

INTERP. KID0 (20 - Feb 46)

DOC 4137

30

(17)



INTERROGATION OF

(Marquis) KIDO, Koichi

(Continued)

DATE AND TIME: 20 February 1946, 1345 - 1530 hours

PLACE : Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan

PRESENT : (Marquis) KIDO, Koichi  
Mr. Henry R. Sackett, Interrogator  
Lt. Fred F. Suzukawa, Interpreter  
(Miss) S. M. Betar, Stenographer

Questions by : Mr. Sackett

- 
- Q On February 19, 1936, you made some notations with reference to General MASAKI trying to win over prince NASHIMOTO. What was he actually trying to accomplish?
- A Count SOEJIMA and MASAKI happened to come from the same country. Their feudal lord happened to be Marquis NABESHIMA. They tried to win over NASHIMOTO through the mother of Marquis NABESHIMA because Princess NASHIMOTO is the mother of Marquis NABESHIMA.
- Q My point is, what did they try to win him over to. What did they try to accomplish?
- A The object was to have a member of the Imperial Household act in behalf of the fact that MASAKI has been made to resign.
- Q It was in connection with MASAKI's resignation and he was trying to get back in good graces with whom - the Army?
- A To get in the good graces with the Emperor.

Evid Doc, 4/37  
~~#375~~



- Q We are down to February 26. You have written quite a bit in your diary about that. I wish you would, in your own words, describe what was back of the February 26 incident, what it was indicative of, and who was involved in it, as you recall the incident.
- A The cause of the February 26 incident lies in the antagonism held by the Army toward the Zaibatsu and the political parties. In that year, the First Division was scheduled to be transferred to Manchuria and the officers in the First Division felt that their being transferred to Manchuria would mean that they may be going to war against Soviet Russia. They were very fearful of Soviet Russia and they felt their equipment was inadequate. They did not fear to die for the country but they felt that with inferior equipment, they would die to no avail. So, they were very dissatisfied.
- Q Do you recall who was the commanding officer of this Company 1. Who was the leader of that unit which was going into Manchuria?
- A The Division commander's name does not come to my mind at present.
- Q Alright, go ahead.
- A And so, the officers said that before they ever had to go to Manchuria, they would settle the matter right here and that they would do something about the Zaibatsu and the political parties who are responsible for conditions in the Army.
- Q And they felt that the political parties and Zaibatsu were responsible because they were influential in withholding appropriations for improvement of military equipment. Is that what they thought?
- A I believe the Army was dissatisfied and had the feeling that the Zaibatsu were responsible in curtailing the amount of taxes paid out and in trying to obstruct any revision in the taxation laws and in the giving of an adequate military budget.
- Q These men in the First Division, who were scheduled to go to Manchuria, were they in favor of entering into a war with Russia if they were properly equipped?



- A There is no special significance in the First Division going to Manchuria because they were changing around the units that were stationed in Manchuria.
- Q But I thought you said the men involved in this incident were men of the First Division who were scheduled for the purpose, they thought, of fighting Russia.
- A They had the will, or more or less the sentiment, of fighting with Russia but it doesn't mean they were scheduled to fight with Russia. This transfer of the First Division to Manchuria fills in the long-range plan or schedule made by the Minister. That sort of a rumor came into our ears from a long time ago.
- Q In other words, the military faction was interested in fighting the countries that they thought were the enemies of Japan provided they could get the proper equipment to do so. Is that a fair statement?
- A The Army at that time was more or less in a passive situation and it was frantic in getting its equipment up-to-date.
- Q Why was it so concerned about getting improved equipment. Was it so that they might expand into China or was it strictly for defense?
- A I believe that the Army felt that its equipment was inadequate even for defense, and the Army felt that the belligerent countries that participated in World War I had advanced far ahead of Japan militarily.
- Q But this money they wanted appropriated for military purposes - they desired to use it for offensive military equipment as well as for what you might term defensive equipment, didn't they?
- A The sentiment at the time, I believe, were that it was to be used more for defense rather than offense, because they didn't have any confidence in an offensive then. The February 26 incident centered around the Kodo faction of which I have spoken to you previously and they are mostly company grade officers. Behind the Kodo factions were personalities such as NISHIDA and KITTA who were civilians and who were active plotters in that organization. But the active or actual plotting was done within the First Regiment and no one expected the incident to come out so suddenly and so violently. So, they attacked the official residence of the Prime Minister and the residence of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, and the residence of the Finance Minister TAKAHASHI, and also the residence of the Inspector General of Military Training.



