

EXHIBIT No. 3336

(8)

EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERROGATION OF

TŌJŌ HIDEKI

7 February 1946

A. ...Under the Japanese Constitution, the Army Chief of Staff and the Navy Chief of Staff are responsible solely to the Emperor in matters of strategy and evaluation of the probable advantages and disadvantages [yoshiashi] of warfare. The Ministers of State, that is to say, the Premier and the Cabinet Members, are responsible to the Emperor for other governmental functions. The Ministers of State have no right to interfere with the conduct of military affairs nor have the Chiefs of Staff the right to interfere in civil matters.

Q. Then you mean that it is the responsibility of the Chiefs of Staff to advise the Emperor on the probable beneficial or ill-effects of war?

A. Yes. This is an important point about the prerogative of the command. In America it is a function of the civil government. In Japan, you might say that the two spheres of military command and civil government over-lap. Matters of pure military importance are no function of the civil government; matters of pure civil importance are no function of the military command. However, the over-lapping area, which includes such matters as foreign policy and decisions to go to war for example, presents problems which in practice are taken up by the Liaison Conference [Renraku Kaigi]. For example, the strategic war plans are a matter of pure strategy and were not known to the Cabinet members. I did not even know them myself.

Q. You mean that as Premier you did not even know what the war plan was?

A. In my character as Premier, I did not. I was also a member of Imperial Headquarters and a War Councillor [Iaku ni sankaku]. In these latter two capacities, I received military reports of operations plans. These were forwarded by the Chief of Staff. Incidentally, by the war plan, which I referred to a moment ago, I mean Army war plan. I did not know anything about the Navy war plan. However, the fact that I received reports did not mean that I had the right to interfere or participate in matters involving command. These were the sole prerogative of the Chief of Staff.

13 March 1946

A. . . . This whole matter of the actual system in Japan is basic to the understanding of such things as the China Incident and the matters in southern Indo-China that we have talked about. At the first, the government policy in regard to the China Incident was that of localization. However, due to the fact of the independence of the High Command, the fighting kept spreading as they strove for victory. Premier Konoye had a terrible time.

. . . . The responsibility of the Premier and the Foreign, War, and Navy Ministers, and the President of the Planning Board, together with the Chiefs of Staff, for advice to the Emperor, through the instrumentality of the Liaison Conference and Imperial Conferences, was of tremendous importance. To return to the China Incident, for example--the Government policy was a policy of non-enlargement of the Incident; nevertheless, because of the fact that the civil government had no authority over the Supreme Command, the fighting was, in fact, enlarged and the civil government was powerless to prevent it. [This complete last answer was read back to the witness and he agreed as to its correctness. The attached diagram, illustrating the relationships discussed in the above interrogation, was later prepared and shown to the witness who agreed also as to its correctness.]

Q. You said yesterday that the civil government could not control the Supreme Command and gave as examples the China Incident and the situation in southern Indo-China. Would you explain how this worked in regard to southern Indo-China in 1941?

A. Well, on the one hand, the Japanese-American negotiations were under way. On the other hand, Imperial Headquarters kept moving troops and supplies from Formosa by ship to southern China and into northern Indo-China in order to win. This was something which could give rise to misunderstandings, but,

because the movement of troops and military supplies was the sole province of the Supreme Command, the civil government could say nothing. It was a different situation with regard to southern Indo-China. There, the troops were moved in on a basis of the joint defense agreement: since this involved the civil government, it could not be done by the Supreme Command alone. However, troops could be moved from central China into south China and even into the north part of French Indo-China at that time under the proper authority and at the convenience of the Supreme Command. This, of course, refers to the Army; a similar situation existed with regard to the Navy.

19 March 1946

A. . . . However, you may say that these four steps, to wit: the "Four-" and "Five-Minister" Conferences, the Liaison Conferences, the Conference for the Supreme Direction of the War, and the Imperial Headquarters Conferences, attended by the Premier, were four stages of the attempt to solve this problem of the over-lapping spheres of authority. With regard to the over-lapping spheres, there was a certain amount of success, but the political forces, that is to say, the political power, of the Cabinet, could not control the pure command sphere of authority of the Supreme Command.

I am not saying that the independence of the Supreme Command is a bad thing. There are some good points about it too, for example, being able to conduct operations without political interference. It was a good thing in 1890, when the Constitution was established, for the High Command to be untrammelled, but in these days where the influence of a single action is felt around the world, a certain amount of control by the political authority is necessary. However, under the Japanese system, it was impossible. [The preceding portion of this answer was read back to the witness who agreed as to its correctness.]

There is one important point that I would like to make clear. I have been talking about difficult problems of the Japanese Government system and of the independence of the Supreme Command. However, the foreign problems arising from the actions of the Supreme Command, I am responsible for.

Q. So that the independence of the Supreme Command was good from a military standpoint but not good from a political or civil standpoint.

A. The independence of the Supreme Command is good from a military point of view only if fighting were the only thing to be considered, but fighting today is also a part of politics. From the political point of view, under modern conditions, the independence of the Supreme Command requires consideration. I believe that under modern conditions, war is a part of politics--they are not separate any more.

Q. Do you not realize that the position in which Japan finds herself today was due largely to the independence of the Supreme Command?

A. To speak plainly, it was a big cause. . . .