

WAR DEPARTMENT

Exhibit # 20

Case # 145

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*Original transcript of notes taken
by Lt. J. Alexander in the interrogation
of 2. Abu Mitsumi Shinzige, JPN*

*Joe B. Alexander
2nd Lt. Inf.*

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INTERROGATION OF
SHIMIZU, MITSUMI, Vice Admiral, IJN

Date and Time: - 30 November 1945, 1010-1220 hours.
Place : - Room 335, NYK Bldg., Tokyo, Japan
Present : - Lt Joe B Alexander, Inf., Interrogator
- T/4 Rickey S Yamaguchi, Interpreter
- V/Admiral Mitsumi SHIMIZU, IJN (Ret)

Q. What is your present status?

A. Retired in February of 1944.

Q. What is your present address?

A. SETAGAYA, TOKYO.

Q. Are you a graduate of Naval Academy--if so, when did you graduate?

A. Yes, in 1908.

Q. Admiral, will you please give us a brief summary of your naval service?

A. Routine assignments until I entered the Naval War College in 1918. I graduated in 1920 and was promoted to rank of Lt Commander and assigned as staff officer with Grand Fleet. Served about a year and a half with the Fleet and then became an instructor in tactical school at Yokosuka for a year and a half. Was transferred to the Naval Ministry in the Educational Bureau. Promoted to full Commander in 1925, and Captain in 1929. Captain of light cruiser TAMA in 1930-1931. Then to Naval Personnel Bureau until assigned as Captain of battleship ISE in 1934. Served in that capacity until 1935. Became Rear Admiral in 1935 and assigned to SASEBO Naval Station as Chief of Staff. In 1936 transferred to Naval Ministry as chief of Personnel Bureau--served there until 1939. Became squadron commander in 1st Fleet (6th Squadron) until 1940. Became Commander-in Chief of Training Squadron in 1940, and was promoted to Vice Admiral. Became Commander-in Chief of North China Fleet in 1940. Commander-in-Chief of 6th Fleet from 25 July 1941 until February 1942. Wounded during Marshall Islands campaign and returned to Tokyo, resigned as C-in-C of 6th Fleet in February 1942. In July 1942 became C-in-C of 1st Fleet and served until retirement in 1944.

Q. What was your flagship while C-in-C of 6th Fleet?

A. Training Cruiser KATORI.

Q. Will you describe briefly the war games or exercise you attended in Tokyo at the Naval War College in August 1941?

A. Exercise held annually and Fleet Commanders usually took no active part in them. Chiefs of staff of various fleets actually worked

on them. My Chief of Staff was Capt (now Vice Admiral) MITO, HISASHI, who is now Vice Minister of Naval Department. I did not see anything different from any of the exercises held in preceding years.

Q. What exercise or games did you participate in where the final plans for attack of Pearl Harbor and the Philippines were discussed?

A. None. These plans were discussed between Adm Yamamoto, C-in-C of Combined Fleet and V-Admiral NAGUMO, Commander-in-Chief of Air Fleet.

Q. When did these discussions take place?

A. I don't know. I heard about it at a dinner about the end of November. The dinner was held on Adm Yamamoto's flagship, the NAGATO and was attended by the Commander-in-Chiefs of the units in that area--Setonaikai. Adm Yamamoto made the announcement that Pearl Harbor was to be attacked. Others present were V Adm TAKASU, Shiro (1st Fleet) and V Adm KONDO, Nobutake. No date as to the attack was given. This dinner was secret.

Q. Didn't an announcement of that nature cause quite a bit of surprise?

A. It wasn't exactly a surprise, but I thought it would be a very hazardous mission.

Q. Why did you think it would be a hazardous undertaking since the element of surprise was in your favor?

A. I thought they might be spotted on the way.

Q. In the discussion which no doubt followed Adm Yamamoto's remarks, wasn't the probability of discovery discussed?

A. Adm Yamamoto stated that in the event of discovery on the way, they would be unsuccessful. Everyone thought that if the plan wasn't discovered it would be a success, but that if the task force was spotted it would be very difficult.