Q Who was he?

A WATANABE. And they attacked the former Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, MAKINO, who was at Yugowara, which is a hot-spring resort and they occupied the War Ministry, the General Staff Headquarters, and the Metropolitan Police Board. They also attacked the Grand Chamberlain SUZUKI and upon hearing of the incident, I immediately went to the Palace at 6:00 A. M. If I was thirty minutes later, I would have been caught by these perpetrators.

Q Do you think they were looking for you in those days?

A I heard they were hunting me up later on.

Q There were two phases of the plan. The first phase was that which I mentioned in which they attacked all those personalities. In the second phase, I believe I was included in the group to be attacked and it was found out there were some subversive and rebellious elements within the Imperial Guard Division. The thing of which I was most fearful was that the insurgents have gotten control over the Army's directing body and I feared they may issue a false Army order.

Q Whom do you have in mind when you refer to the Army directing body - staff headquarters?

A By Army body, I mean the staff headquarters and the War Minister. Upon having the Aide-de-camp investigating that matter, it was found out they did not issue a false order. The second thing which was of great concern to us was the fear that they would attack the Imperial Palace with force and make a direct demand upon the Emperor. Upon that matter, I inquired as to the determination or the feeling held by the Imperial Guard Division and the Imperial Guard Division replied in case they came at us with force, we would have repulsed it. Upon that answer, we were greatly relieved. The Army at that time tried their utmost to justify the incident. In order to remedy or to correct that sort of sentiment, we had great difficulties.

Q What did the Army do or say in order to justify their actions?



- A They tried to say that they tried to save the country and they couldn't tolerate existing situation and stand by watching idly.
- Q When you say the Army attempted to justify it, who do you mean in the Army?
- A In the directing body, such persons as ISHIWARA has been highly active in that respect and this sentiment was very keen among field grade officers.
- Q Was ISHIWARA in Staff Headquarters in those days?
- A I believe he was in the Staff Office in Tokyo.
- Q What was Prince KANIN's attitude toward the incident - the chief of staff, himself?
- A I believe he had a very fair view of the matter and he was highly indignant.
- Q Who was the Vice Chief of Staff in those days? It had formerly been MASAKI.
- A I have no accurate recollection, but perhaps it may have been SUGIYAMA.
- Q Was SUGIYAMA sympathetic to the plotters of the incident?
- A No, SUGIYAMA absolutely did not approve of the incident.
- Q Who in Staff Headquarters would sympathize with the plotters and tried to justify what they were doing?
- A Among the general officers, there weren't very strong sentiment trying to justify the incident. On the other hand, they did not have any will or desire to clamp down on them and the person who acted in behalf of both parties at this time was TOMOYUKI YAMASHITA.
- Q Was he a member of Staff Headquarters?
- A I believe he was Bureau Chief in the War Ministry.
- Q Was he a man that had been closely associated with ARAKI and MASAKI in the Manchurian incident days?



A I don't believe he had any direct connection there. I believe the reason why he acted as a go-between was because of his official position. The Army propaganda at that time stated in order to solve the present difficulties, <sup>MASAKI</sup> Manchuria must be given the function of forming a Cabinet.

Q In other words, the Army group were trying to put MASAKI forth as Premier?

A The Emperor at that time had a very firm attitude toward the rebellion. He said that unless the incident has been completely quieted down, no cabinet formation will be executed. The Emperor ordered the existing cabinet to settle the incident.

