

Excerpt from the Interrogation of Oshima Hiroshi

Interrogation on 27 February 1946

P. 201 - 207

Q. Proceed.

A. Following the receipt of this despatch containing the orders from the Japanese Government I conveyed the message to Ribbentrop. . . . Ribbentrop then asked me whether there was going to be a war or not - you may recall that the despatch did not definitely say that there would be war, only that in case there was a war such and such was desired. In reply to his questions I told him that I knew of Hull's severe reply and also of the burning of the code books in the United States, and that relations were evidently extremely strained, but whether war would actually come about or not I could not say. . . . Ribbentrop stated that this was an extremely grave decision that Germany would have to make and that before he could give any reply he would have to communicate with Hitler at Supreme Headquarters. . . . I do not remember whether it was that day or the next, but in any case Ribbentrop sent for me again and when I went he stated that Soviet forces had just launched a severe counter-offensive in the Moscow sector and a portion of the German Armies was surrounded. Therefore, he said, Hitler had gone personally to the area to direct operations and that he had not been able to make contact with him yet. It is a further fact that there was a very bad storm raging around Berlin at the time, and I believe that all communications were badly hampered. In any case he asked me to stand by for a while, as he was trying very hard to make contact with the Fuehrer.

Q. Now, General, this all happened on the day you received the despatch from Tokyo containing these instructions to approach the German Government?

A. As I just told you, I am not absolutely certain of whether it was that day or the next.

Ribbentrop then questioned me, asking whether Japan had anything to offer on her part and, too, whether she was prepared to draw up another pact regarding mutual aid. . . . In substance, the Germans at this point were becoming very foxy and wanted payment for goods delivered if they supplied the goods. I told him that this would mean doing away with the Military Commission that existed at the time or at least taking away their prerogatives, so that I was not in a position to make any counter-proposals, and that I would communicate about this matter with the Japanese Government. Ribbentrop then said that he wished me to not send such a communication yet, as this was simply his own idea and he would have to communicate with Hitler before any official negotiations were entered into with the Japanese Government. I then sent a despatch to the Japanese Government - this was around the third or fourth of December 1941 - relating how I had informed Ribbentrop about their wishes and how Ribbentrop had not been able to contact Hitler yet. There comes a brief recess in the proceedings at this point.

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- A. Following this I received an almost daily request from the German Government for any further news as they, too, were very anxious to find out whether war was actually going to break out or not. On my part I was extremely anxious to contact Hitler, but as it transpired right up to the start of hostilities we were not able to contact him.

We now come to December 7, 1941. Sometime during the afternoon I received a despatch from the Foreign Office in Tokyo to the effect that they wished me to speed up negotiations and come to a decision as quickly as possible. I do not know for certain when this telegram was received, but after being decoded it was handed to me about 5 P.M. Because of this communication I decided under any circumstances to send a telegram to the Japanese Government regarding the progress of my talks with the Germans so far. This meant that I would have to include that which Ribbentrop had requested me not to communicate about, as it was his own idea and not the official views of the German Government. In my telegram I wrote up the full history of these talks and while I did not say that Ribbentrop had requested me not to communicate about it I definitely stated that these views regarding unconditional aid were Ribbentrop's alone because it had been impossible to make contact with Hitler as yet. We of the Embassy Staff had a conference about the communication we should send and based on that this despatch was drafted and completed around 7 P.M., Berlin time. Around 8 P.M., Berlin time, after having given orders to send off this despatch I returned to my official residence. After about ten or twenty minutes I received a phone call from Counsellor KAWAHARA informing me that he had heard from a man named NOHARA, an Embassy employee, that this man had heard on the radio that the Japanese Navy had attacked Pearl Harbor. Immediately following this telephone call I called the Japanese Embassy and ordered that the despatch which had been prepared be canceled - that is to say, not be sent. Following this Ribbentrop telephoned and said that he had heard the news over the air that Pearl Harbor had been attacked, but that was all he knew, and did I have any further information as to whether the report was true or not. I answered that I had only heard about it a few minutes before and knew no more than he had recounted. He then requested me to come right over to his home and while I had not yet even had my dinner I went on over. He once again asked me if I knew anything further and I answered in the negative. Ribbentrop then told me that as a matter of fact he had received a telephone call from Supreme Headquarters in which they said that they had heard this over the radio, but did he, Ribbentrop, know anything more about it. I then asked him whether, having been able to contact Hitler, he had spoken about the matter of Germany's entry into the war, and Ribbentrop answered that Hitler had stated he was in accord with Japan's wishes, but wished to wait until an official confirmation of the start of hostilities was received from Japan. Ribbentrop and I broke off the conversation at this point and I returned home. The next day I received the official report from Japan and communicated this fact to Ribbentrop. We then began drawing up the pact. This pact has been made public, but as I recall the main points they were that no cessation of hostilities or a separate peace would be entered into by any of the signatories without prior discussion.

