Japan started hostilities against U.S. Execute war plan 41" (sic). This wire was in turn relayed immediately to all forces.

However, unfortunately, southern FORMOSA was covered with dense fog and the air force unit was unable to fly. It would have been a tragedy if the enemy had counterattacked as all the fields were covered with our airplanes. We felt it so serious that we endeavored mightily to intercept enemy air communications.

However, the enemy did not attack until our air force had carried out an initial attack in the afternoon of the same day. Simultaneously with the opening of our air attack, the place became a madhouse-calling of officers, issuing of orders to transport war materials, et cetera.

There are always slip-ups and errors on both sides at the opening of a war. World history has taught us that the force that attacks first is the victor.

Battle of MIDWAY

Our Combined Fleet, which had destroyed the main American and British Fleets in the Hawaiian and Malayan Sea Battles, continued intrepid operations in the south and the west - the winner if they fought and always seizing their objective if they attacked. Our Rising Sun flag flew as far as the South Pacific and the Indian Ocean. It seemed like unparalleled sea might. It was inevitable that, through the great victories in the first phase of operations, the fighting spirit of the officers and men went up and that the arrogant feeling of despising the enemy crept into their hearts.

On April 18, the enemy planes suddenly raided TOKYO. Admiral YAMAMOTO (山本), Chief of the Combined Fleet, who sought to complete the defenses in the East, planned to capture MIDWAY and destroy the enemy fleet by a single blow by enticing the enemy fleet into action. As far as I am concerned it could have succeeded if we had attacked at the opening of the war when the enemy was off guard.

It was planned that our weak carrier unit should attack the enemy, who seemed to have well prepared radar networks and powerful replaceable and unsinkable carriers in HAWAII. Furthermore, the location of the enemy task force was not known. It certainly was a dangerous operational undertaking. Secrecy of the operation plans and movement was absolutely necessary. Without that there was no possibility of success.

The first step in countering communication leaks is to reduce the number of communication stations. We must consider the fact that whenever wire communications are sent we are giving some information of intelligence value to the enemy regardless of its worth.

However, the arrogant feeling among the officers and men put them off guard and they left openings for the enemy, and the caution and thoroughness that prevailed in the Hawaii operation was forgotten.

Furthermore, the units that were to participate in the operation consisted of major parts of the Combined Fleet and they were dispersed in a large area ranging from the SETO Inland Sea to SAIPAN. Consequently, it necessitated an increase in the number of communications.

On other hands the U.S. was eagerly listening to our communications in order to detect the next appearance of the Japanese fleet, which was cruising everywhere at will. At this time, an adjutant of the Navy 2nd Special Landing Unit sent the following poorly composed code message to all forces. "All postal matters addressed to the unit after 5 June will be forwarded to MIDWAY". What carelessness! It was just like reporting to the enemy the time and the place of our attack. Also, a certain Supply Section sent a poorly composed code message instructing that arrangements be made to transport drinking water to MIDWAY. Whoever sent the message

seemed to think that water is not a weapon and so not a matter to be classified as secret but, to the U.S. forces, who were eagerly watching the next move of the Japanese, the telegram was significant.

They felt that MIDWAY was the only logical place that was without water open to possible Japanese attack. There were many other wires that contained such imprudent messages. The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters Communications Section, which were controlling and censoring all communications, sent out warnings with cold desperation but the damage had been done already.

According to the American battle report published after the war, the U.S. knew about the operational plan one month beforehand. The task force was immediately recalled to HAWAII and defense constructions on MIDWAY were greatly expedited and were worked on day and night. Airplanes were sent to MIDWAY in great numbers.

The Americans were full of energy for this fight, but the Japanese Combined Fleet was overconfident, believing that they could destroy the enemy at one blow. Thus they did not even bother such to search for the enemy and went into action.

An enemy submarine that was located somewhere in the path of the attacking fleet sent a long radio message on 30 May. On the 31st the enemy planes and submarines became very active and many more urgent messages than ever before were sent. Among 180 messages that were sent out on 1 June from Hawaiian waters, 72 messages were classified urgent.

The enemy certainly became aware of our operational plans. Our hope of a surprise attack was shattered. If we had maintained the caution we exercised at the opening of the war we might have reconsidered our plans, but the leaders of the task force, the Headquarters of the Combined Fleet and Imperial General Headquarters were confident, believing that our task force was stronger than the enemy. It made no difference to them that our plans had been detected. Thus, the fleet persisted in following the original plan without knowledge of enemy movements, and they steamed off to certain destruction.