Q Why was it that MASAKI not long before had been removed as Inspector General of Military Education?

A It was said that MASAKI was trying to organize a separate faction within the Army and he was removed in order to prevent the Army from becoming split up.

Q And how was he removed? Did the Emperor have something to do with his removal?

A No, the War Minister, HAYASHI, removed him but MASAKI was very unwilling.

Q The Emperor was in sympathy with his removal at the time, was he not?

A Yes, and for that reason, the Emperor consented to MASAKI's removal and for that reason, the AIZAWA incident occurred and NAGATA was killed.

Q And there were elements in the military group just previous to February 26 that resented very much the removal of MASAKI?

A Yes.

Q Wasn't his removal tied up with the February 26th incident as one of the issues, wouldn't you say?

A And so the Kodo faction was acting under MASAKI and ARAKI in that respect.



- Q The ARAKI and MASAKI factions and groups felt that the removal of MASAKI had been brought about by the opposition, which included the political parties, they felt, and the Zaibatsu, and even the Emperor? Isn't that right?
- A I don't know if the Emperor was included.
- Q The Emperor generally had been opposing a great deal of this military program, had he not and in that respect, he would have to be numbered among the opposition, wouldn't he?
- A Yes, that is true, but the military of Japan would not consider the Emperor in that category. Both parties were trying their utmost to win over the Emperor.
- Q They both wanted to govern through the Emperor? They wanted to accomplish their ends through the Emperor and not despite the Emperor? Is that right?
- A Immediately after the incident broke out, the participants were called uprisers. Four days later, they were called trouble-makers and later on, they were called rebels. So you can understand, the sentiment changed.
- Q When you say they were called that, were they called those names by the press men? By whom were they called those names?
- A They were called so in the communique issued by the War Ministry.
- Q Can we say that the fundamental or underlying cause of the February 26 incident was the demand put on by the military for increased appropriations for equipment but that one of the immediate causes of the incident breaking out was the discharge and removal of MASAKI?
- A I believe that is one factor that was directly instrumental. MASAKI was called in by the insurgents and they tried to use him but MASAKI was highly indignant at their actions because he didn't agree to the direct use of force.
- Q You don't think MASAKI helped plot the incident prior to its breaking out?
- A I believe that is highly questionable. I believe he was listening to the plan or the plot in a passive manner but that is neither approving or disapproving.
- Q You think he knew about it in advance?



- A I believe he did know. It was said he knew everything about the situation. Then later on, he was investigated in the court martial. He was absolved and the verdict of the court was "not guilty" at that time.
- Q At least, the insurgents at all times looked upon MASAKI as their leader, did they not, whether he was very active or not?
- A I believe that the rebellion was executed, depending upon him. The insurgents thought that MASAKI would help them from behind.
- Q In other words, they thought if they rose up, MASAKI would come forward and assume leadership and he didn't do so to the extent they thought he would?
- A Yes.
- Q ARAKI, in those days was particularly incensed also over the removal of MASAKI, was he not?
- A ARAKI may have been incensed, I do not know, but ARAKI at this time was not so active.
- Q Do you think ARAKI knew about the plot in advance and participated in it?
- A It is questionable if he knew as MASAKI did.
- Q Both ARAKI and MASAKI desired to accomplish the same result that the insurgents wanted, did they not? But they had different ideas as to how to bring it about?
- A Yes.
- Q Both MASAKI and ARAKI desired for the military to assume control of the Government in order that the military forces might be strengthened so that they might carry out their program in China? Isn't that correct?
- A Generally so.
- Q What part, if any, did MINAMI have in the Incident.
- A I don't believe that MINAMI was involved at all and MINAMI wasn't even in the picture at this time.



