

INTERR OF HIRANUMA CINTA, 14, 15 Jan 46)

DOC 4124

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON



DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS BRANCH, T.A.G.O.

INTERROGATION OF

Baron Kichiro Hiranuma

Date and Time: 11 January 1946, 1000-1130 hours

Place : Home of Baron HIRANUMA

Present : Baron Kichiro Hiranuma
Valentine C. Hammack, Interrogator
Edward H. Dell
Jerome W. Sandweiss, Special Agent, CIC
D. Kildoyle, Interpreter
Ruth F. Anderson, Stenographer
Jimbo, former secretary to Baron Hiranuma

BY MR. HAMMACK: Mr. Kildoyle, do you solemnly swear that you will faithfully and truthfully translate the questions as propounded by myself in English to Baron Hiranuma into Japanese and faithfully and truthfully translate the answer of Baron Hiranuma in Japanese into English, so help you God?

BY MR. KILDOYLE: I do.

BY MR. HAMMACK: Baron, what is your profession?

A. At present I have none.

Q. Originally you were a lawyer, were you not?

A. I was a judge in the Procuror's Court.

Q. In 1907 you were Vice Minister of Justice?

A. Minister of Justice, yes.

Q. When was that?

A. 1907. I was Vice Minister of Justice from 1907 and Minister of Justice in 1923.

Q. So you were Vice Minister of Justice in 1907?

A. I was Vice Minister of Justice in 1907 and Minister of Justice in 1923, yes.

Q. When were you President of the Privy Council?

A. 1936.

Q. When were you President of the Privy Council? From 1936 to 1939, is that right?

A. Yes.

Q. When were you Premier?

A. 1939.

Q. You were Minister without Portfolio in 1940?

A. Yes.

Q. And later became Home Minister?

A. Yes, 1940.

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Q. Also, you were Vice Premier and Minister Without Portfolio in 1941?

A. 1940 and 1941 I was Home Minister and Vice Premier and Minister Without Portfolio.

Q. Were you a member of the Kokokumshi Society.

A. Yes.

Q. Were you not the founder and first president for many years of the Kokokumshi Society?

A. Yes.

Q. What was your official position in 1930 and 1931?

A. Vice President of the Privy Council.

Q. Baron, you were Vice President of the Privy Council during the Manchurian Incident in 1931, were you not?

A. Yes.

Q. Who were those in the Cabinet who supported the Manchurian Incident?

A. I wasn't in the Cabinet at that time, so I don't know, but I think that generally the Cabinet didn't support the Manchurian Incident.

Q. Who did?

A. I am not quite sure -- the military people.

Q. But is it not true that the military could not have operated without the support of the Government?

A. I don't think that they had any support. There was no support from the Cabinet at all. The people at the other end in Manchuko just did it on their own. This is the work of the Kwantung Army officers.

Q. Who raised the money to support the Army in Manchuria?

A. They have their funds voted every year.

Q. Isn't it a fact that it is the government, or the officials of the government, voted the fund to support the Army?

A. Every the Cabinet and the Diet get together and they vote these funds for military and naval purposes.

Q. And in voting funds for maintenance of the army and navy, was it not necessary to include in such funds monies for the support of the Japanese army in Manchuria?

A. Yes, that was so.

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- Q. Do you remember when Mr. Henry Hsiang was made President of Manchukuo?
A. I don't think President is quite the term, but I remember that.
- Q. Do you remember about what year that was?
A. I don't remember the date, but this is well known to everybody and you can find that out if you want to.
- Q. Who was responsible for placing Mr. Henry Hsiang first as President and later as Emperor of Manchukuo?
A. I do not know this, because I was not in the Cabinet at the time.
- Q. What were your duties at the time?
A. Vice President of the Privy Council.
- Q. Do you remember what year Japan recognized the Emperor of Manchukuo?
A. At the time he was appointed emperor.
- Q. Do you remember what year that was?
A. I do not remember.
- Q. Do you remember what your position was at the time the Japanese Government recognized --
A. I was Vice President of the Privy Council. I was there ten years altogether.
- Q. Is it not a fact that during your terms of office as Vice President and President of the Privy Council, you supported bigger armaments?
A. I was not concerned with this while I was in the Privy Council - not concerned in matters of this description.
- Q. Is it not a fact that it is the duty of the Privy Council to advise the Emperor?
A. Yes, it is. But if the Emperor does not ask for advice, it is not given. They do not go to the Emperor with advice unless it is requested.
- Q. Do you approve the withdrawal of Japan from the League of Nations?
A. This, the Emperor requested some advice on, and the Privy Council recommended it was advisable.
- Q. That Japan withdraw from the League of Nations?
A. Yes.
- Q. Is it not a fact that you supported the Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany and Italy in 1936?
A. Originally, of course, Japan wasn't concerned with it, so there was no question of supporting it or anything.

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- Q. Why did Japan withdraw from the League of Nations?
A. Matsuoka did that at Geneva, but he must have had the approval of the government.
- Q. Are you familiar or have you knowledge of the Nine-Power Treaty of Washington in 1922?
A. I remember that.
- Q. As a result of the Manchurian Incident, and particularly of the Chinese Incident, a conference was called at Brussels in November 1937 under Article 7 of the Nine-Power Treaty, Japan being invited to participate, and Japan refused to do so.
A. I don't remember that.
- Q. At that time, you were President of the Privy Council. Do you not remember discussing the fact Japan declined to attend the conference?
A. The Privy Council had nothing to do with this. Later the Emperor requested advice, and the matter was taken up. I remember that.
- Q. Do you remember what the advice given to the Emperor was?
A. They recommended ratification of this treaty.
- Q. I think you are mixed up. You remember there was such a conference in Brussels, but do not remember the details? Also you do not remember what advice was given to the Emperor? Is that correct?
A. Yes. I remember such a conference at Brussels, and that unless the Emperor requested advice on the subject, none was given, and I don't remember whether or not such request for advice was made.
- Q. Was it your opinion as a statesman that the matters between China and Japan were peculiarly matters for arbitration between Japan and China and for that reason that the terms of the Nine-Power Treaty did not apply to the so-called Chinese Incident? You thought that Japan should have adhered to the Nine-Power Treaty?
A. Actually, the treaty was in existence, this Nine-Power Treaty, and, therefore, Japan could really not deal independently with China, but there was a statement I made awhile ago - due to this treaty, Japan had lost her predominant position in China.
- Q. And, therefore, was it the attitude of the statesmen of the Japanese Government that the Treaty should be scrapped or ignored?

(At this point former secretary to the Baron, Mr. Jimbo, entered the room. Jimbo was secretary to the Baron last year. For a short time.)