The American task force had already departed from HAWAII on May 30, a day after the Combined Fleet had left the SETO Inland Sea, and was waiting at a point 200 nautical miles north of MIDWAY to carry out a flank surprise attack against our task force which was moving toward MIDWAY.

Our task force, without knowledge of this situation, came to a pre-arranged point on June 3. The time was unfortunate because a dense fog enveloped the fleet. Finally, in desperation, they violated the ban on radio communication and issued an order of change of direction by short range radio communication.

The message was heard by the main fleet, which was 500 to 600 nautical miles away; therefore, it was obvious that the American task force, which was closer, intercepted the message. By their use of a direction finder the location of our task force was exposed. Just as one expected the enemy flying patrol "boats" made contact with our task force at dawn on the 5th.

Tactically and strategically a surprise attack was no longer possible. When the attacking force reached the MIDWAY objective there was not a single plane on the ground. The attack had completely failed. Just as our planes left for their objective the enemy planes came to attack. Our truly efficient and highly trained fighters shot down the enemy planes like leaves off a tree. However, at this off-guard moment, the enemy dive bombers from the task force bombed the three carriers, KAGA, AKAGI and SORYU, which were enveloped in raging flames in an instant. The HIRYU which fought gallantly and valiantly and knocked out the YORKTOWN was also sunk by continuous enemy attacks.

Thus the world-famous, highly trained Japanese task force met with destruction in a day. By this battle the status of attacker passed from the hands of the Japanese Navy to the American. Our arrogant soldiers first lost in the battle of communications and then lost the war completely.

Death of Fleet Admiral YAMAMOTO

On 17 Apr 43 a telegram arrived at the Solomon Area U.S. Air Force Headquarters, located near Henderson Field on GUADALCANAL. It reported in detail the schedule of a front-line inspection to be made by Fleet Admiral YAMAMOTO, commander-in-chief of the Japanese Combined Fleet, and an order from the Secretary of the Navy to attack his plane.

On the following day, the 18th, the weather was clear and good. Admiral YAMAMOTO's Party flew from Rabaul Air Field aboard two medium attack bombers with a six fighter plane escort. They travelled southward along the west side of DOUGANVILLE Island and headed for *PARARE Air Base.

They were suddenly attacked by 16 P-38s that had been waiting for them, and Admiral YAMAMOTO's plane was shot down into the jungle. The search party later found the body of Admiral YAMAMOTO, who had enjoyed both influence over and popularity among the whole Navy, sitting with his GITSUZAN sword in his hands as if he were still alive.

Prior to this incident, ever since the enemy began their counteroffensive against GUADALCANAL in August 1942, our Navy had been desperately struggling for half a year, and the sea around GUADALCANAL had become a grave-yard for our naval vessels.

In the sea battle off SAVO Island on 11 October the FURUYUKA and FUBUKI were sunk. The YURA was sunk on the 25th at Lingayen anchorage, and the HIKI, KIRISHIMA, KINUGASA, and three other destroyers were sunk on the 12th and 13th of November during the third Solomon sea battle. Again, on 30 November, the TAKAO was sunk at Guadalcanal anchorage. Besides these ships, several submarines engaged in underwater transportation were sunk at the Guadalcanal anchorage.

(THE *Transliteration of the original in KANA.)

Since the beginning of the war, our navy had organized a special operation unit with the purpose of recovering enemy code books from the sunken ships, and had searched the PRINCE OF WALES and REFULSE, which were lying on the sea bottom 90 meters deep and enemy submarines sunk in the Japanese home waters and occupied areas. However, our divers could work only five minutes at 60 meters depth, and with their inferior diving technique, requiring an hour for both submerging and surfacing, we did not succeed in obtaining anything valuable. At that time the Americans could operate for one hour under similar conditions.

The Japanese vessels sunk in the narrow sea area were not overlooked by the U.S. Navy, which was staffed with superior diving technicians.

In the case of land forces, when a critical situation arises, all the code books are usually destroyed, although due to mis-handling by persons in charge important books sometimes fall into enemy hand. In those days our navy was using a two volume code system for strategical communications, and if the original books were recovered by the enemy, it was expected that our code could be decoded by the enemy code experts no matter how much the code method was changed.

One opinion has it that both Army and Naval units in the front-lines were using a poor battle strategy code. As the order to attack Admiral YAMAMOTO's plane was issued by the Secretary of the Navy prior to his inspection tour, the wire reporting the schedule of his expected tour of the front-line units was read for certain by the Naval Secret Chamber in WASHINGTON, D.C. It is presumed, judging from the situation of those days, that our naval codes had already come into the hands of the U.S. Navy in the manner mentioned above, or that our very poor code system used at the front had been decoded.