- Q Was ITAGAKI active on behalf of the insurgents?
- A I believe that ITAGAKI didn't have any connection whatsoever.
- Q Was he in Manchuria in those days, do you think?
- A I do not know where he was at that time
- Q What about this man, OKAWA, who was active in Mukden days? Was he involved in this incident?
- A I don't believe that OKAWA was involved because he was connected with the other faction, the Tosei. This happened to be an incident created by the Kodo. The Tosei faction is made up of field grade officers mostly.
- Q Will you tell me again the difference in aims of these two factions, the Tosei and Kodo? What distinguished their programs?
- A The programs of the Tosei faction and Kodo faction are generally similar. The only difference lies in the personalities that is leading it. In the Kodo faction, NISHIDA and KITTA are leaders while OKAWA is the leader of the Tosei faction. The reason why the two factions were formed is because OKAWA and NISHIDA quarreled and then both of these persons were very quick-tempered and narrow-minded, and because of bad relations, there was a split.
- Q Did the Kodo group get any support from the other faction in this incident?
- A No, the Tosei faction did not aid at all. Before the October incident, the Tosei and Kodo factions were together but the younger officers felt that the older field grade officers had a corrupt motive and so after that, a split occurred.
- Q What did they think was corrupt about their motives?
- A They were said to be desiring promotions or financial remuneration and things like that.
- Q What did our man HASHIMOTO have to do with the Incident?
- A He was a member of the Tosei faction.



- Q You don't think he was active in this incident?
- A I don't believe he was very active. In the October incident, the General Staff officers had a plan of giving false Army orders to all the troops in Japan and so in the February 26 incident, it was feared that the insurgents would issue false Army orders; but because of the fact that the Tosei was not involved at all in the rebellion, our fear did not materialize.
- Q The Tosei faction was sympathetic with what was going on were they not, but did not actively participate?
- A The reason why it took four days for the rebellion to be brought under control is because of the sympathizing done by the field-grade officers within the Tosei faction and because they had plotted and intrigued in that respect. Also, because they requested a cabinet to be formed under MASAKI.
- Q By that, do you mean the Tosei group, or both groups?
- A Both groups.
- Q I take it that it is your opinion that if these two groups had gotten together and not fought among themselves, the incident might well have been successful?
- A Yes, and I believe it would have become a terrible situation.
- Q But both factions did come forward and support MASAKI for Premier as a solution of the problem at the moment?
- A Because, if the MASAKI Cabinet was consented to, the militarists would go rampant and make all sorts of demands. I felt that the incident must be completely quieted down before any thought about Cabinet formation could be taken up.
- Q Wasn't NEMOTO's part in the incident in about the same category as HASHIMOTO?
- A Yes.
- Q Tell me what part ISHIWARA played?
- A I do not know accurately but I heard that ISHIWARA as a staff officer was very active for the incident and that he was highly sympathetic.



Q Which faction of these two groups was he in?

A I believe he was close to the Kodo faction.

Q How about KOISO? Was he involved in the incident?

A I believe he was involved. He is more or less the head of the Tosei faction.

Q How about Colonel OBATA?

A I don't believe he was involved.

Q Lt. Colonel SUZUKI played a part in the incident, didn't he? What was his part?

A He did not have any direct connection. He was active in settling the incident.

Q How about SHIGETO?

A I do not know if he was in Japan at that time.

Q And HAYASHI, the War Minister. What part did he play in the incident?

A He undoubtedly was opposed to the incident. HAYASHI naturally was responsible for the removal of MASAKI and he was of the Tosei faction.

Q Was General MITSUI involved in the incident?

A I do not know. I don't believe he was involved but I believe he was a sympathizer.

Q Was he in staff headquarters in those days, would you say.

A I have no recollection.

Q You mention a General OKAMURA? Do you know what part he played in the incident? On February 28, you indicate that PRINCE KONOYE stated that Major-Generals OKAMURA and YAMASHITA were active in the plot?

A I do not know anything about General OKAMURA. I believe he is now a full general.