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- Q. Was it, therefore, the attitude of the statesmen of the Japanese Government that the Nine-Power Treaty should be scrapped or ignored?
- A. No, they had no idea, not in the government, of working independently outside the Nine-Power Treaty.
- Q. Why did Japan refuse the invitation to participate in the conference at Brussels?
- A. The Privy Council is not concerned with anything like that, and this must have been decided by the Cabinet and I would have no knowledge of it.
- Q. Who was, in your opinion, primarily responsible in the Cabinet for Japan's refusal to participate in the conference?
- A. The Cabinet.
- Q. What are the names?
- A. The whole cabinet.
- Q. The head, of course, would be the Premier?
- BY MR. JIMBO: And Foreign Minister.
- Q. When did you become Premier?
- A. January 5, 1939.
- Q. What was your policy in connection with the Chinese Incident at the time you became Premier?
- A. I wanted to settle this as quickly as possible. I didn't think it should be dragged on. It was necessary to settle matters.
- Q. Was it your policy, however, in order to settle the Chinese Incident, to use as much force and arms as in the judgment of the Japanese government should be necessary?
- A. I thought that it was not right to use armed - continue using armed force in an effort to settle this China Incident.
- Q. But it was the policy to continue to do so in the event they considered it necessary?
- A. If necessary, they were going to use it, but in my opinion it was not necessary to use armed force. I did not recognize the necessity.
- Q. As a matter of fact, when you were Premier, armed force was used in China?
- A. Actually it was used, armed force. I admit that.

- Q. Is it not a fact that on January 5, 1939, in your official statement upon taking office of Premier, you declared that the entire power of the state should be concentrated on achieving the goal in the China hostilities and that the policies pertaining to a greater East Asia of the Prince Konoye Cabinet would be carried out?
- A. Yes. I made such a statement.
- Q. On January 5, 1939, the War and Navy Ministers requested you, as Premier, to give special consideration to the requirements or needs of the national defense and foreign relations? What representations were made in connection with national defense and foreign relations?
- A. I think, but am not definite about it. I think there was.
- Q. What connection did greater armaments for national defense have with foreign relations?
- A. In a speech in the Diet I stated that I believed Japan should depend upon morality, not on arms.
- Q. Notwithstanding such statement made by him, isn't it a fact that in 1939 Japan was increasing her armaments?
- A. Yes. That was during the China Incident.
- Q. Isn't it a fact that on January 6, 1939, in a radio address to the nation, you, as Premier, declared that the new Cabinet would place emphasis on enhancement of national strength and national mobilization, and that national mobilization would be intensified for the enforcement of domestic and foreign policies?
- A. But this was not only in connection with the army and navy. It was international, a general mobilization of the entire nation.
- Q. In an interview with the Press on January 12, 1939, isn't it a fact that the Baron asserted that the application of Japan's China policy would depend on the stand of the other party. Did you make such a statement and, if so, what did you mean.
- (Much conversation between interpreter and Baron, the Baron finally stating that the "other party" referred to is China.)
- Q. And does that mean that your attitude as Premier was that if the Chiang Kai-Shek government continued to resist that the Japanese government would use such force as they deemed necessary to over-come such resistance?
- A. No, that is not my meaning.

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Q. Notwithstanding, Chiang Kai-Shek was taking an Anti-Japanese attitude and you wanted to get rid of this attitude on the part of Chiang Kai-Shek?

(The Baron states he is tired and would like to discontinue questioning for today. Mr. Hammack stated we would be back tomorrow.)

Q. I want all your diaries and records that you have.

A. BY MR. JIMBO: He hasn't got anything, because his house was burned out by the Japanese soldiers.

Q. Has he any personal records of any kind pertaining to his official duties in government?

A. Nothing.

Q. To Mr. Jimbo: Tell him I have many questions to ask him and ask him if it is agreeable that we should come again tomorrow at 9:00 o'clock or 9:30?

A. 9:30, yes.

Q. Tell him I will try and make it as easy as possible, but it will take three or four mornings, because I have many things to ask him.

INTERROGATION OF BARON KICHIRO HIRANUMA

DATE: 12 January 1946

INTERROGATOR: Valentine C. Hammack

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

INTERPRETOR: D. Kildoyle

PLACE: Home of Baron Hiranuma

STENOGRAPHER: Ruth F. Anderson

PRESENT: Fred Mignone

Jerome W. Sandweiss, Special Agent, CIC

Jimbo - Former Secretary to Baron Hiranuma

Mr. Kildoyle, having previously been sworn as interpreter, translated the questions and answers from English into Japanese and Japanese into English.

- BY MR. HAMMACK: Baron, is it not a fact that on January 23, 1939, Navy Minister Yonai, stating the policy of the Japanese Government, stated that the Navy had worked out new plans that would give Japan such control of the seas that it would be in a position to enforce its national policies for construction of a new East Asia without interference? Was that the statement of policy of your government while you were Premier? A statement of policy of Admiral Yonai, but a statement of policy of your government while you were Premier?
- A. The Imperial General Headquarters and the Army and Navy in general are independent organizations and the cabinet has no power to give them instructions. The only way that they have power to interfere or limit this is in connection with the budgets.
- Q. Is it not a fact that Navy Minister Yonai was a member of the cabinet?
- A. I would like you to understand that the Navy Minister is practically independent of the cabinet. The Navy Minister is a member of the cabinet. The Navy Minister is there to report to the cabinet and from the cabinet to convey his report from the cabinet to the General Headquarters and the General Staff.
- Q. Is it not true, however, as Premier, you were responsible for the policies of the cabinet during your administration as Premier?
- A. Yes, I had a responsibility.

- Q. On January 31, 1939, isn't it a fact that you, then Premier, and Foreign Minister Arita opposed a proposal to hold a conference in Japan with the United States and Great Britain to discuss the new order in East Asia?
- A. No.
- Q. Why was not the proposal to hold such a conference accepted?
- A. Where did the proposal come from?
- Q. The United States and Britain.
- A. I do not remember that proposal having come up in January.
- Q. Do you remember that a proposal was made, perhaps in your own cabinet, which you opposed with Foreign Minister Arita? The question came up in your own cabinet. Did you oppose such a proposition along with Foreign Minister Arita?
- A. No. I, myself, have never opposed a proposal of that description.
- Q. Was it not your policy when Premier to follow the policies that the Japanese-China Incident was a matter peculiar to Japan and China and that interference from the Western Powers would not be tolerated by Japan?
- A. That is one question that we thought was a question that should have been settled between China and Japan, and there was some proposal from Germany too in addition to proposals from other countries - from the United States. Our desire was to settle this question between China and Japan ourselves. That wasn't our policy that we expected to carry on right into the future, but all the questions that came up at the time between China and Japan, we wanted to settle at that time amongst ourselves without help or advice from other parties.
- Q. Was it not your policy as Premier, upon the failure of Japan to affect any settlement with the government of Chiang Kai-Shek to then set up and recognize and assist the Chinese Nanking Government?
- A. Chiang Kai-Shek was in Chungking, and the desire to establish a central government in China, this came mostly from the Army. The Army originated this plan and planned its execution by the Army - or the military.
- Q. Is it not true, however, that the Nanking Government was recognized by the Japanese Government and ambassadors were exchanged?
- A. That was actually effective, the exchange of ambassadors, and the recognition of the Nanking Government was affected during the Kanoye Cabinet, but before that there were the Abe and the Yonai Cabinets, during which time plans were made and completed for this recognition and exchange of ambassadors.