Q. Wasn't the possibility of Pearl Harbor being alerted and ready for the attack discussed at the dinner?

A. The defenses at Pearl Harbor weren't discussed, but I thought personally that the defenses at Pearl Harbor were well-prepared.

Q. Why did you think they were well-prepared? Was it on account of the money we spent there; the fact that our Fleet was there, or what?

A. I thought that everyone everywhere was well-prepared.

- Q. For the attack to be successful those at the dinner thought that the task force would have to remain undiscovered and for the element of surprise to be complete--was that it?
- A. That was the general opinion and everyone thought there was no other way to succeed.
- Q. Wasn't the possibility of the Foreign Office declaring war discussed?
- A. No.
- Q. Did you ever attend any meetings where the possibility of a Declaration of War discussed?
- A. No.
- Q. Was this the first time you knew that plans had been made to attack Pearl Harbor?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did Adm Yamamoto mention the part that the Army would take?
- A. No.
- Q. When was the first time you discovered that Pearl Harbor had actually been attacked?
- A. Received radio message on my flagship, KATORI, at 4 A. M., 8 December 1941. My flagship was then in the Marshall Islands.
- Q. Do you remember the contents of the message?
- A. Air attack was successful--or words to that effect. It was short and simple, and was evidently from one of the ships taking part. The message was for general consumption and not addressed specifically to me.
- Q. What orders did you receive for the employment of your Fleet when the attack was made?
- A. My flagship was in the Marshalls to act as a transmitter for messages between the task force and submarines in that area.
- Q. What was the rest of the 6th Fleet doing at that time?
- A. It was with the task force attacking Pearl Harbor.
- Q. Did you relay the message about the attack to the submarines?
- A. On the night of 8 December 1941.
- Q. When did the rest of the 6th Fleet join the task force?
- A. End of November.

- Q. When did you sail for the Marshalls?
- A. About the end of November from Yokosuka. My flagship did not go with the task force because it had a speed of only 17 knots.
- Q. At the time you sailed from Yokosuka did you know that you were to act as communications liaison between the task force and the submarines?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Then you must have received the order giving the general plan with the communications network and the orders specifying the date of the attack before you sailed, didn't you?
- A. My orders stated that in the event of war my duties were to act as transmitter.
- Q. Did you receive any messages designating the date the attack was to be made?
- A. No.
- Q. When the rest of the 6th Fleet joined the task force, did you know what the task force was being assembled for?
- A. Yes--it was to join the task force and take part in the attack on Pearl Harbor.
- Q. And you never at any time heard when the Declaration of War would be served?
- A. I heard a chance remark from Yamamoto that the Declaration of War would be sent just before the attack. A few hours before. Remark made shortly after dinner meeting.
- Q. Just how long before the attack was the Declaration of War to be served?
- A. Just a few hours. Everyone thought that just a short time before the attack wouldn't make any difference because the declaration would be sent to Washington and by the time the notice got to Pearl Harbor, they wouldn't have time to prepare and it wouldn't make any difference.
- Q. Did you hear any further references to a Declaration of War?
- A. No.
- Q. Then the element of surprise was to be achieved?
- A. I think so.
- Q. Did Adm Yamamoto ever mention to you that the plan was to have the Declaration of War served too late for Pearl Harbor to be sufficiently notified?

A. He didn't think it made much difference because the U S wouldn't know where or when the strike would take place.

Q. Did Adm Yamamoto ever mention the attitude of the Foreign Office about the plan?

A. I never heard him do so.

Q. Do you have anything to add to your statement?

A. No.

Vice-Admiral MITSUMI SHIMIZU

I, T/4 Rickey S Yamaguchi, 30107575, hereby certify that I acted as interpreter at the interview set out above, that I truly interpreted and translated the English questions into Japanese and the replies thereto from Japanese into English, and that the English translation of the answers set out above are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Rickey S. Yamaguchi
RICKEY S YAMAGUCHI

Joe B. Alexander
JOE B ALEXANDER
2d Lt. Inf