

IPS 4/96

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(40)

INTERROGATION OFSHIGEMITSU, Mamoru

Date and Time: 19 March 1946 - 1420 - 1700
Place : Room 753, Meiji Building, Tokyo, Japan
Present : SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru
Elton M. Hyder, Interrogator
Taken in English by Mr. Hyder

Questions by : Mr. Hyder

Q. Please give chronologically your official positions.

A. January 1931 - July 1932 - Minister to China in Shanghai; injured by bomb and returned to Japan.

April 1933 - April 1936 - Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Nov 1936 - Nov 1938 - Ambassador to Russia

Nov 1939 - June 1941 - Ambassador to Great Britain

Jan 1942 - April 1943 - Ambassador to Nanking

April 1943 - April 1945 - Foreign Minister

July 1944 - April 1945 - Concurrently Minister for Greater East Asia

Aug 1945 - Sept 1945 - Foreign Minister

From April 1945 to Aug 1945 I held no official position.

Q. As Foreign Minister you handled correspondence with the Swiss government?

A. I recollect several times.

Q. Do you recall refusing permission to the Swiss for their delegates to speak to POW without Japanese witnesses?

A. The matter was handled by the Special Section of the War Office - Information Bureau. We communicated between this Bureau and the Swiss.

SHIGEMITSU 19 March 1946 (cont'd)

- Q. Who decided that the Swiss could not talk to the POW without Japanese witnesses present?
- A. That was decided by the War Ministry.
- Q. By the War Minister?
- A. By the Information Bureau.
- Q. Did not the Minister of War and the Vice-Minister of War make regulations governing the treatment of POW?
- A. The War Ministry did. The contents of these communications were always decided by the Bureau.
- Q. Who was in charge?
- A. I do not recollect. The Foreign Office had its own section dealing with the matters concerning all foreigners and enemies. This section had to handle all of these things. The Chief of this section in the Foreign Office - SUZUKI, Kuyman - talked with the Chief of other sections on these matters.
- Q. Is he still living?
- A. He is now in Yokohama representing the Foreign Office in Yokohama.
- Q. In May 1933 you told the Swiss you would in the treatment of POW apply mutatis mutandis the provisions of the Geneva Convention?
- A. No. We said we would be fair in treatment of prisoners.
- Q. Did you inspect any camps?
- A. That was not permitted.
- Q. What did you mean by the phrase "mutatis mutandis"?
- A. By "mutatis mutandis" we meant as far as we can. That was our legal standpoint.
- Q. Did you ever request to inspect a POW camp?
- A. SUZUKI did that for me. It was not well received. SUZUKI requested permission from the Chief of the Section.

SHIGEMITSU 19 March 1946 (cont'd)

- Q. You knew in May 1942 that the War Ministry had decided not to apply the Hague and Geneva Conventions?
- A. No. I knew we were not a signatory power.
- Q. You knew the provisions of the Hague and Geneva Conventions?
- A. Yes
- Q. You knew the War Ministry had regulations governing POW?
- A. Not in detail.
- Q. You knew they were in conflict with the Geneva and Hague Conventions provisions?
- A. They wanted to follow the language. The fundamental idea was to treat them properly and correctly. I cannot say as to detail.
- Q. You wanted to "go/far as you could". Why could you not accept the provisions in full?
- A. We did not want to be bound in detail.
- Q. Why did you not want to be bound in detail?
- A. I cannot answer.
- Q. Were you responsible for the acceptance "mutatis mutandis"?
- A. The substance was decided by Army Minister and Navy Minister in the first instance. They proposed it in the Cabinet. It must have been done during my office by the Ministers agreeing beforehand (Army, Navy, Foreign and Prime Ministers) as I do not recall it having been brought before the Cabinet.
- Q. Do you recall their having approached you before a Cabinet meeting on this?
- A. I cannot recollect. I know that the Foreign Office liked to follow the Geneva Convention as far as circumstances would allow.
- Q. Who was really responsible, - you, or the Army or Navy Ministers?
- A. The Cabinet ultimately but the Army and Navy primarily.

SHIGEMITSU - 19 March 1946 -(cont'd)

Q. You can say those two are actually responsible?

A. Yes. After consulting other ministers.

Q. The Minister of War was TOJO?

A. Yes. He had concurrent posts.

Q. And the Minister of the Navy?

A. SHIMADA

Q. Again in June 1943 you refused permission to the Swiss to visit POW without Japanese witnesses?

A. We liked to accommodate the Swiss Minister but the Army and Navy would not.

Q. When the requests came in what were the mechanics?

A. It came through the Foreign Office to the Information Bureau in the War Office. I directed SUZUKI to ask them; they made the decisions. We tried to use our influence.

Q. Would you not have had more influence if you as Foreign Minister had talked to the Chief of that Bureau?

A. The Foreign Minister talks to the War Minister about general affairs.

Q. Did you not talk to the War Minister about these refusals?

A. Yes. I did sometimes.

Q. What did he say?

A. I cannot exactly say. I discussed generally with him.

Q. Did not you discuss with him the constant protests received by the Foreign Office from the British and Americans?

A. Yes. He said he always would do his best. We faced a difficulty in that we were not signatory to the Geneva Convention.