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- Q. Was it not a fact that the Nanking Government had been recognized prior to 1939?
- A. No.
- Q. Do you remember when the Nanking Government was recognized?
- A. It was during the Konoye Cabinet. The Second Konoye Cabinet.
- Q. And that was when?
- A. 1941.
- Q. And what position did you occupy in the Cabinet in 1941?
- A. I was not there at the time, in the Cabinet at the time. I entered it later.
- Q. Where were you?
- A. I was doing nothing before that. No official position.
- Q. Was it not a fact that you were Minister Without Portfolio in the Second Konoye Cabinet in 1940 and Home Minister also?
- A. I was doing nothing. I had no official capacity in 1940.
- Q. Were you not Vice Premier and Minister Without Portfolio in the Third Konoye Cabinet in 1941?
- A. Yes, in 1941.
- Q. On March 4, 1939, you, as Premier, made a radio speech stating as your policy the construction of a new order in East Asia. Is that not true?
- A. I think I did, but those ideas were my ideas. That is, I had those ideas.
- Q. What do you mean, as a matter of policy for the construction of a new order in East Asia.
- A. The story is rather long, but I am going to give my views. My idea was that for the sake of world peace, it was necessary to base my idea on morality, and that governments should be established on this base, based on morality, and I wanted to spread this idea over the Far East, that is, the idea of basing governments on morality.
- Q. Baron, what do you mean when you use the term "morality?"
- A. I refer to liberty, equality, and fraternity that the French use, and I refer to this fraternity as one of the principles of this morality that I talk about.

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- Q. And assuming that that would be the right of Japan, to establish an order based upon such principles in Japan, what right did Japan have to attempt to establish the same order in an independent country such as China by force of arms?
- A. My idea was by mutual conference between the two nations to establish this. Not by force, by mutual conference, friendly conference, to establish this.
- Q. But is it not a fact that the Japanese government used armed force in China?
- A. That was one point that I did not favor, using force. But the army was powerful and could act independently. That was one point on which I did not see eye to eye with the militarists. I wanted to achieve my objectives by negotiations between the two nations.
- Q. Is it not a fact that on January 5, 1939, the War and Navy Department asked you, as Premier, to give special attention to the requirements of the national defense, and as a result of such request, the national general mobilization law was promulgated on April 1, 1939, and became effective May 5, 1939?
- A. I think there was a request, and I think this came mostly from the Army, and this was affected, this general mobilization was affected, mostly through the Cabinet Planning Office.
- Q. Is it not a fact that as Premier you approved such a policy?
- A. Yes, I did. But this was mostly in connection with Japanese economic defense general mobilization.
- Q. How do you interpret the general mobilization law for bigger armaments and bigger money for national defense as being a matter of economy?
- A. The increased budget was due to the China Incident, Army and Navy expenses.
- Q. Isn't it a fact that at that time the China Incident was in its third year, and why should there be any increase in the Army and Navy?
- A. Increased forces were sent to China.
- Q. If it was your policy to settle the China Incident by diplomacy, why were increased forces sent to China?
- A. As I stated before, my policy and the Army's policy were not the same, and actually the Army's policy was the stronger policy. They were in a position to enforce their policy.

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- Q. Do you have any records which will tend to prove that you at any time opposed the policy of the Japanese Government in China?
- A. I have no records, but in oral statements I have always maintained that position.
- Q. How do you reconcile your present statement that you were opposed to armed force in China with your statement of policy as Premier that the entire power of the state would be concentrated upon achieving the goal in the China hostilities?
- A. As an individual, this was my idea, not to use armed forces, but as head of the government I could not do what I wanted to because the Army was too powerful. Although I stated that I did not wish to use armed force, actually armed forces were being used at the time.
- Q. Your statement made now can not be reconciled with your public statement that such force - that all the force of the empire if necessary would be used to settle the China Incident.
- A. In connection with the statement about using the entire power of the state, logically you would deduce that the armed force would be used, but actually what I wanted to do was to negotiate - settle matters by negotiation.
- Q. Isn't it a fact that it may have been your policy perhaps to settle matters with China by negotiation, but if that was not possible to settle matters by the use of armed forces?
- A. My ideas, my own ideas were to withdraw the Army from China and negotiate, but that could not be done. That was my own personal idea.
- Q. Do you have any records to tend to prove that you at any time attempted to carry through such ideas?
- A. No, I have no records, no proof.
- Q. How do you reconcile your present statement with your statement of January 6, 1939, that the new cabinet would place emphasis on enhancement of national strength and national mobilization would be intensified for the enforcement of domestic and foreign policies?
- BY THE INTERPRETOR: That was his cabinet, Mr. Hammack?
- BY MR. HAMMACK: Yes.
- A. Without strengthening that national - that is, without mobilizing the national strength, it was not possible to govern economically or to rule the national government, rule the nation economically, - to carry out their domestic policies and also their foreign policies.

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- Q. Who in the Army during the time you were Premier insisted upon the use of armed forces in China?
- A. There was a certain element in the Army. These are not the real higher ups, but the younger element, a certain younger element amongst the officers who had certain ideas which they were able to get the higher ups in the Army to adopt.
- Q. Who was the Minister of War in your cabinet?
- A. General Itagaki.
- Q. What was General Itagaki's policy in connection with the use of armed forces?
- A. I think it was the policy of the military or the military party.
- Q. Do you not know or is it not a fact that you know that General Itagaki's policy was the policy of the military?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Who else that you know in the army favored the policy of using armed forces in China?
- A. I do not know the internal affairs of the military, but I am pretty sure that there were people in the Army with the same ideas as General Itagaki, that is, people in high positions. That is my idea only - thought - guess.
- Q. Let me ask you again if you do not know some of the military personally who were in favor of the use of armed force other than General Itagaki?
- A. I do not know. I do not know, as I have not heard individually from -- from these people individually. There was one man in the headquarters, an Army man, who had the same ideas as I did. I have forgotten his name. He was Vice Chief of the General Staff at that time. He had the same ideas as I had. I can not think of the names of any of the others on the other side with other views.
- Q. Then, is this the situation? While you personally may have been opposed to the use of armed forces in China, nevertheless, as Premier, you carried out the policies of the military in the use of armed forces in China?
- A. I could not stop that. I had to go along.