Q. What date was it signed?

A. December 11, 1941. Now, in so far as this treaty goes, while I may have been off slightly on dates, the actual facts leading up to it are as I have recounted it and I believe that both Ribbentrop and Gaus would know of it also.

Q. The actual drafting of the pact then, according to your statement, started on December 9, and it was signed on December 11. Is that correct?

A. The drafting of the pact began on the 8th and the pact was signed on the 11th.

. . . .

A. It was a very simple pact and did not necessitate detailed discussions.

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Def. Doc. 2820

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大島浩 訊問調書 抜萃

一九四六年二月二十七日 調書

第二〇一—二〇七頁

答 問

お続け下さい

日本政府からの訓令を含む此電報を受取つてから、私は之をリッツベントロツプに傳へました。、、、其時リッツベントロツプは私に戦争になるのか如何かと訊ねました。御承知の通り電報には戦争になるとははつきり書いてなく、ただ戦争になつた場合にはこれこれのことを希望するといふことだけ言つて来たのです。リッツベントロツプの間に答へて私は、ハルのひさい回答のこと、米國で暗號を焼いたこと、日米關係がたしかに非常に緊張して居ることは私も知つて居るが、實際戦争になるか如何かは何とも言へないと申しました。、、、リッツベントロツプは之は獨逸に取つて極めて重大な決定であることと、返事をする前に大本營のヒットラーと連絡しなければならぬことを申しました。、、、其日であつたか、其の次の日であつたか記憶しませんが、兎に角リッツベントロツプは又私の往訪を求めましたので行きますと、蘇聯軍の一部が包圍されたので、ヒットラーは自ら其の地方に行つて

作戦を指揮して居り、未だヒットラーとの連絡が取れないと申しました。尚其上に當時柏林附近には大暴風があり、通信は皆大障害を受けて居たと思ひます。

河これにせよリツペントロツプは總統と連絡をとる最大いに努力して居るから暫く待つてくれと申しました。

問、閣下、之は首真方から逃政府と交渉せよといふ訓電を受取られた日の
出来事ですか。

答、私か今さき申上げましたやうに、その日であつたか、次の日であつた
か、はつきりは覚えて居りません。リットンロツプはそれから私に口
本は何か對償を出すか、或は相互援助に關する他の條約を作る用意かあ
るかどうかと質問しました。……要するに此の時獨逸側は甚だ
拔目がなくなつて、物を出した場合には其の代償が欲しかつたのです。
私はリットンロツプにそれは今在る重事委員會を無視することになる
か、少くとも其權限を尋ふといふことになるから、私の立場としては代
償の是乘をすることは出来なかつた。このことを日本政府に傳へようと申
しました。そうするとリットンロツプは之は自分だけの考であつて、
日本政府と正式交渉に入る前にヒットラーと話をせねばならぬから、今
の處そんを報告はしないでほしいと申しました。それから私は電報で日
本政府に、之は一九四一年十二月三日か四日頃のことでしたか、私か
リットンロツプに日本政府の希望を傳へたこと、リットンロツプか
未だヒットラーと連絡が出来ないことを言つてやりました。此で話は暫
く停頓してゐました。