Q. Would you have followed it if you had been a signatory?

A. Yes.

SHIGEMITSU - 19 March 1946 (cont'd)

- Q. In July 1943 you refused the request to permit the Swiss to visit area camps?
- A. We made a strong request on this to the Information Bureau to let the Swiss visit the area camps. Many of them were accepted. I don't recall the date.
- Q. You know a lot of them were refused, do you not?
- A. In the beginning my requests were often refused.
- Q. Did you take this up with the War Minister?
- A. My request went thru SUZUKI to the Information Bureau. I discussed generally with the War Minister the humanitarian treatment of POW.
- Q. You also received protests on the working of POW in war factories?
- A. I do not recollect. It is possible.
- Q. All protests and communications came through you?
- A. Through my office. It depends on the degree of importance whether I received them.
- Q. The treatment of POW is an important matter, is it not, and you had a rule that everything came to you?
- A. Yes, of course.
- Q. Everything relative to the treatment of POW came through you and to your attention?
- A. Yes
- Q. You followed the protest or request through?
- A. Yes
- Q. What would you do when your office failed to answer a protest or request?
- A. I think we answered all, but in some cases they were delayed because we couldn't get substance of answer from Information Bureau. In many cases delay was involved.
- Q. When you received a protest that American POW were dying of malnutrition what did you do?

SHIGEMITSU - 19 March 1946 (cont'd)

A. We asked if that were true and if so what could be done.

Q. Did you ever bring it up in the Cabinet meeting?

A. No. These things are principally handled by Army, Navy and Foreign Ministers.

Q. You knew, of course, of the execution of the Doolittle fliers?

A. Yes. It was published in the newspapers.

Q. Did you talk to the War Minister?

A. The case was closed when I became Foreign Minister so it did not come up for discussion and I insisted that correct treatment be given the POW.

Q. You knew, of course, that POW were not being correctly treated?

A. No, I did not because we were not correctly supplied with information. I wanted to send SUZUKI around but this was not accepted because they thought it was outside the duties of the Foreign Office.

Q. You knew of the regulations promulgated by the Ministry of War relative to treatment of POW?

A. Yes. They were published in the papers.

Q. Is the Minister of War responsible for the treatment of POW?

A. Yes. Under the law there are two classes: The POW in the homeland (Japan) are under the Information Bureau of the Ministry of War. Outside of the homeland - jurisdiction is under the Area Commander (Army and Navy).

Q. Who was Chief of the Information Bureau while you were Foreign Minister?

A. Gen. MARUYAMA (does not know first name) - I am not sure of the name. Someone else replaced him while I was Foreign Minister.

Q. Is he living now?

A. I think so.

Q. Did you ever talk to the Chief of the Information Bureau?

A. Very seldom. SUZUKI always talked to him.

SHIGEMITSU - 19 March 1946 - (cont'd)

Q. You knew, of course, that your office furnished the only information that could be obtained by the American and British governments?

A. Yes, of course.

Q. Did you not want to give accurate information?

A. I did. I wanted to give the Swiss Minister as much satisfaction as possible. Through my efforts things were much better later.

Q. You must have known then that POW were not receiving the best treatment?

A. Satisfactory answers from the Information Bureau made it harder to ask for more information. But I suspected from the Swiss protests that things were not satisfactory.

Q. Your answers were really the answers of the Information Bureau?

A. Yes. The regulations gave the Information Bureau jurisdiction. Requests came to us from the Swiss. The Information Bureau decided the answer and transmitted it to us. The Foreign Office always gave them advice and the request.

Q. You might suggest, but the Information Bureau decided?

A. That is correct.

Q. Did the Chief of the Bureau actually decide himself or were there members who had authority with him?

A. I am not sure of the internal organization.

Q. You are sure that this Chief had the authority to decide?

A. We always dealt with him. Whether he had to consult with other people I am not sure.

Q. The policy is above him, is it not?

A. Yes. It is above him but how to execute, that was his responsibility. The policy was to treat the POW humanely.

Q. Then the false reports were his.

A. It was his responsibility.

Q. The Chief of the Information Bureau?

A. Yes

SHIGEMITSU - 19 March 1946 (cont'd)

Q. Didn't TOJO decide in 1942 not to abide by any provisions of the Geneva Convention?

A. We were not a signatory power. We wanted to follow it *mutatis mutandi*.

Q. Who would lay down the policy guiding the Information Bureau to usually give a satisfactory answer to you?

A. Since I received protests from the Swiss I suspected something. I tried to improve the situation. I cannot say that a policy like this was laid down. Answers I got always said "treated quite well" and denied the charges in the protest. Because of this it was difficult to go beyond this.

Q. When you became Foreign Minister you shortly realized that the POW were not being treated humanely?

A. Yes

Q. This Information Bureau handled POW in Japan - how they POW were to be fed and treated?

A. Yes

Certificate of Interpreter

I, _____, _____ (Rank) (Serial Number)
(name)
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 _____ pages, is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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, _____, 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.

Certificate of Interrogator.

I, (we) **Elton M. Hyder**, _____,
and _____,

certify that on the **19th** day of **March**, 1946, personally appeared before me (we) **SHIGEMITSU, Manoru** and ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ **XXXXXXXXXX** gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth therein.

Tokyo, Japan, 20 March 1946
Place

Elton M. Hyder
Elton M. Hyder

Date

IPS Doc No 4196

INTERROGATION OF
SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru

Date and Time: 20 March 1946, 1235-1500 hours

Place : Room 753, Meiji Building, Tokyo, Japan.

Present : SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru
Mr. E. M. Hyder Interrogator
(Taken in English by Mr. E. M. Hyder).

Questions by : Mr. Hyder.

NOTE:

The Military Affairs Bureau is the most important in the War Office. The heads were always influential. All departments were really under this Bureau and the young officers were collected in the Bureau.