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Q. That is the answer? You could not stop it? You had to go along?

A. Yes.

Q. What was the policy and purpose of the Kokohunshi Society?

A. At the time the present emperor was regent, a man by the name of Namba attempted to assassinate him. This caused great consternation, and it was my idea that steps should be taken to eliminate anything that would give cause for the appearance of people like Namba, and my idea was that the nation should be governed by laws based on morality, and the idea of this Kokohunshi Society was that a government should be based on morality, or politics and economy should be based on morality and not on force. At that time there was a saying in Japan that politics is force, but I opposed this and said that force should only be used to sustain morality. I also refer to "morality" as "ethical standards."

MR. HAMMACK TO MR. JIMBO: Tell the Baron we do not want to tire him, and we would like to return again at 9:30 Monday morning.

MR. JIMBO: That will be all right.

Interrogation of Baron Kichiro Hiranuma

15 January 1946

Certificate of Interrogator

I, Valentine C. Hammack, a civilian, certify that on the 11th, 12th, 14th, and 15th days of January, 1946, personally appeared before me Baron Kichiro Hiranuma and according to Mr. D. Kildoyle, Interpreter, gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth therein.

Dated this 17th day of
January, 1946, at Tokyo,
Japan.

Valentine C. Hammack

INTERROGATION OF BARON KICHIRO HIRANUMA

PLACE: Home of Baron Hiranuma

INTERROGATOR: Valentine C. Hammack

DATE : 14 January 1946

INTERPRETOR: D. Kildoyle

TIME : 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

STENOGRAPHER: Ruth F. Anderson

PRESENT: Jerome W. Sandweiss

Jimbo - Former Secretary to Baron Hiranuma

Mr. Kildoyle, having previously been sworn as interpreter, translated the questions and answers from Japanese into English.

BY MR. HAMMACK: On February 10, 1939, Japanese forces landed on Hainan Island. Do you remember that?

A. I remember that.

Q. Had you previously had knowledge that such a landing by Japanese forces would be affected?

A. No, I heard it afterwards.

Q. Did you hold any conferences with the military leaders in connection with the Hainan landing? Before or after?

A. There was nothing before, and the Navy Minister told me about this after the landing. There was no conference, except the Navy Minister told me about this. It was principally a Navy affair, this landing of naval forces.

Q. Did you have any conference with the Minister of the Navy in connection with it?

A. The only matter that I was concerned with was in connection with the information given to me about the landing, but there was no conference.

Q. In connection with the National General Mobilization Law, what was the purpose of that bill at the time it was passed in 1939?

A. The principal object was the control of internal economy, national economy.

Q. Was this bill a step in the preparation for war larger in scale than the Chinese war?

A. This was not a preparation for a larger war.

Q. Then why was it necessary at this time to enact a law which practically mobilized the entire forces of the Empire?

A. The economic situation in the country was bad at the time, the shortage of food, the general internal troubles, and that was really the main reason that the General Mobilization Law was promulgated. Industry also was in a bad state, and the object was to enact some form of control generally over all matters.

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- Q. But was it not the result of the passage of this law that the armed forces and armaments of the empire were built up tremendously far beyond that necessary for the Chinese war?
- A. (Answer as stated by interpreter:) He said he realized that it was his own personal view that military preparations far exceeded the strength or requirements of the national strength compared with the strength of the national necessities. (The Baron objected to the use of the word "requirements." "Necessities" was suggested to be used in its place. The Baron also objected to the use of "Necessities." The question was rephrased as follows:)
- Q. Is it not a fact, Baron, that the National General Mobilization Law established a much larger armed force and greater armaments than was necessary for the defense of the empire or for the carrying on of the war with China?
- A. This mobilization law was designed with the object of controlling and advancing generally the national economy, and if the military expanded or became too powerful compared with the advance of internal economy, industry - it exceeded the advance of the others. In other words, it designed they all advance at the same time or increase at the same time, but as said previously, I agree that the military advanced in a greater degree than the others. I considered that the two, military preparations and the general mobilization of a country's resources, should go together, but I, myself, realize that military preparations and expansion of the military resources exceeded -- that if the military expansion exceeded its requirements, it would affect adversely the living conditions of the people and industry, - would disturb and affect them adversely.
- Q. Is it not a fact that as a result of the passage of the law, the industrial power of the empire and economic power of the empire was speeded up to meet the requirements and to keep pace with the expansion of the military?
- A. I do not share your opinion. I do not agree to that. The Army and Navy requested tremendous budgets at the time, but this was pared down in the planning, -- This was cut or pared by the Planning Bureau.
- Q. Is it not a fact that you, as Premier, supported the passage of the National General Mobilization Law in 1939?
- A. Yes, of course, I approved it.
- Q. At that time was Japan anticipating war with any other power besides China?
- A. No.

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- Q. Then why was it necessary for the military to expand in 1939 when it is admitted that such expansion was not necessary for the China war?
- A. The Army and Navy, for the sake of peace in the Pacific and to the defense of the seas - I refer to what we consider the Japanese part of the Pacific - most people recognized the necessity for increasing armaments, military and naval resources.
- Q. Did you realize and approve the necessity for increasing armaments?
- A. I recognized the principle, the necessity, but I also realized that military and naval preparations could exceed the necessity, which I did not agree to. While I recognized this in principle, I realized that if military and naval preparations were unduly expanded, this would adversely affect other matters.
- Q. Nevertheless, as Premier, it is a fact is it not, that you supported the policy of military expansion?
- A. Yes, for the sake of Pacific defense I did. I thought it necessary.
- Q. From whom, for the sake of Pacific defense, did you anticipate any danger?
- A. At that time I had no views, but I was looking to the future. The war in Europe broke afterwards, and I had, as Premier, to look to the future. I didn't know where the danger would come from half the time.
- Q. Is it not a fact that as Premier you anticipated that it was possible that the Japanese war with China might eventually lead to war with other powers?
- A. If the thing continued for a long time, I realized that there was a danger of involvement with other powers, and I wanted to settle the China incident as soon as possible.