之からといふものは私は殆んど毎日の様に獨逸政府から何かニエースは
 ないかといふ向合せを受けました。それは獨逸側でも實際戦争が始まる
 か如何かを非常に知り反かつて居たからでした。私としてはヒットラーと
 との連絡に最も苦心しました。遂々實際戦争が始まる迄ヒットラーと
 連絡出来ませんでした。こうして一九四一年十二月七日になりました。
 身の午後。私は東京の外務省から電報を受取りました。その内容は交
 渉を促進して出来るだけ速に妥結に到達すべしといふことでありました。
 私は何時に此電報か着いたかは知りませんが、暗號解後私に渡された
 のは午後五時頃でした。此の電報が多量なもので、私は兎に角これ迄の
 獨逸側との話合に付て日本政府に電報を送る決心をしました。之はリッ
 ベントロツプが自分だけの考で獨逸政府の公式の見解では無いから報告
 してくれるなと申しました。争柄にも言及しなけれはならぬといふ意味で
 す。私は管轄で兵の話合ひの呼称を誌し、尤もリッペンとロツプが報告
 してくれなると言つたといふことは書きませんでした。此の無條件援
 助に對する見解はリッペンとロツプだけのものではある。その點はヒット
 ラーどの連絡かまたとれないからといふことをはつきり尋ねました。私
 共大使館員は我々か打つ電報に付いて尋ねて致しました。其の尋ねに基
 いて此電報は起草せられ、旧杯時間で午後七時頃出来上りました。旧杯

時間午後八時頃、此の電報を出すように命じましてから、私は官邸に
歸りました。十分か二十分して河原參事官から電話かあつて、大使館雇
の野原といふ男が日本海軍の真珠湾攻撃をラヂオで聞いたと申してゐま
すとの事でありました。

此電話を聞きましてから直ぐ私は大使館に電話をして準備した電報を取
消しました。發送するなといふことです。此についてリツベントロツ
プから電話があつて、自分は眞珠灣攻撃があつたといふニュースをラデオ
で聞いたが、それ以上のことは判らないが、此ニュースが本當かどうか
に付て私が何か情報を持つて居るかと訊いて來ました。私は私もこのユ
ニスを數分前に聞いたばかりで、貴方のお話以上には何も知らないとい
答へました。そこでリツベントロツプはすぐ家へ來てくれと申しました
ので私は示だ夕食も済んでゐませんでしたけれども出掛けて行きました
リツベントロツプは一度、何かもつと詳しいことを知らぬかと訊きま
したので、私は知らぬと答へました。リツベントロツプは私に、實は大
本營からの電話で、大本營ではラデオで之を聞いたが、リツベントロツ
プはもつと何か詳しいことを知つて居るかといふ問合せを受けたところ
であらうと申しました。そこで私はリツベントロツプにヒットラーとの運
絡がとれたのだから、獨逸の參戰の問題を話してくれたとか訊きますと
リツベントロツプの答へますのに、ヒットラーは日本の希望に同意する
が、開戦について日本から公式の確認がある迄待ち度いと言つて居ると
のことでありました。

此處でリツベントロツプと私とは話をやめて、私は歸宅しました。翌日
私は日本から公式の通報を受取りましたので此の事をリツベントロツプ

に傳へました。私共はそれから條約起草にかゝりました。此の條約は公表せられたものですが、私の記憶する所では其の要點は締約國は、事前の協議なしに敵對行爲の中止又は單獨講和を行はないと言ふことでありました。

問、それが署名されたのは何日のことでしたか。

答、一九四一年十二月十一日です。此の條約に關する限り日附については少し間違があるかも知れませんが締結に至る迄の事實は私が之迄申上りました通りです。リップペン！ロツプとガウスも知つて居ると思ひます。

問、貴方の説明に依りますと締約の實際上の起草は十二月九日に始つて、十二月十一日には署名されたといふことになりましたね。

答、條約起草は八日に始つて十一日に署名が行はれました。之は極く簡單な條約で面倒な討議の必要がありませんでした。