General Koiso was the head of the Military Affairs Bureau when the Manchuria Incident occurred. The head of the Military Affairs Bureau was only nominally under the War Ministry. The heads of the Information Bureau during the war were General Mikio UYEMURA (believed to be now in Manchuria); General Hei HAMABA (believed to have died in Burma); and General Hiroshi TAMURA (believed to be now in Tokyo).

Q. Did you talk to KOISO (Prime Minister) about the requests and protests you were receiving from the Swiss Government as to the treatment of prisoners of war?

(SHIGEMITSU 20 March 1946 Cont'd)

A. Yes, I did.

Q. What did he say?

A. He also approved my idea. He never objected to proper treatment.

Q. Did you tell him that they must not be getting proper treatment?

A. Yes, he was the Premier, not the War Minister. The War Minister was SUGIYAMA. I think SUGIYAMA gave the Chief of the Information Bureau instructions to improve the treatment of the prisoners of war.

Q. Couldn't he (SUGIYAMA) have improved the treatment of the prisoners of war, as War Minister?

A. Yes.

Q. SUGIYAMA was War Minister when you refused to allow camp visits in occupied territories.

A. Yes, I am not sure though in our refusal. The answer on this always came from the War Ministry.

Q. When you accepted the Geneva and Hague provisions mutatis mutandis, you agreed that your Government would be responsible for prisoners of war and not area commanders, is that not right?

A. Yes.

Q. Though SUGIYAMA agreed with you, you knew that prisoners of war were not being treated properly, did you not?

A. I suspected.

Q. You had no knowledge at all of maltreatment?

A. No, I was puzzled at the Office in general. I wanted to improve the treatment in all directions as far as possible for us.

Q. Why do you say "as far as possible for us"?

A. Our food supply was difficult. We could not always supply foreign food but I thought we should. It is the shame of the nation. I wanted to help - for later.

(SHIGEMITSU 20 March 1946 Cont'd)

- Q. Who would you charge from 1941 to 1945 for the responsibility of maltreatment of prisoners of war?
- A. The War Ministers.
- Q. What about the Premier? He knew of it.
- A. Yes, I took it up with Premier TOJO and KOISO.
- Q. Could the Premier if he had wanted to improve the treatment - would he have brought it up in the Cabinet?
- A. I presume he had knowledge.
- Q. You told him about it. He knew what you knew and possibly more.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Couldn't the Prime Minister have brought it up in the Cabinet - saying I want to visit the camps - I want better treatment.
- A. The Army and Navy are responsible for those things and correspondence with the Foreign Office.
- Q. Did you have any duty other than correspondence?
- A. My duty was strictly limited to transmittance of notes and notes of answer.
- Q. Didn't you call to the attention of the War and Navy Minister the fact that there must be bad treatment?
- A. Yes. They said the prisoners of war were properly treated.
- Q. Didn't you talk to the Premiers, TOJO and KOISO?
- A. Yes. They never disagreed with me. I went to SUZUKI under me who had contact with the Head of the Information Bureau.
- Q. Couldn't you or the Premier have brought it up in the Cabinet?
- A. This was mostly between the concerned Ministers. If there was no disagreement, it never came up to the Cabinet for discussion.
- Q. Couldn't you have told those Ministers you disagreed?
- A. They always agreed with me and said prisoners of war were properly treated.

(SHIGEMITSU 20 March 1946 Cont'd)

- Q. Didn't you after a while think SUGIYAMA was lying?
A. No.
- Q. Did you think the Swiss were?
A. No.
- Q. Someone, you must have thought was lying?
A. The Foreign Office was fooled. The Swiss transmitted information the enemy was supplying.
- Q. Did you ever see a prisoner of war camp?
A. No.
- Q. Did SUZUKI?
A. Yes.
- Q. What did he say?
A. His report was rather an ordinary one. He thought everything was in order.
- Q. Which camp did he visit?
A. It was inside Japan. I do not know the name.
- Q. Where were they located?
A. In Nagano and those in Tokyo.
- Q. Did he go to the Osaka prisoner of war camp?
A. I don't know.
- Q. He got to go frequently?
A. At least several times.
- Q. Did he hand in a good report always?
A. Yes. So did the Swiss Minister.
- Q. What did the Swiss say?
A. He said it was in good condition.
- Q. How many times did you permit the Swiss to visit?
A. I don't know. He insisted to see more. I think he wanted to see outside Japan. This was not accepted.
- Q. You did not let him see all of the camps in Japan?
A. To the best of my recollection he did. But that was not my jurisdiction - that was the Bureau of Information. The answer came through my office. /SUZUKI Many times handed it to the Swiss Minister.
- Q. Were you always informed of the contents of the answer?
A. Yes, I think so.

(SHIGEMITSU 20 March 1946 Cont'd)

- Q. Did you not decide in the Cabinet on the policy of the treatment of prisoners of war?
- A. Policy was decided on in the Cabinet but how to exercise it was military domain. The Cabinet could not step into it. This was by custom and regulation.

Certificate of Interpreter

I, _____, _____, _____
(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 _____ pages, is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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

(Name and Rank)

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

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Certificate of Interrogator.