BY MR. HAMMACK: Have you any further suggestions, Mr. Sandweiss?

BY MR. SANDWEISS: I have only this question. Are you not aware, Baron, that if the General Mobilization Bill had not been passed that any plans for expansion that the military might have had would have been impossible because of lack of backing from the national mobilization sources?

A. It could have been done. Pressure could have accomplished their plans, but this would have affected the nation adversely in other respects, and, therefore, it was decided that the whole thing should go together. The military, the Naval, economic internal industry.

BY MR. HAMMACK: And you, Baron, as Premier, supported this policy, is that not correct? The policy of general mobilization?

A. It is more than support, because it came from me, because I was Prime Minister. It exceeds support.

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Q. It came from you for the reason that you were Prime Minister?

A. Yes. More than support.

Q. Going back to the Kokuhonsha Society. Is it not a fact that the leaders of the Kokuhonsha Society were made up of high-ranking officials of the Army, the Navy, and the civilian administrative officials of the empire?

A. Not all. Some of them were leaders of the Army, Navy and civilian government.

Q. Was not the effect of the principles and purposes of the Kokuhonsha Society to abolish political parties?

A. No.

Q. Is it not a fact that you personally, Baron, were opposed to political parties?

A. I have never opposed that. I have always considered that political parties were necessary, but I did not consider the parties at that time as being what they should be. They were not good parties. Their methods were not good.

Q. But is it not a fact that that would be your personal opinion on political matters which might not have been shared by all?

A. I think most people thought the same way that I did.

Q. Would not the net effect of the purpose of the Kokuhonsha Society have resulted in a Fascist form of government?

A. The Nazis and Fascists represent a one party form of government, and I have always been against that, and I did not want to introduce that into Japan. I have stated that in the diet. I have always been against that.

Q. Do you know Fumio Goto?

A. Yes.

Q. Was Mr. Goto a director of the Kokuhonsha Society?

A. No, he was not a leader.

Q. Was he a director or a member?

A. I do not remember well. I do not remember well, but he might have been a member once, but it was at a later date he was in the Kokuhonsha Society.

Q. Was Mr. Goto not Home Minister between 1934 and 1936?

A. I do not remember the date exactly, but I know Mr. Goto was Home Minister at one time.

HIRANUMA

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- Q. Do you know Mr. Goto was Vice-President of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association?
- A. He was Vice-President?
- Q. Mr. Goto was Vice-President of the Imperial Rule Association?
- A. I do not remember it well, but it is possible that he was.
- Q. Was Mr. Goto President of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association Youth Corps?
- A. Yes, he was.
- Q. Mr. Goto was also Premier, was he not, until Hirota formed a new cabinet?
- A. No, he was not. Never.
- Q. Not even temporarily?
- A. Yes, he was temporarily. Two or three days.
- Q. What were the political policies of Mr. Goto?
- A. I do not know.
- Q. Was not Mr. Goto a strong supporter of the military policy?
- A. I do not know.
- Q. Do you not know that in 1932 Mr. Goto was publicly criticized for advocating a Fascist form of government?
- A. I do not remember it.
- Q. What parties was Mr. Goto connected with?
- A. I think his leaning was toward the Minseito. Mr. Wakatsuki was the President of the party.
- Q. With what party, Baron, were you?
- A. I am not in any party. I was not connected with any party.
- Q. Did you, Baron, depend upon the influence of the Kokuhonsha Society for your political strength or for political assistance?
- A. In connection with the government of the nation, it had no connection whatever. In other words, the Kokuhonsha Society had nothing to do, no connection with politics. The sole object was the advancement of morality and fraternity.
- Q. If you belonged to no political parties, from whom did you receive your support in maintaining over the many years your various positions with the government?
- A. There has been no support. It doesn't mean that in Japan if you have no political support you can not be appointed to a government position.

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- Q. While that may be true, how do you explain the fact that for many years you occupied leading offices in the government of Japan?
- A. I was first in the Justice Ministry and the Privy Council, and these have no political connections or in any way is it desirable that they have political connections, and my appointment was from the Emperor. In the Justice Ministry, that is an impartial position and political parties would have no influence with them. The appointment came from the Emperor.
- Q. Is it not a fact that by reason of your influence with the department of Justice you were responsible for the suppression of anti-war speeches, writings, and conduct during the period of the China Incident?
- A. When I was in the Justice Ministry, the China Incident hadn't happened yet. It was before the China Incident.
- Q. Is it not a fact that you favored the policy followed by the Justice Ministry of ruthlessly suppressing anti-war speeches, writings, and conduct during the China Incident? I have received reports that you did so. Have you any explanation to give?
- A. There is no such thing. It is not true.
- Q. Did you know of your own knowledge that the Justice Ministry did suppress anti-war speeches, conduct, and writings?
- A. No.
- Q. What was your policy as Premier in connection with anti-war speeches, conduct, and writings on the part of the Japanese subjects?
- A. I always believed in hearing all sides, and I never had any particular ideas about suppressing these writings or speeches. I believed it advisable to hear, listen to everybody.
- Q. Then if Japanese subjects were placed in custody for anti-war speeches, conducts and writings, who would be responsible for having placed them there during your administration as Premier?
- A. I think it is Juan Domeira or Kempei Tai.
- Q. The Juan Domeira?
- A. The War Minister.
- Q. Is it your statement that the War Minister might have caused the suppression of Japanese subjects for such conduct as heretofore mentioned?
- A. While I was Premier, I was sure there were no such instances. It was after my time, but I agree that the responsibility lies with the War Minister. After the Tojo Cabinet came into power, the Kempei Tai or the Jaun Domeira - they are one and the same thing - adopted these suppressive policies.

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- Q. Do you remember who was the War Minister in the Tojo Cabinet?
A. General Tojo. He had about five portfolios.
- Q. General Tojo himself?
A. Yes.
- Q. Was Mr. Goto Minister of State Without Portfolio in the Tojo Cabinet?
A. I do not remember that well. It may be, but I do not remember.
- Q. You know Mr. Michiyō Iwamura?
A. Yes, I know the man.
- Q. Do you know that Mr. Iwamura was Justice Minister from 1942 to 1944 in the Tojo Cabinet?
A. Yes.
- Q. Baron, I would be deeply appreciative if you will give me any information that you may have in connection with any of these persons whom I may ask you of.
A. You want the history, personal history?
- Q. No, just answer the questions if you know. Do you know whether or not Mr. Goto was one of those who favored war against the United States?
A. No, I do not know. I was not in the cabinet at the time.
- Q. Baron, when did you first, as a leading statesman, have knowledge or reason to believe that Japan would go to war against the United States?
A. I was not a member of the Cabinet, but the information did come to me that war was eminent.
- Q. When did you first, - to the best of your recollection, when did you first receive that information?
A. I think it was toward the end of November or early part of December.
- Q. Was not Mr. Iwamura a member of the Kokuhonsha Society?
A. I think so. In fact I am pretty sure that he was a member.
- Q. Were not you and Mr. Iwamura close friends?
A. Yes.
- Q. Baron, do you know Mr. Takeo Kikuchi?
A. Yes.
- Q. And he is a Baron also?
A. Yes.
- Q. And was he not at one time a lieutenant general in the Army?
A. Yes.

