In 1939, the Japanese Foreign Ministry adopted a new machine to encipher its diplomatic messages to and from the most important cities of the world.

It took over a year, but American Army cryptanalysts led by Frank Rowlett solved this new machine, enabling US officials to read messages Japan was sending to Washington, D.C. Not knowing the Japanese name for it, the Americans nicknamed it the "PURPLE" machine. They built their own replica to decipher Japanese automatically --- at least as fast as the original device itself. Cryptanalyst Genevieve Grotjan found the key to solving it.

In October 1938, Lieutenant General Oshima Hiroshi became Japan’s ambassador to Germany. He spoke fluent German and admired Adolf Hitler.

Because Ōshima (大鳥) was considered a compade, the Germans invited him to Nazi party meetings, gave him briefings about the war situation, and took him on frontline inspection tours.

His reports about Nazi Germany were enciphered on the PURPLE machine for broadcast to Tokyo.

This meant the U.S. had access to them, and shared them with its ally, Great Britain. This is some of what they learned...