I, (vs) Elton M. Hyder, _____,
and _____,

certify that on the 20 day of March, 1946, personally appeared before me (vs) SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru and ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~, ~~Interpreter~~, gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth therein, **the interrogation being conducted in the English language.**

Room 753, Meiji Building
Place

Tokyo, Japan

Elton M Hyder

20 March 1946
Date

IPS Doc No 4196

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INTERROGATION OF
SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru

Date and Time: 15 April 1946, 1230-1530
Place: Mr. Shigemitsu's Residence,
Suma-Cho, Zaimokuza, Samakura City,
Kanagawa Prefecture.
Present: SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru
Edward P. Monaghan, Interrogator
Alexander A. Muzzey, Interrogator
John MacNichol, Stenographer

Mr. Kase of the Foreign Office advised IPS that SHIGEMITSU indicated to him that he had some information he desired to convey to IPS. Pursuant to instruction these investigators contacted Mr. SHIGEMITSU and as he was not listed as a possible defendant no attempt was made to interrogate him thoroughly. The sole purpose of the interview was to obtain the information he desired to relate. SHIGEMITSU stated that he was out of the country during most of the time and was not too familiar with the events which transpired during 1931-1941.

He furnished the following information:

(Interrogation of SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru, 15 April 1946)

All Army people were more or less of one clique or one tendency, and they formed their own factions. These factions were broken up into various groups; however, they all had the fundamental militaristic aim of their leaders. Political power was entrusted to the government, but it permitted the military elements to act independently from the government insofar as military matters are concerned. It was this situation which formed the basis for the trouble leading up to the events of 1941. At one period before 1931 liberalism became popular, military powers lost their influence and it was thought that party politics was firmly established. But unfortunately, after the first world war, the question of disarmament in the League of Nations was publicly criticized by the military elements. They did not like disarmament and bitterly objected to the 5-5-3 Naval ratio. In accepting disarmament they thought their power would be lost altogether. To regain power the military began to widen their power in internal politics. In 1931 and again in 1936 abortive coup d'etat occurred. These were inspired by the militarists in opposition to the conciliatory policy of the government and leaders who wanted to peacefully settle Japan's difficulties with other nations. The War Ministry played a prominent role in these coup d'etats. It is difficult for me to say anything about the individuals involved as I was out of the country. It is said that UGAKI and MINAMI and KOISO played important parts in these incidents. I blame all military cliques, because they have the

(Interrogation of SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru, 15 April 1946)

same common idea adduced from the military system which was imported from Germany. The instigators of the Manchurian and China Incidents were in the powerful Department of Military Affairs. Hashimoto was very strong and powerful. There were others but they are dead. Not only the chiefs of sections within the Department of Military Affairs, but the subordinates, such as Colonels and Majors are primarily responsible. Another powerful element was the Recruiting Department, which controlled the gendarmerie. The tactics of the militarists were always to get power, political power by coup d'etat internally, and at the same time they wanted to have international difficulties to cause conditions in the country requiring reconstruction.

Araki was the leader of one military faction. He belonged to the ideological group. Other military factions were led by KOISO, ITAGAKI, and of course TOJO. They were politically minded and wanted to expand in China and Manchuria. ARAKI wanted to have a powerful nationalistic country, more an ideological one. In 1936, the February 26 Incident was created by the militarists so that they could establish power in Japan. Until 1936 the militarists sought to obtain their objective by violence with the aid of the extreme elements outside military circles, especially philosophers and other people. They all wanted to get military power established, through violence if necessary. The right element philosophers outside the military circle were affiliated with the military people.

(Interrogation of SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru, 15 April 1946)

General TANAKA's Cabinet was responsible for the crushing of the communists, and consequently they went underground. They were clever enough to infiltrate into the military circle. The communist idea was to create trouble in Japan as much as possible so that they could accomplish their mission. At the same time the communists received instructions from the Comintern to create trouble in Japan--to oust the Emperor system and bring about bourgeois revolution. Because the militarists were against Russia, communists wanted to destroy Japanese power from inside in creating revolution. The communists' activities became very efficient in all circles, so that their focus, always their policy, was to be friendly with Russia and antagonistic toward China and other powers. The military wanted expansion outside and a military dictatorship within. Their ideas were greatly supplied not only by the right extremists but also by the communists. Having obtained their objective by violence, the militarists destroyed the foreign office, by getting their allies in key positions in the government.

OSHIMA is the one most responsible for directing the foreign policy of German indoctrination. The entire foreign office was forced to accept those who were allied with the military people.

We fought their ideas for years but they could create the utmost fear in Japan by propaganda or threats. By intimidation and violence they managed to place the government under military control. Prince Konoye struggled in his first, second and third cabinets to stop the military elements from going to the extreme, but failed.

(Interrogation of SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru, 15 April 1946)

The Tri-Partite Pact was the most unfortunate thing. I was in London at the time and first learned about the pact when it was signed. MATSUOKA sent a wire to me that it was not meant against any country, especially America. Upon my return to Japan, MATSUOKA explained to me that in concluding the pact he wanted to use that instrument to negotiate with the United States and even with Russia to come to an understanding. He did succeed in a way with Russia. I thought if we were tied with Germany by the Alliance our relations with Anglo-Saxon countries would be difficult. My mission to England was to come to some understanding with England. It was my idea that to have close connections with Germany would be disastrous to Japan.

SHIRATORI and other officials in the Foreign Office were treacherous. They circumvented those that opposed them and neutralized their efforts. OSHIMA and SHIRATORI, along with the factions that supported them, were responsible for the signing of the Tri-Partite pact.

The Zaibatsu was a powerful group outside of the military circle. The Mitsubishi element belonged to the old Zaibatsu. They were more or less liberal but wanted to keep their business going along peacefully so they went along with the militarists; however, they did not believe in revolution. The new Zaibatsu belonged to the left wing element and wanted Japanese revolution inside through external war. They tried to create a situation that would be most

(Interrogation of SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru, 15 April 1946)

favorable to them. We had a very difficult time with the Ishihara Industry and Shipping Transportation Company, Ltd. This company was unduly using the militarists and prevented us from conducting negotiations with the Dutch people who had business in Java. The new Zaibatsu was more responsible for the war than the old Zaibatsu, because they had an ideology which was supplied by the communists.