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- Q. Was not the Baron Kikuchi, was he not also a director of the Kokuhonsha Society?
- A. He was a member. He was not a leader.
- Q. Baron Hiranuma, do you know whether or not Mr. Kikuchi favored the policy of the military?
- A. I do not know while he was in the Army, but after he left the Army, I think that he was in a way opposed to the general policies of the army.
- Q. Do you know whether or not General Kikuchi was pro-German and pro-Italian?
- A. I think not.
- Q. My information is that General Kikuchi was very pro-German and pro-Italian. Can you explain that?
- A. I think not.
- Q. Do you know Mr. Ikezaki Chuko?
- A. No.
- Q. Do you know this Chuko is a writer of many books?
- A. No, I do not know.
- Q. Do you know Takeo Godo?
- A. Yes, I know him.
- Q. He is retired from the Japanese Navy as Vice-Admiral? That is correct, is it not?
- A. He is an engineering admiral.
- Q. Do you know that Admiral Godo was a member of the Board of Directors of the South Manchurian Railway?
- A. I wouldn't quite remember it.
- (Mr. Jimbo, Secretary, confirms this.)
- Q. Do you know that in 1934 and 1935 he was President of the Showa Steel Works in Manchuria?
- A. I do not quite know the position, but this man was in the Showa Steel Company.
- Q. In 1939 and 1940 was not Admiral Godo the Minister of Commerce and Industry?
- A. Yes.

HIRANUMA

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Q. Do you know what the attitude of the Admiral, Admiral Godo, was in connection with the China Incident?

A. I don't know because I never talked to the Admiral on the subject.

Q. Do you know whether or not Admiral Godo was an advocate and supporter of the policy of alliance between Japan, Germany, and Italy?

A. No, I do not know.

Q. Do you know any one in official government positions who did support the alliance between Germany, Japan, and Italy?

A. The people that made the pact, of course, they all supported it.

Q. Then it would be your opinion that the cabinet during whose term the pact was made were all supporters of this pact?

A. Generally I think they all supported it.

Q. Do you know Mr. Junichiro Kobash?

A. I know the person, but I have never talked very much with him.

Q. Do you know what his position was?

A. He was in France a long while and came back to Japan but never held a government position and I do not know what he was doing.

Q. Do you know Mr. Kzuo Aoki?

A. Yes.

Q. Was Mr. Aoki not the president of the Planning Board in your cabinet?

A. Yes. He was president of the Planning Board.

Q. Do you know that in 1936 Mr. Aoko was vice president of the Manchurian Affairs Board?

A. I don't remember well, but if there are records to that effect, I think it would be true.

Q. In 1940, Mr. Aoki was appointed Supreme Economics Advisor to the Chinese Nanking Government. Who was responsible for that appointment?

A. This was during the Yonai Cabinet, and I think that the request for the appointment of this description came from the Nanking Government.

Q. Do you know, Baron, whether or not Mr. Aoki was a member of the Tojo Cabinet?

A. Yes, he was.

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- Q. I would be happy to see you again at 9:30 in the morning, and I think possibly by tomorrow we will have finished.
- A. All right.
-

INTERROGATION OF

Baron Kichiro Hiranuma

Date and Time: 15 January 1946, 0930-1100 hours

Place : Home of Baron Hiranuma

Present : Baron Kichiro Hiranuma
Valentine C. Hammack, Interrogator
Jerome W. Sandweiss, Special Agent, CIC
D. Kildoyle, Interpreter
Ruth F. Anderson, Stenographer
Jimbo, former secretary to Baron Hiranuma

Questions by: Mr. Hammack

Mr. Kildoyle, having previously been sworn as interpreter, translated the following questions and answers from Japanese into English and English into Japanese.

- Q. Baron, when you were Premier on January 31, 1939, a question was propounded to you before the Japanese House of Representatives in relation to the possibility of holding a conference between the United States, Japan and Great Britain in connection with an effort to settle the China question at which time both yourself and Foreign Minister Arita expressed yourselves as against the policy of holding such a conference. Do you remember that?
- A. As I said before, I wanted to settle this question between China and Japan and I opposed the intervention of a third country.
- Q. On June 14, 1939, as Premier, you conferred with the Foreign Minister, Mr. Arita, and War Minister Itagaki and Navy Minister Yonai on the action of Japanese forces in placing a blockade in Teintsin over the foreign settlement. What action, if any, was taken by you as Premier to settle the question of the blockade at Teintsin?
- A. The Navy and the Army did not inform me in each case of what happened, although I know of the action of this blockade having taken place. I was not concerned with the discussion of the Teintsin blockade. That is purely a military action - military and naval action. I received intimation of the blockade afterwards, or official intimation afterwards.
- Q. The question has been asked before, but ask him again. Was it not the policy of his cabinet to support the military in any action they may have taken in connection with the China Incident?
- A. Military actions and naval actions were left to the discretion of the military and Navy.

15 January 1946

- Q. But was it not the policy of his cabinet, however, to support such action as the military may have taken?
- A. It depended on the circumstances. If the military and the navy considered it essential that the blockade be established, then I did not oppose it in connection with the China Incident. If they considered it essential in connection with the China Incident, then I did not oppose it.
- Q. Do you know Kuniako Koiso?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Was not Mr. Koiso Minister of Colonies in your cabinet?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did not Mr. Koiso, while Minister of Colonies, openly condemn the nine-power pact?
- A. No. I do not remember that.
- Q. Do you not know of your own knowledge whether or not Mr. Koiso was opposed to the nine-power pact and the continued adherence of Japan to the same?
- A. No, I do not know.
- Q. Do you know whether or not, of your own knowledge, that Mr. Koiso, as head of the Cabinet on July 21, 1944, made a public statement that Japan would further strengthen her ties with Germany?
- A. No, I do not know.
- Q. Is it not a fact, Baron, that on December 8, 1944, you conferred with Mr. Koiso at the residence of Mr. Koiso while Mr. Koiso was a member of the Tojo Cabinet?
- A. Yes, and I think Konoye was there.
- Q. Will you state what the purpose of the conference was?
- A. There was no special topic. There was a general conference on matters of government.
- Q. Did the matters of government also pertain to the war?
- A. I went there to inquire about matters in general, at which time I heard that it was their intention to prosecute the war to the best of their ability.
- Q. And that refers to the conference of December 8, 1944?
- A. Instead of a conference, I really went there to obtain Koiso's opinions and attitudes. It was not a conference. I wouldn't call it a conference. I held no government position at the time, and I went there as a civilian to ask Koiso's opinion.