- Q What about Colonel ISHIMOTO?
- A There are about three ISHIMOTO brothers and I don't know which one of them this is but I believe this story is not authentic.
- Q Who was it you said was more or less the head of the Kodo faction - the leader?
- A ISHIWARA was close to the Kodo faction but the actual leaders were the young captains and some of them are persons like KODA and AMANO. There were twelve captains involved in the incident and they were all given the death penalty.
- Q But ARAKI and MASAKI were the higher-ups that were sympathetic to the Kodo faction. That is right, isn't it?
- A Yes.
- Q And HAYASHI was the higher-up who was sympathetic to the Tosei faction. Is that right?
- A Yes.
- Q Who else in the higher ranks was sympathetic with the Tosei faction besides HAYASHI?
- A The leaders of the Tosei faction were HAYASHI and the late NAGATA and HASHIMOTO and other field-grade officers.
- Q NAGATA is dead? That is right?
- A Yes.
- Q It is true though, isn't it, that the immediate desire of both factions, although they differed in how to accomplish it, was for the military to obtain control of the Government. That is true, isn't it?
- A Yes, generally so.
- Q In their long-range plan, both factions were thinking in terms that after they had obtained control of the Government and had built up the military power they were seeking to acquire, they then desired to have Japan expand further into Manchuria and China. Wasn't that their long-range program?



- A I don't believe they had any long-range plan in that respect but the young officers were indignant of the fact that preparations were insufficient.
- Q Don't you think it was in their planning that they wanted the country to become strong in a military sense so that they could have a show-down on the China affairs which were always embarrassing through these various incidents. They wanted a sufficient force in order to make demands in China and if they weren't carried out, they could move in with their military force and settle it.
- A Such is the indication but I don't know if they actually had plans.
- Q That was the general attitude of ISHIWARA, wasn't it?
- A ISHIWARA did not favor the China incident because he wanted to settle the Manchurian matters and he was more engrossed in dealing with Soviet Russia. There was a division of opinion as to which to take up first - China or Russia.
- Q But the real purpose of the military group we have been talking about was to build up sufficient military and governmental strength so that an aggressive foreign policy could be adopted with reference to China and Russia. Is that correct?
- A Yes.
- Q Who all was killed in the incident?
- A SAITO.
- Q And the Finance Minister TAKAHASHI?
- A Yes. WATANABE of the Bureau of Military Affairs and the Inspector General of Military Training. Those three and SUZUKI was injured.
- Q OKADA escaped?
- A Yes, and MAKINO escaped.
- Q Those particular men were sought out because the insurgents felt they were leaders in opposing the increase in military strength - is that right?
- A Yes.



- Q You write several items about the Supreme War Council and in your entry of February 26, you indicate that the Supreme War Council took the position that they agreed with the opinions of the insurgents and that they were in favor of having their program carried out, and that if they did retire and withdraw the Supreme War Council would support their program. Was that the attitude of the Supreme War Council?
- A Because the Supreme War Council took on that sort of an attitude, the incident wasn't termed a rebellion.
- Q In other words, what the insurgents were doing, was really what the Army group wanted?
- A Yes and because the members of the Supreme War Council all have different ideas and they couldn't get together, the matter of calling it a rebellion did not come out conclusively.
- Q In other words, there was no organized effort on the part of the military to suppress the incident but they were divided as to what should be done about it.
- A The Army were fearful that any attitude on its part unfavorable to the plotters would bring forth sympathizers of the insurgents throughout Japan and we were highly indignant that the military took on such a foolish attitude.
- Q The only real reason, as I see it, why the military didn't take over the Government completely on that occasion was the fact that there was fighting among themselves. Had they been unified the result would have been complete military control of Japan after the incident.
- A Yes.
- Q You say in your diary that the Chief of the Privy Council IKKI desired to resign because he thought he was the cause of the incident. What did he have to do with the incident? Why did he feel that way.
- A It is because he was one person described as the advocator of the Emperor Organ Theory and he has been opposed by the militarists in that respect. While he was an instructor at the Tokyo Imperial University, he lectured on the Emperor Organ Theory and for that reason, he was highly criticized.