I would like to reiterate: the Army was the first who were responsible for all the trouble, and in the Army the important department was the Military Affairs Bureau. The Army and Navy had their own spokesmen and they were very powerful in creating the right atmosphere by propaganda and intimidation. They actually had control of the government under the Cabinet.

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INTERROGATION OF
SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru

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Present : SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru
Elton M. Hyder, Interrogator
Taken in English by Mr. Hyder

Questions by : Mr. Hyder

Q. Please give chronologically your official positions.

- A.** January 1931 - July 1932 - Minister to China in Shanghai; injured by bomb and returned to Japan.
 - April 1933 - April 1936 - Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs.
 - Nov 1936 - Nov 1938 - Ambassador to Russia
 - Nov 1939 - June 1941 - Ambassador to Great Britain
 - Jan 1942 - April 1943 - Ambassador to Nanking
 - April 1943 - April 1945 - Foreign Minister
 - July 1944 - April 1945 - Concurrently Minister for Greater East Asia
 - Aug 1945 - Sept 1945 - Foreign Minister
- From April 1945 to Aug 1945 I held no official position.

Q. As Foreign Minister you handled correspondence with the Swiss government?

A. I recollect several times.

Q. Do you recall refusing permission to the Swiss for their delegates to speak to POW without Japanese witnesses?

A. The matter was handled by the Special Section of the War Office - Information Bureau. We communicated between this Bureau and the Swiss.

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SHIGEMITSU 19 March 1946 (cont'd)

- Q. Who decided that the Swiss could not talk to the POW without Japanese witnesses present?
- A. That was decided by the War Ministry.
- Q. By the War Minister?
- A. By the Information Bureau.
- Q. Did not the Minister of War and the Vice-Minister of War make regulations governing the treatment of POWs?
- A. The War Ministry did. The contents of these communications were always decided by the Bureau.
- Q. Who was in charge?
- A. I do not recollect. The Foreign Office had its own section dealing with the matters concerning all foreigners and enemies. This section had to handle all of these things. The Chief of this section in the Foreign Office - SUZUKI, Kayman - talked with the Chief of other sections on these matters.
- Q. Is he still living?
- A. He is now in Yokohama representing the Foreign Office in Yokohama.
- Q. In May 1933 you told the Swiss you would in the treatment of POW apply mutatis mutandis the provisions of the Geneva Convention?
- A. No. We said we would be fair in treatment of prisoners.
- Q. Did you inspect any camps?
- A. That was not permitted.
- Q. What did you mean by the phrase "mutatis mutandis"?
- A. By "mutatis mutandis" we meant as far as we can. That was our legal standpoint.
- Q. Did you ever request to inspect a POW camp?
- A. SUZUKI did that for me. It was not well received. SUZUKI requested permission from the Chief of the Section.

SHIGEMITSU 19 March 1946 (cont'd)

- Q. You knew in May 1942 that the War Ministry had decided not to apply the Hague and Geneva Conventions?
- A. No. I knew we were not a signatory power.
- Q. You knew the provisions of the Hague and Geneva Conventions?
- A. Yes.
- Q. You knew the War Ministry had regulations governing POW?
- A. Not in detail.
- Q. You knew they were in conflict with the Geneva and Hague Conventions provisions?
- A. They wanted to follow the language. The fundamental idea was to treat them properly and correctly. I cannot say as to detail.
- Q. You wanted to "go/as far as you could". Why could you not accept the provisions in full?
- A. We did not want to be bound in detail.
- Q. Why did you not want to be bound in detail?
- A. I cannot answer.
- Q. Were you responsible for the acceptance "mutatis mutandis"?
- A. The substance was decided by Army Minister and Navy Minister in the first instance. They proposed it in the Cabinet. It must have been done during my office by the Ministers agreeing beforehand (Army, Navy, Foreign and Prime Ministers) as I do not recall it having been brought before the Cabinet.
- Q. Do you recall their having approached you before a Cabinet meeting on this?
- A. I cannot recollect. I know that the Foreign Office liked to follow the Geneva Convention as far as circumstances would allow.
- Q. Who was really responsible, - you, or the Army or Navy Ministers?
- A. The Cabinet ultimately but the Army and Navy primarily.

SHIGEMITSU - 19 March 1946 -(cont'd)

Q. You can say these two are actually responsible?

A. Yes. After consulting other ministers.

Q. The Minister of War was TOJO?

A. Yes. He had concurrent posts.

Q. And the Minister of the Navy?

A. SHIMADA

Q. Again in June 1943 you refused permission to the Swiss to visit POW without Japanese witnesses?

A. We liked to accommodate the Swiss Minister but the Army and Navy would not.

Q. When the requests came in what were the mechanics?

A. It came through the Foreign Office to the Information Bureau in the War Office. I directed SUZUKI to ask them; they made the decisions. We tried to use our influence.

Q. Would you not have had more influence if you as Foreign Minister had talked to the Chief of that Bureau?

A. The Foreign Minister talks to the War Minister about general affairs.

Q. Did you not talk to the War Minister about these refusals?

A. Yes. I did sometimes.

Q. What did he say?

A. I cannot exactly say. I discussed generally with him.

Q. Did not you discuss with him the constant protests received by the Foreign Office from the British and Americans?

A. Yes. He said he always would do his best. We faced a difficulty in that we were not signatory to the Geneva Convention.