After this all our tactical operations were out-maneuvred by the enemy. It was like playing poker when opposition knows all about our hands. At Guadalcanal base, an elaborate victory celebration party was held for the fighter unit that successfully shot down Admiral YAMAMOTO's plane. However, it is said that this celebration was kept strictly secret as they feared that JAPAN might detect how the information, which was responsible for this great success, was obtained.

Effectiveness of the Naval Secret Chamber During the War

Since 1 Apr 41, eight months prior to the outbreak of the war, the U.S. Navy had placed all radio communications on a war-time basis. They discontinued the Simple Cipher messages which had been in use till then, as well as ordinary language communications, and everything was put into the Strip Cipher. After that the deciphering of code actually became impossible although its form was known.

We recovered some parts of the Strip Cipher from the U.S. Gunboat WAKE, which was sunk in SHANGHAI at the beginning of the war, and some were found on WAKE Island and CORREGIDOR.

However, even though the former was covered with heavy oil and the latter was without code rules, we were able to read enemy code at times with certain amount of study, although after the enemy changed the code, it became impossible for us to read them.

As wire messages tended to become long due to the nature of their contents, the U.S. Navy used this code in combination with naval abbreviations. Moreover, as the war situation turned against us, our Naval Secret Chamber lost hope of decoding important enemy codes as our attempts to raise code books from sunken ships were unsuccessful and other such means of obtaining enemy codes were out of. Thereafter, our efforts were turned toward judging the number of transmissions and by locating the positions of radio transmitting stations. In those days, the U.S. was using a code called "BAMS" (Broadcast for Allied Merchant Ships Card) for communications pertaining to transportation. This code was called the Multiple Table Type Variable Word Code (TAHYO SHIKI KANJI ANGO) and we were able to decode it without much difficulty.

Furthermore, the simple abbreviations used for communication by the U.S. submarines for reporting their position three times a day (0600, 1200, and 1800) were known to our Navy.

As a result of studying the statistics on the enemy communications which appeared prior to the enemy's successive offensives since the battle of GUADALCANAL, we came to a stage where we could almost judge the enemy's next move correctly.

Marshalls Operations

According to investigations conducted by the Owada signal unit, the movement of American air units from the UNITED STATES Pacific coast to HAWAII markedly increased in the latter part of July 1943. A total of 50 or 60 units were moved in this operation. In the early part of January 1944 the same air units were moved toward SUVA and CANTON Island, and in the latter part of this month they commenced move from CANTON Island toward TARAVA in the GILBERT Islands. There was also a mass movement of transport planes accompanying this sweeping shift, and at the same time numerous transport vessels commenced gathering in the vicinity of the HAWAIIAN Islands. This information was obtained from "BAMS".

In the early part of January, the communication between ships in and around the HAWAIIAN Islands became quite intense, and around the 20th of the month, the number of submarines greatly increased in the vicinity of the MARSHALL Islands and between HAWAII and the MARSHALLS. Also, around 15 January new unit call signals of fleet disposition, presumably organized for a new operation, appeared in approximately 50 communications.

The Code signal unit predicted with confidence that the enemy would commence operations against the MARSHALL Islands in the latter part of January or the early part of February. In a clear message intercepted around 24 or 25 January, it was learned that three General officers flew from CANTON Island to PARAKEA. This was assumed to be in preparation for landing operations, and as expected, the flame of the invasion operation was ignited on 30 and 31 Jan 44 by mass air attacks over the entire MARSHALL Islands area.

As can be seen in this instance, indications of impending enemy operations became evident in the sudden increase in movement and concentration of transport ships, planes, and air units. This was followed by the increase in communication between all ships and the concentration of submarines near the target area several weeks before the commencement of operations. Also, special call signals of group dispositions organized for new operations appeared in intercepted enemy communications. Past statistics of radio messages had proved that developments such as these were always followed by enemy operations within two weeks.

Although the prediction of the Navy's secret chamber regarding the MARSHALL operation proved correct, they could take no counter-measure. The combined fleet had exhausted the strength of her task forces, which was the bulk of her strength, and the air units based on the MARSHALL Islands during the year and a half Solomons campaign. Thus the combined fleet was unable to engage in a decisive sea battle, but was forced to stand idly by.