- Q. And did you, as an elder statesman, give any advice in connection with the continuation of the war?
- A. No, I gave none of my own views.
- Q. Now, Baron, yesterday you stated that your first information that war with the United States was impending was in the latter part of November or early part of December 1941. Will you state how you received that information?
- A. I heard this from Premier Tojo.
- Q. And to the best of your recollection, what did Premier Tojo say to you?
- A. He said that the meetings or conferences between the United States and Japan were not successful and war was unavoidable.
- Q. Now, is it not a fact, that it was determined that war was unavoidable and the determination made to embark upon war at a meeting held on November 28th or 29th, 1941?
- A. I was not a member of any government organization at the time. I think that it was determined after that date.
- Q. On November 28th or 29th, did you not attend a meeting of elder statesmen at which war was determined upon by Japan at which were present the following: Premier Tojo; Admiral Shimada, Navy Minister; and former Premiers Okado, Abe, Hiranuma, and Yonai?
- A. Okado and myself were not members of the government, and all that happened here was they received intimation of the declaration of war, or the possibility of the declaration of war.
- Q. In other words, at this meeting then you and Okado were advised were you, of the possibility of impending war with the United States?
- A. Yes.
- Q. At this meeting, Baron, what was your attitude in connection with war upon the United States?
- A. I don't like to call it a conference, because it was not an important government meeting.
- Q. I will rephrase the question. At this meeting of November 28th or 29th heretofore mentioned by you, what was your attitude in connection with a declaration of war upon the United States?
- A. While I have never stated it publicly, I and Okado at the time considered that negotiations between the United States and Japan should be carried on further and war should not be resorted to.

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- Q. Is it not a fact, however, that after the war was in progress, that you, as a citizen of Japan, supported the war effort?
- A. I did not oppose it after the declaration of war. Japan's policy had been fixed and I did nothing to oppose it.
- Q. Is it not a fact that war was practically determined upon with the United States at a meeting of September 6, 1941, at which were present the Emperor, the Foreign Minister, War Minister Tojo, Chief of the Army Staff Sugiyama, Chief of the Naval Staff Nagano, Prince Konoye, and yourself?
- A. I was not there because I had been wounded at the time. I was in bed at the time.
- Q. Is it not a fact, however, that notwithstanding that you had been wounded and were home in bed that of your own knowledge you knew of such a meeting and that war with the United States was practically determined upon at said meeting?
- A. No, I did not know because I was severely wounded at the time. I was in no position to know.
- Q. Baron, during your many years as a statesman, did you believe that the destiny of Japan required that Japan expand territorially?
- A. That is a very difficult question and is connected with the state of world condition - condition of the world and many other factors. I did not think that Japan should expand beyond what she had at the time. That was about the time of the China Incident. I, myself thought that, that Japan should not go into a territorial expansion.
- Q. Beyond what she had at the time of the China Incident?
- A. Yes. But I limit it to what she had at the time of the China Incident.
- Q. Baron, did you support the formation of the Dai Nippon Seijikai Party?
- A. I did not think that one party, - that the one party system was good for Japan and at heart I did not support it. I thought it was not right.
- Q. Were you a member of the party?
- A. No, I was not a member.
- Q. What policy, if any, did the Kokuhonsha Society follow after December 7, 1941?
- A. The Kokuhonsha Society was dissolved in 1936.
- Q. Baron, is it not a fact that in 1927 it was the policy of the Japanese Government to commence expansion in Manchuria?
- A. The central government had no such policy, but this was the policy of the South Manchurian Railway, but the government policy was to support the South Manchurian Railway.

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- Q. Was not that policy the policy of Baron Tanako when he was Premier?
- A. It was Baron Tanako's policy to support the south Manchurian Railway, but Tanako's policy did not include the acquisition of Manchuko as Japanese territory.
- Q. Was it not the policy of Baron Tanako, however, to use in supporting the South Manchurian Railway - to colonize Manchuria with Japanese subjects?
- A. I feel sure that that was the policy of Baron Tanako to send colonists to Manchuria, as Japan was land hungry, but I am certain that it did not include, as I stated before, territorial acquisition.
- Q. Baron, do you remember, in connection with the development by Japan of the resources of Manchuria, a conference being held from June 27 to July 7, in Tokyo in 1927?
- A. Who was this conference with?
- Q. Called by Baron Tanako, and attended by civil and military officers connected with Manchuria and Mongolia?
- A. I have heard that Baron Tanako held a conference of this sort.
- Q. And do you know, or have you ever heard that following the conference Baron Tanako submitted to the Emperor a program or policy for colonization and development of natural resources in Manchuria?
- A. No, I do not know.
- Q. But do you know, as a statesman and one interested in Japanese affairs that following 1927 it is a fact Japan did start developing the resources of Manchuria and Mongolia and did send colonists there?
- A. I do not know whether it was the result of this conference, but I do know that colonists were sent there, but they were not numerous. They were sent there.
- Q. Do you remember a statement of policy made by Baron Tanako in 1927 or thereafter to the Emperor or to the government in which Baron Tanako recommended the colonization and industrial development of Manchuria and Mongolia?
- A. The Emperor or the government?
- Q. Or both?
- A. As Baron Tanako was in the government at the time, he would not make that statement to the government because it would beat himself, wouldn't it? But he might have made it to the Emperor. I do not know, but that is my statement.