Q. Would you have followed it if you had been a signatory?

A. Yes.

SHIGEMITSU - 19 March 1946 (cont'd)

- Q. In July 1943 you refused the request to permit the Swiss to visit area camps?
- A. We made a strong request on this to the Information Bureau to let the Swiss visit the area camps. Many of them were accepted. I don't recall the date.
- Q. You know a lot of them were refused, do you not?
- A. In the beginning my requests were often refused.
- Q. Did you take this up with the War Minister?
- A. My request went thru SUZUKI to the Information Bureau. I discussed generally with the War Minister the humanitarian treatment of POW.
- Q. You also received protests on the working of POW in war factories?
- A. I do not recollect. It is possible.
- Q. All protests and communications came through you?
- A. Through my office. It depends on the degree of importance whether I received them.
- Q. The treatment of POW is an important matter, is it not, and you had a rule that everything came to you?
- A. Yes, of course.
- Q. Everything relative to the treatment of POW came through you and to your attention?
- A. Yes
- Q. You followed the protest or request through?
- A. Yes
- Q. What would you do when your office failed to answer a protest or request?
- A. I think we answered all, but in some cases they were delayed because we couldn't get substance of answer from Information Bureau. In many cases delay was involved.
- Q. When you received a protest that American POW were dying of malnutrition what did you do?

SHIGEMITSU - 19 March 1946 (cont'd)

A. We asked if that were true and if so what could be done.

Q. Did you ever bring it up in the Cabinet meeting?

A. No. These things are principally handled by Army, Navy and Foreign Ministers.

Q. You know, of course, of the execution of the Doolittle fliers?

A. Yes. It was published in the newspapers.

Q. Did you talk to the War Minister?

A. The case was closed when I became Foreign Minister so it did not come up for discussion and I insisted that correct treatment be given the POW.

Q. You know, of course, that POW were not being correctly treated?

A. No, I did not because we were not correctly supplied with information. I wanted to send SUZUKI around but this was not accepted because they thought it was outside the duties of the Foreign Office.

Q. You know of the regulations promulgated by the Ministry of War relative to treatment of POW?

A. Yes. They were published in the papers.

Q. Is the Minister of War responsible for the treatment of POW?

A. Yes. Under the law there are two classes; The POW in the homeland (Japan) are under the Information Bureau of the Ministry of War. Outside of the homeland - jurisdiction is under the Area Commander (Army and Navy).

Q. Who was Chief of the Information Bureau while you were Foreign Minister?

A. Gen. MARUYAMA (does not know first name) - I am not sure of the name. Someone else replaced him while I was Foreign Minister.

Q. Is he living now?

A. I think so.

Q. Did you ever talk to the Chief of the Information Bureau?

A. Very seldom. SUZUKI always talked to him.

SHIGEMITSU - 19 March 1946 - (cont'd)

- Q. You knew, of course, that your office furnished the only information that could be obtained by the American and British governments?
- A. Yes, of course.
- Q. Did you not want to give accurate information?
- A. I did. I wanted to give the Swiss Minister as much satisfaction as possible. Through my efforts things were much better later.
- Q. You must have known then that POW were not receiving the best treatment?
- A. Satisfactory answers from the Information Bureau made it harder to ask for more information. But I suspected from the Swiss protests that things were not satisfactory.
- Q. Your answers were really the answers of the Information Bureau?
- A. Yes. The regulations gave the Information Bureau jurisdiction. Requests came to us from the Swiss. The Information Bureau decided the answer and transmitted it to us. The Foreign Office always gave them advice and the request.
- Q. You might suggest, but the Information Bureau decided?
- A. That is correct.
- Q. Did the Chief of the Bureau actually decide himself or were there members who had authority with him?
- A. I am not sure of the internal organization.
- Q. You are sure that this Chief had the authority to decide?
- A. We always dealt with him. Whether he had to consult with other people I am not sure.
- Q. The policy is above him, is it not?
- A. Yes. It is above him but how to execute, that was his responsibility. The policy was to treat the POW humanely.
- Q. Then the false reports were his.
- A. It was his responsibility.
- Q. The Chief of the Information Bureau?
- A. Yes

SHIMAMITSU - 19 March 1946 (cont'd)

Q. Didn't TOJO decide in 1942 not to abide by any provisions of the Geneva Convention?

A. We were not a signatory power. We wanted to follow it *mutatis mutandi*.

Q. Who would lay down the policy guiding the Information Bureau to usually give a satisfactory answer to you?

A. Since I received protests from the Swiss I suspected something. I tried to improve the situation. I cannot say that a policy like this was laid down. Answers I got always said "treated quite well" and denied the charges in the protest. Because of this it was difficult to go beyond this.

Q. When you became Foreign Minister you shortly realized that the POW were not being treated humanely?

A. Yes

Q. This Information Bureau handled POW in Japan - how they POW were to be fed and treated?

A. Yes

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INTERROGATION OF
SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru

Date and Time: 20 March 1946, 1235-1500 hours

Place : Room 753, Meiji Building, Tokyo, Japan.

Present : SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru
Mr. E. M. Hyder Interrogator
(Taken in English by Mr. E. M. Hyder).

Questions by : Mr. Hyder.

NOTE:

The Military Affairs Bureau is the most important in the War Office. The heads were always influential. All departments were really under this Bureau and the young officers were collected in the Bureau.

