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On the 30th of November, 1941, the *Hilo Tribune Herald* publishes an ominous headline: "JAPAN MAY STRIKE OVER WEEKEND." While the story reports that "Tokyo Desperate as Talks Collapse," Japan's military leaders have already sent a fleet of aircraft carriers to the Hawaiian Islands. Their target will be Pearl Harbor, on the island of Oahu.

While Emperor Hirohito's military men planned a Pearl Harbor attack, his diplomats kept talking. During the fall of 1941, however, the situation worsened.

Hideki Tojo, an Army militant, became Prime Minister on October 16, 1941. His emissaries in Washington, Kichisaburo Nomura and Saburo Kurusu (whose wife was American), made U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull uncomfortable.

As the two Japanese delivered increasingly hostile messages, with their bows and smiles, Hull began to think they were deceptive.

A primary mover behind Japan's expansion south of her home islands, Tojo favored an attack on Pearl Harbor. But as war seemed more probable than possible, high-ranking American officials thought American troops in the Philippines were more vulnerable than those in Pearl Harbor.

They did not know about "Operation Hawaii" (also called "Operation Z"), Japan's carefully orchestrated plan created by Lt. Commander Minoru Genda.

Rumors of war increased. By December 4, the *Chicago Tribune's* lead story screamed its frightening headline:

F.D.R.'s War Plans!

To this day some historians believe President Roosevelt engineered what happened at Pearl Harbor. But it's fair to ask: Why would someone who wanted to enter the fight be willing to destroy the means by which he would win that fight? One possible answer: The President didn't think the attack would come at Pearl Harbor.

What is **not** subject to speculation, like FDR's state of mind, are the messages U.S. military personnel intercepted.

They were increasingly ominous. They pointed to war.

Various commanders in the South Pacific received copies of those messages. But the military high command in Washington did not pass them on to Admiral Kimmel and General Short.

Later, during the inevitable investigations, Pearl Harbor's commanders were treated as though they had first-hand information. They didn't.

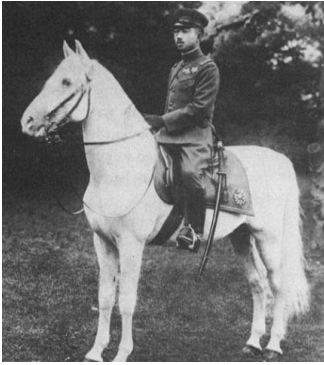
See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/RUMORS-OF-WAR-Pearl-Harbor>

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Media Stream



Emperor Hirohito - On Hatsu Shimo, His White Horse

Photo, U.S. National Archives. PD

Quoted passage, from the BBC's story on the diary, published online 9 March 2007.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Emperor-Hirohito-On-Hatsu-Shimo-His-White-Horse>



Hideki Tojo - Premier of Japan During WWII

Picture of Tojo, published in the 25 October 1941 issue of the *Illustrated London News*.

Library of Congress.

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Nomura and Kurusu - Japan's Diplomats

Image, online courtesy FDR Library.

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Japanese Expansion - Areas of Influence in the Pacific Region

Image, described above, online courtesy Library of Congress.

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Photo # NH 57100 Admiral H.E. Kimmel with Captains W.S. Delany & W.W. Smith



Admiral Kimmel with Planning Officers

Photo, U.S. Navy's Historical Center.

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16. Cards O! O. S. C. Wins To Get Rose Bowl Bid



RUMORS OF WAR

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