Operation "A"

The Solomons-Marshalls outer defense perimeter had been pierced and our forces were frantically engaged in strengthening the defenses after having withdrawn to the Marianas-west Carolines-western New Guinea perimeter which we established as a "fight to the finish" position. The task force accelerated its training schedule in order to meet the deadline which had been set at the end of April.

However, as the enemy's military might increased in strength each day, our forces suffered twice as many losses as production could replace, our fighting power weakened each day and our morale sank lower and lower.

In May 1944, signal intelligence reported that a group of transport vessels and air force units was beginning to converge upon the MARSHALL Islands. The Combined Fleet Headquarters concluded that the enemy was headed for the western part of the CAROLINE Islands and accordingly, sought to take advantage of the situation by committing the entire strength of the fleet combat, and ordered the execution of Operation "A". As the month of May neared its end, the frequency of enemy submarine appearances off the east coast of the PHILIPPINE Islands and the MARIANAS increased so rapidly that the intelligence office issued a warning to the effect that the next operational objective was the MARIANAS, but the Combined Fleet persisted on their "western Caroline" belief and refused to give in.

During the middle part of May, our Task Force No. 1 secretly proceeded to TAWIFANI in the JOLO Islands, southwest of MINDANAO, on the presumption that they could not be detected in this deserted region, but much to their surprise, a whole horde of enemy submarines converged upon them in no time and our advance patrol flotillas were sunk in rapid succession.

Early in the morning of 27 May, the enemy attacked BIAK Island in Western NEW GUINEA and diverted a part of our fleet to this area. Then, on June 11, they attacked the MARIANAS in full force. Combined Fleet Headquarters, which clung to the plan of Operation "A", was still unable to divine the enemy's real plans and remained undecided. When the enemy began sweeping the Saipan anchorage on the 13th, it finally ordered the task force to the attack.

This three-day delay was fatal. When the task force appeared on the field of battle on the 19th, the Marianas Area Base Air Force had already been defeated and was unable to carry out even adequate reconnaissance. In a reconnaissance in the early hours of the 19th, the task force discovered three enemy task forces, built around a total of 11 aircraft carriers, on the ocean west of GUAM. From beyond the enemy's range of attack, our task force took the initiative and launched an air attack. It also planned to attack, both coming and going, by utilizing the base on GUAM, but its plans were intercepted by the enemy's tight anti-aircraft protective screen and were unable to achieve any results.

Our planes, which attempted to land on the base on GUAM to renew their attacks, were attacked and almost all destroyed by the enemy's fighters who were lying in wait for them.

On the other hand, the two large aircraft carriers, the TAMA and the SHOKAKU, were sent to the bottom in southern waters by enemy submarines, which had deployed and waited in the position of our main force, and our fleet was forced to withdraw from the field of battle. On the 20th, the IIC also was sunk in a pursuit by the enemy task force. Our few remaining planes were lost in this one battle, and Operation "A" ended in tragic failure.

In this battle, which frustrated our operation at every turn, there is strong reason to believe that our plan of operation was clear to the enemy beforehand.

After GUADALCANAL, when islands began falling one after the other, there was no room for doubt that our code book had been seized by the enemy. According to reports, after the war ended, an officer with an American investigation group told an officer of the Intelligence Office that a filthy, smelling code book, which our garrison had not had time to burn and had thrown into a toilet before fleeing, had been picked up at ENBUWA Island a year before Operation "A".

In considering this, am I prejudiced in thinking that our failure in the war of signal communications lay at the bottom of this failure, too? Our naval air strength, which had been tragically destroyed in this battle, was unable to rise again until the war's end, and our fleet had already lost the ability to engage the enemy openly. The later naval battle off the PHILIPPINES and the Okinawa naval and air battles were hopeless suicide operations, and we were never able to perform the miracle of doing those Herculean tasks.

Okinawa Operation

On 1 Apr 45, when the enemy commenced the Okinawa Operation, the writer, who was then chief-of-staff of the 5th Air Fleet, composed of the flower of our Navy Air Force, was engaged in a desperate attack on a large, swarming force against overwhelming odds. During the desperate 80-day battle, I noticed that whenever our force attempted to carry out a large-scale air attack, the enemy withdrew his ships to the south, put up a protective screen of fighters, and showed indications of preparing for our attack. Then, by way of experiment, when I kept one section of fighters under my control and, using them as liaison planes to deliver orders in writing, opened up an attack without using the radio at all, the surprise attack succeeded.

Realizing that our code had been broken, I warned Imperial J General Headquarters time and again but to no avail. They insisted that the code was secure.