General Koiso was the head of the Military Affairs Bureau when the Manchuria Incident occurred. The head of the Military Affairs Bureau was only nominally under the War Ministry. The heads of the Information Bureau during the war were General Mikio UYEMURA (believed to be now in Manchuria); General Hei HAMABA (believed to have died in Burma); and General Hiroshi TANURA (believed to be now in Tokyo).

Q. Did you talk to KOISO (Prime Minister) about the requests and protests you were receiving from the Swiss Government as to the treatment of prisoners of war?

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(SHIGEMITSU 20 March 1946 Cont'd)

- A. Yes, I did.
- Q. What did he say?
- A. He also approved my idea. He never objected to proper treatment.
- Q. Did you tell him that they must not be getting proper treatment?
- A. Yes, he was the Premier, not the War Minister. The War Minister was SUGIYAMA. I think SUGIYAMA gave the Chief of the Information Bureau instructions to improve the treatment of the prisoners of war.
- Q. Couldn't he (SUGIYAMA) have improved the treatment of the prisoners of war, as War Minister?
- A. Yes.
- Q. SUGIYAMA was War Minister when you refused to allow camp visits in occupied territories.
- A. Yes, I am not sure though in our refusal. The answer on this always came from the War Ministry.
- Q. When you accepted the Geneva and Hague provisions mutatis mutandis, you agreed that your Government would be responsible for prisoners of war and not area commanders, is that not right?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Though SUGIYAMA agreed with you, you knew that prisoners of war were not being treated properly, did you not?
- A. I suspected.
- Q. You had no knowledge at all of maltreatment?
- A. No, I was puzzled at the Office in general. I wanted to improve the treatment in all directions as far as possible for us.
- Q. Why do you say "as far as possible for us"?
- A. Our food supply was difficult. We could not always supply foreign food but I thought we should. It is the shame of the nation. I wanted to help - for later.

(SHIGEMITSU 20 March 1946 Cont'd)

- Q. Who would you charge from 1941 to 1945 for the responsibility of maltreatment of prisoners of war?
- A. The War Ministers.
- Q. What about the Premier? He knew of it.
- A. Yes, I took it up with Premier TOJO and KOISO.
- Q. Could the Premier if he had wanted to improve the treatment - would he have brought it up in the Cabinet?
- A. I presume he had knowledge.
- Q. You told him about it. He knew what you knew and possibly more.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Couldn't the Prime Minister have brought it up in the Cabinet - saying I want to visit the camps - I want better treatment.
- A. The Army and Navy are responsible for those things and correspondence with the Foreign Office.
- Q. Did you have any duty other than correspondence?
- A. My duty was strictly limited to transmittance of notes and notes of answer.
- Q. Didn't you call to the attention of the War and Navy Minister the fact that there must be bad treatment?
- A. Yes. They said the prisoners of war were properly treated.
- Q. Didn't you talk to the Premiers, TOJO and KOISO?
- A. Yes. They never disagreed with me. I went to SUZUKI under me who had contact with the Head of the Information Bureau.
- Q. Couldn't you or the Premier have brought it up in the Cabinet?
- A. This was mostly between the concerned Ministers. If there was no disagreement, it never came up to the Cabinet for discussion.
- Q. Couldn't you have told those Ministers you disagreed?
- A. They always agreed with me and said prisoners of war were properly treated.

(SHIGEMITSU 20 March 1946 Cont'd)

- Q. Didn't you after a while think SUGIYAMA was lying?
A. No.
- Q. Did you think the Swiss were?
A. No.
- Q. Someone, you must have thought was lying?
A. The Foreign Office was fooled. The Swiss transmitted information the enemy was supplying.
- Q. Did you ever see a prisoner of war camp?
A. No.
- Q. Did SUZUKI?
A. Yes.
- Q. What did he say?
A. His report was rather an ordinary one. He thought everything was in order.
- Q. Which camp did he visit?
A. It was inside Japan. I do not know the name.
- Q. Where were they located?
A. In Nagano and those in Tokyo.
- Q. Did he go to the Osaka prisoner of war camp?
A. I don't know.
- Q. He got to go frequently?
A. At least several times.
- Q. Did he hand in a good report always?
A. Yes. So did the Swiss Minister.
- Q. What did the Swiss say?
A. He said it was in good condition.
- Q. How many times did you permit the Swiss to visit?
A. I don't know. He insisted to see more. I think he wanted to see outside Japan. This was not accepted.
- Q. You did not let him see all of the camps in Japan?
A. To the best of my recollection he did. But that was not my jurisdiction - that was the Bureau of Information. The answer came through my office. /SUZUKI Many times handed it to the Swiss Minister.
- Q. Were you always informed of the contents of the answer?
A. Yes, I think so.

(SHIGEMITSU 20 March 1946 Cont'd)

- Q. Did you not decide in the Cabinet on the policy of the treatment of prisoners of war?
- A. Policy was decided on in the Cabinet but how to exercise it was military domain. The Cabinet could not step into it. This was by custom and regulation.

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INTERROGATION OF
SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru

Date and Time: 15 April 1946, 1230-1530
Place: Mr. Shigemitsu's Residence,
Suma-Cho, Eainokusa, Samakura City,
Kanagawa Prefecture.
Present: SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru
Edward P. Monaghan, Interrogator
Alexander A. Mussey, Interrogator
John MacNichol, Stenographer

Mr. Kase of the Foreign Office advised IPS that SHIGEMITSU indicated to him that he had some information he desired to convey to IPS. Pursuant to instruction these investigators contacted Mr. SHIGEMITSU and as he was not listed as a possible defendant no attempt was made to interrogate him thoroughly. The sole purpose of the interview was to obtain the information he desired to relate. SHIGEMITSU stated that he was out of the country during most of the time and was not too familiar with the events which transpired during 1931-1941.