- Q This really was a move on the part of the military to try and bring about a Fascist type or totalitarian type of Government in Japan, was it not?
- A The young officers' group that were perpetrators of the incident only had an immediate object while the sympathizers tried to utilize the incident to that effect and so the MASAKI Cabinet has been strictly demanded.
- Q By the sympathizers, you mean the higher ranking leaders we referred to such as ARAKI, ISHIWARA and others?
- A Yes.
- Q Those were the people that decided to build up the strength of the Army so that a much more positive and aggressive foreign policy could be put into effect in Japan?
- A Yes.
- Q What part, if any, did the Navy have in this incident and what was the attitude of the high-ranking Navy officials?
- A The Navy was highly indignant at the incident and according to the reports, the Navy said it was ready to quell the rebellion if the Army was unable to do so. I even heard a story to the effect that the marines were landed from the warships.
- Q Who was Prince Higashikuni?
- A PRINCE HIGASHIKUNI is a member of the Imperial family and ~~and~~ this is the person that formed a cabinet after the cessation of World War II.
- Q How was the incident finally brought under control?
- A After the insurgents were classed as rebels, tanks and balloons were used to spread bills and pamphlets telling the soldiers to quit and the moral of the insurgents collapsed and there were many of the participants that returned to their respective units and therefore the rebellion was quelled without a shot being fired and all the officers were captured.
- Q In the meantime, during the three or four days the incident was taking place, the Emperor was practically a prisoner within the palace grounds, was he not?



- A No, because the Imperial Guard Division was not one of the rebels.
- Q But the rebels on the outside prevented free action on the part of the Emperor and confined him to his Palace Grounds, did they not?
- A Naturally because of the situation he could not go out although the Palace Grounds was not entirely circled. I was able to go in and out of the Palace grounds myself. The insurgents were centered around the Imperial Diet, the Staff Headquarters and the War Ministry.
- Q Because of the fact that a great majority of the military people sympathized with what the insurgents were trying to do, the incident at first, and for several days, was not thought of or considered as being a rebellion in military circles, was it?
- A No, in the military circles, they were not considered as rebels or the incident as a rebellion.
- Q What finally caused them to change their minds and to consider them as rebels, to arrest them, try them, and execute a number of them?
- A Because the Emperor had a firm attitude regarding the incident as a rebellion and public sentiment thought that the action of the officers in ordering troops was an act of rebellion.
- Q There isn't any question in your mind but what it was a rebellion, is there?
- A Yes, I considered it a rebellion from the very first and under the national compulsory service laws which drafted all the soldiers of Japan, any acts whereby the soldiers are used for selfish motives, created a highly indignant reaction on the part of the public.
- Q This was an instance, was it not, where the Emperor, by taking a firm stand commanded the loyalty of the Army group and was able to cause the uprising to be suppressed?
- A Yes.
- Q As I see it as we go along, every time the Emperor really took a definite stand, he always was supported. Isn't that true?
- A Yes.



Certificate of Interpreter

I, Fred F. Suzukawa , 2nd Lt. 02030605  
(name) (Rank) (Serial Number)

being sworn on oath, state that I truly translated the questions and answers given from English to Japanese and from Japanese to English respectively, and that the above transcription of such questions and answers, consisting of 15 pages, is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Fred F. Suzukawa, 2nd Lt AUS

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 1946.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name and Rank)

Duly Detailed Investigating Officer,  
International Prosecution Section, GHQ, SCAP.

Certificate of Stenographer

I, S. M. Betar , hereby certify that I acted as stenographer at the interrogation set out above, and that I transcribed the foregoing questions and answers, and that the transcription is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

S M Betar

Certificate of Interrogator.

I, (~~XIX~~) Henry R. Sackett , \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

~~XIX~~ \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

certify that on the 20th day of February, 1946, personally appeared before me ~~XIX~~ KIDO, Koichi and according to Lt. Fred F. Suzukawa Interpreter, gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth therein.

Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan. \_\_\_\_\_  
Place

20 February 1946 \_\_\_\_\_  
Date