Having no concrete evidence, I could only continue fighting with misgiving. However, when I read Mr Hanson BALDWIN's account of the battle, in the READER'S DIGEST of August of last year, I realized that I had been right. Sure enough, our code had been broken.

(On 17 April, Admiral SPHUAUCE, Commander of the Fifth Fleet reported to Admiral KEMITZ, the commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet, "The skill and effectiveness of enemy suicide air attacks and the rate of loss and damage to ships are such that all available means should be employed to prevent further attacks. Recommend attacks with all available planes on Kyushu and Formosa Air fields.")

(The attacks are made; the Japanese fields are pounded relentlessly by bombs and rockets. But the KAMIKAZES are well dispersed and camouflaged; the suicide raids continue. The damaged ships clog the anchorage at KERAMA RETPO; there is a trail of limping cripples all the way across the PACIFIC. But replacements of flesh and steel move steadily westward.)

(Gone now are the hopes of a quick victory. The United States forces settle down for a long trial by blood and fire. For more than 40 consecutive days—until foul weather brings a brief break—there are air raids every night and every day. Sleep becomes a thing dreamed about. Heads droop over gun sights; tempers snap; sleepers are red-eyed and haggard. "Magic," the Navy's system of breaking the enemy's codes, has enabled the fleet to forecast the days of big attacks. Loudspeakers sometimes warn the crews the night before to be prepared. But this has to be stopped. The strain of waiting, the anticipated terror, made vivid from past experience, sends many men into hysteria, insanity.)

This one passage is clear evidence that our Navy was being defeated in the battle of radio waves. Our cards were bad, and the enemy could read our hand. No wonder we could not win in this poker game.

The Naval Intelligence Office always gave accurate advance warnings of the enemy's next operation about ten days in advance, but our fleet, which had already lost its balanced strength, was unable to take advantage of this information. Especially in the Okinawa

battle, our fleet had exhausted its entire strength; and its few remaining planes and ships were unable even to function properly because of the shortage of fuel. Even the mission of the Secret Chamber lapsed into a mere game of forecasting.

Postscript

On 15 August, amidst confusion throughout the nation, the Imperial edict ending the war was issued, and the Naval Secret Chamber closed its troubled, weighty, over 20 year old history.

This story is a thing of the past. However, the battle of the invisible radio waves is still being carried on with intensity, concealed at times under the cloak of peace; sometimes behind the scenes of a cold war; and sometimes in a shooting war. Its outcome will have an important effect on the destinies of nations.

In order to win this battle, the necessary intellectual facilities must be mobilized, a perfect system to combine these facilities must be organized with careful foresight, and this system must be operated most scientifically. Sectionalism and impatience for quick results must be avoided.

We must carefully examine and reflect on the record of continuous defeats that our Navy suffered from the Washington Conference, to MIDWAY, Operation "A", and the Okinawa Operation. By losing the invisible war, our Navy also lost the actual war.

Time has passed and the situation has changed. On 6 Sep 45, on the battleship MISSOURI, General MacARTHUR offered a prayer, "Dear Lord, please let this be a permanent peace." Even the thought that this fervent prayer had reached God, lasted but a brief moment. Now the world, in the face of communist aggression, is trembling with fear over the threat of a third world war. World War III, indeed, will be a profound war of ideologies. It will not be a war that can be settled with half-way measures. This war will take the typical form of unrestricted warfare if it follows the class lines of CLAUSEWITZ's war philosophy. To an enemy who comes marching into our country carrying red flags and crying "Liberation! Liberation!", protests that we are neutral and that we have renounced war will be preaching to deaf ears. The fate of our fatherland depends on joint partnership with the democratic camp under the UNITED NATIONS.

This invisible battle of the radio waves, which I have described here, and the activities of spies are in full swing even now behind the scenes throughout the world.

Even from my limited experience with the Naval Secret Chamber I know that the Russian code is very hard to break. Their system of radio transmission is highly developed, and I even had trouble in intercepting their radio messages. Their officers in charge of code-books are also very strict, and I was unable to obtain any result even though I utilized specially trained project sections. On the other hand, it is safe to regard these facts as proof that

the Russian intelligence system is operating very positively and efficiently. Even the intelligence organization of our Navy, which in retrospect was full of faults in both organization and operation, was able to achieve the results described here. This time, a much stronger antagonist is watchfully waiting for an opening. Beware! Beware!

If this report is accepted as a warning to the powers over JAPAN to be careful, the writer will be very happy.

(The End)