15 January 1946

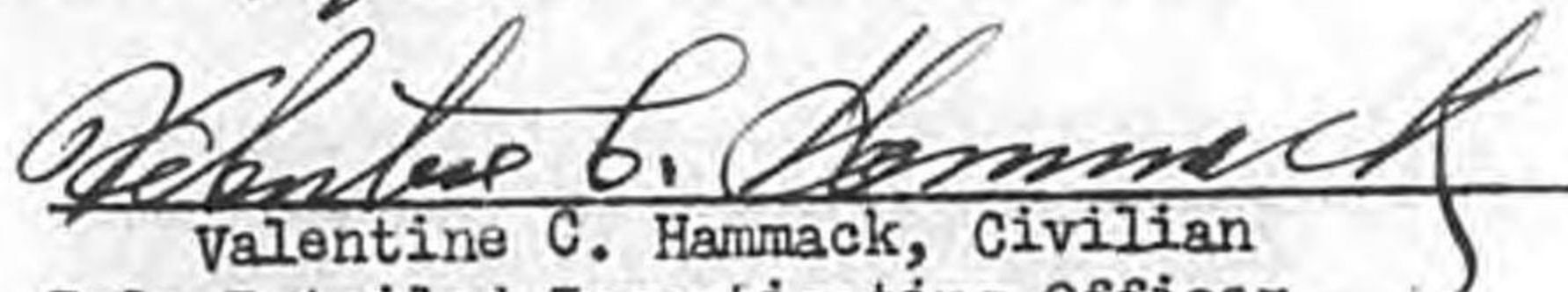
- Q. That he might have made it to the Emperor?
A. That is right.
- Q. Did you ever hear of the Tanako Memorial?
A. No, I do not know of it.
- Q. Baron, I may wish to ask you some more questions, but not right away. I may not want to ask you any more at all, but I would like the privilege of returning again in the event there is something more I wish to know.
A. All right, if you will let me know in advance.
- Q. I will try to come by and let you know a couple of days in advance.

Certificate of Interpreter

I, D. Kildoyle, a civilian, 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 thirty pages, are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.



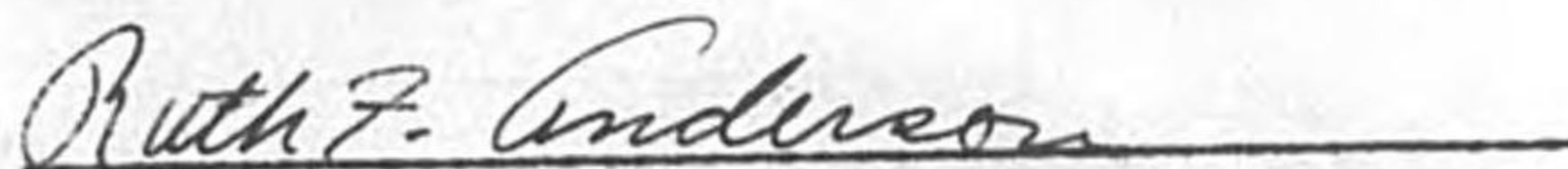
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 17th day of January, 1946.



Valentine C. Hammack, Civilian
Duly Detailed Investigating Officer
International Prosecution Section, GHQ,
SCAP.

Certificate of Stenographer

I, Ruth F. Anderson, 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.



15 January 1946

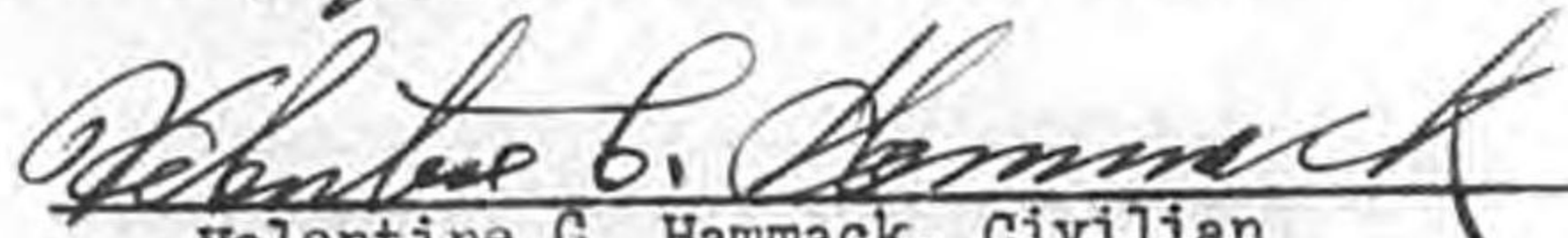
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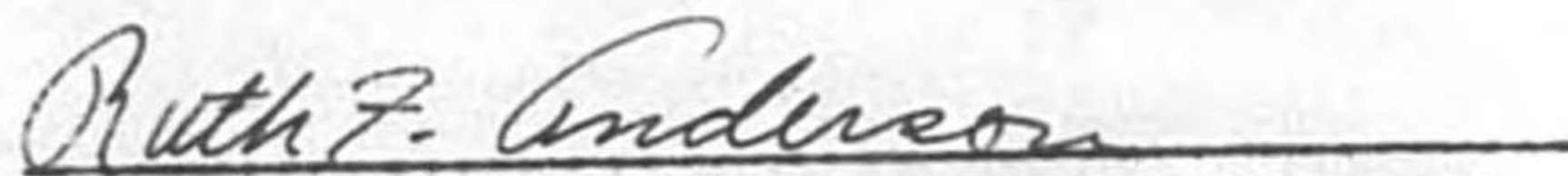
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4124 73
Interrogation of Baron Kichiro Hiranuma

Get Her
interviewed
of the date.
15 January 1946

- Q. And did you, as an elder statesman, give any advice in connection with the continuation of the war?
- A. No, I gave none of my own views.
- Q. Now, Baron, yesterday you stated that your first information that war with the United States was impending was in the latter part of November or early part of December 1941. Will you state how you received that information?
- A. I heard this from Premier Tojo.
- Q. And to the best of your recollection, what did Premier Tojo say to you?
- A. He said that the meetings or conferences between the United States and Japan were not successful and war was unavoidable.
- Q. Now, is it not a fact, that it was determined that war was unavoidable and the determination made to embark upon war at a meeting held on November 28th or 29th, 1941?
- A. I was not a member of any government organization at that time. I think that it was determined after that date.
- Q. On November 28th or 29th, did you not attend a meeting of elder statesmen at which war was determined upon by Japan at which were present the following: Premier Tojo; Admiral Shimada, Navy Minister; and former Premiers Okado, Abe, Hiranuma, and Yonai?
- A. Okado and myself were not members of the government, and all that happened here was they received intimation of the declaration of war, or the possibility of the declaration of war.
- Q. In other words, at this meeting then you and Okado were advised were you, of the possibility of impending war with the United States?
- A. Yes.
- Q. At this meeting, Baron, what was your attitude in connection with war upon the United States?
- A. I don't like to call it a conference, because it was not an important government meeting.
- Q. I will rephrase the question. At this meeting of November 28th or 29th heretofore mentioned by you, what was your attitude in connection with a declaration of war upon the United States?
- A. While I have never stated it publicly, I and Okado at the time considered that negotiations between the United States and Japan should be carried on further and war should not be resorted to.

Interrogation of Baron Kichiro Hiranuma

15 January 1946

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