He furnished the following information:

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(Interrogation of SEIGEMITSU, Mamoru, 15 April 1946)

All Army people were more or less of one clique or one tendency, and they formed their own factions. These factions were broken up into various groups; however, they all had the fundamental militaristic aim of their leaders. Political power was entrusted to the government, but it permitted the military elements to act independently from the government insofar as military matters are concerned. It was this situation which formed the basis for the trouble leading up to the events of 1941. At one period before 1931 liberalism became popular, military powers lost their influence and it was thought that party politics was firmly established. But unfortunately, after the first world war, the question of disarmament in the League of Nations was publicly criticized by the military elements. They did not like disarmament and bitterly objected to the 5-5-3 Naval ratio. In accepting disarmament they thought their power would be lost altogether. To regain power the military began to widen their power in internal politics. In 1931 and again in 1936 abortive coup d'etat occurred. These were inspired by the militarists in opposition to the conciliatory policy of the government and leaders who wanted to peacefully settle Japan's difficulties with other nations. The War Ministry played a prominent role in these coup d'etats. It is difficult for me to say anything about the individuals involved as I was out of the country. It is said that UOAKI and MINAMI and KOISO played important parts in these incidents. I blame all military cliques, because they have the

(Interrogation of SHIOZUMITSU, Manora, 15 April 1946)

same common idea adduced from the military system which was imported from Germany. The instigators of the Manchurian and China Incidents were in the powerful Department of Military Affairs. Hashimoto was very strong and powerful. There were others but they are dead. Not only the chiefs of sections within the Department of Military Affairs, but the subordinates, such as Colonels and Majors are primarily responsible. Another powerful element was the Recruiting Department, which controlled the gendarmerie. The tactics of the militarists were always to get power, political power by coup d'etat internally, and at the same time they wanted to have international difficulties to cause conditions in the country requiring reconstruction.

Araki was the leader of one military faction. He belonged to the ideological group. Other military factions were led by KOISO, ITAGAKI, and of course TOJO. They were politically minded and wanted to expand in China and Manchuria. ARAKI wanted to have a powerful nationalistic country, more an ideological one. In 1936, the February 26 Incident was created by the militarists so that they could establish power in Japan. Until 1936 the militarists sought to obtain their objective by violence with the aid of the extreme elements outside military circles, especially philosophers and other people. They all wanted to get military power established, through violence if necessary. The right element philosophers outside the military circle were affiliated with the military people.

(Interrogation of SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru, 15 April 1946)

General TAKAKA's Cabinet was responsible for the crushing of the communists, and consequently they went underground. They were clever enough to infiltrate into the military circle. The communist idea was to create trouble in Japan as much as possible so that they could accomplish their mission. At the same time the communists received instructions from the Comintern to create trouble in Japan--to oust the Emperor system and bring about bourgeois revolution. Because the militarists were against Russia, communists wanted to destroy Japanese power from inside in creating revolution. The communists' activities became very efficient in all circles, so that their focus, always their policy, was to be friendly with Russia and antagonistic toward China and other powers. The military wanted expansion outside and a military dictatorship within. Their ideas were greatly supplied not only by the right extremists but also by the communists. Having obtained their objective by violence, the militarists destroyed the foreign office, by getting their allies in key positions in the government.

OSHINA is the one most responsible for directing the foreign policy of German indoctrination. The entire foreign office was forced to accept those who were allied with the military people.

We fought their ideas for years but they could create the utmost fear in Japan by propaganda or threats. By intimidation and violence they managed to place the government under military control. Prince Konoye struggled in his first, second and third cabinets to stop the military elements from going to the extreme, but failed.

(Interrogation of SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru, 15 April 1946)

The Tri-Partite Pact was the most unfortunate thing. I was in London at the time and first learned about the pact when it was signed. MATSUOKA sent a wire to me that it was not meant against any country, especially America. Upon my return to Japan, MATSUOKA explained to me that in concluding the pact he wanted to use that instrument to negotiate with the United States and even with Russia to come to an understanding. He did succeed in a way with Russia. I thought if we were tied with Germany by the Alliance our relations with Anglo-Saxon countries would be difficult. My mission to England was to come to some understanding with England. It was my idea that to have close connections with Germany would be disastrous to Japan.

SHIRATORI and other officials in the Foreign Office were treacherous. They circumvented those that opposed them and neutralized their efforts. OSHIMA and SHIRATORI, along with the factions that supported them, were responsible for the signing of the Tri-Partite pact.

The Zaibatsu was a powerful group outside of the military circle. The Mitsubishi element belonged to the old Zaibatsu. They were more or less liberal but wanted to keep their business going along peacefully so they went along with the militarists; however, they did not believe in revolution. The new Zaibatsu belonged to the left wing element and wanted Japanese revolution inside through external war. They tried to create a situation that would be most

(Interrogation of SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru, 15 April 1946)

favorable to them. We had a very difficult time with the Ishihara Industry and Shipping Transportation Company, Ltd. This company was unduly using the militarists and prevented us from conducting negotiations with the Dutch people who had business in Java. The new Zaibatsu was more responsible for the war than the old Zaibatsu, because they had an ideology which was supplied by the communists.

I would like to reiterate: the Army was the first who were responsible for all the trouble, and in the Army the important department was the Military Affairs Bureau. The Army and Navy had their own spokesmen and they were very powerful in creating the right atmosphere by propoganda and intimidation. They actually had control of the government under the Cabinet.