

INTERROGATION OF

SASAGAWA, Ryoichi.

Date and Time: 18 January, 1946, 1000-1140 hours

Place : Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan.

Present : Mr. Joseph F. English, Interrogator.
Mr. Dennis Kildoyle, Interpreter
Miss Dinah Braun, Stenographer.
SASAGAWA, Ryoichi.

Questions by : Mr. English.

Oath of Interpreter, administered by Mr. English
to Mr. Kildoyle:

Mr. ENGLISH: Do you solemnly swear, by Almighty God, that
you will truly and accurately interpret and
translate from English into Japanese and from
Japanese into English, as may be required of
you, in this proceeding?

Mr. KILDOYLE: I do.

Questions by: MR. ENGLISH.

Q. At the first interrogation I asked if you were a member of
the Imperial Rule Assistance Association and you said yes. Is
that correct?

A. I was a member, a very low grade member.

Q. Were you a member of the Imperial Rule Assistance Political
Society?

A. I was a member of the Imperial Rule Political Assistance
Association. I was not connected with the Imperial Rule Assistance
Association.

Q. Were you a member of the Political Association of Japan?

A. The Imperial Rule Political Assistance Association became
the Japan Political Association later and I was also a member of
this. All Diet members of the Peer and Lower House were practically
forced to become members of this association.

Q. The Imperial Rule Assistance Association was formed in 1940, was it not?

A. Yes.

Q. And you were not a member of the Political Rule Assistance Society during 1940?

A. No connection at all.

Q. You became a member of the Imperial Rule Political Assistance Association in 1942, is that correct?

A. I became a Diet member in 1942 and therefore automatically became a member of the Political Assistance Association.

Q. For what purpose was this Political Association formed?

A. It was formed somewhat along the lines of the Nazi Organization in Germany, where control of government was centered in one organization.

Q. Were there any other organizations or societies functioning in Japan after the organization of this Imperial Assistance Association?

A. There were two political parties - Sau Seiyuki. Later the two political parties were broken up and formed into Seyukai and Munseito. There were other little parties but they were so small they were of no account.

Q. Was the Kokusui Taishuto disbanded after the Imperial Rule Association was organized?

A. That was practically non-existent after the formation of the Imperial Rules Assistance Association.

Q. What effect did the formation of this political association have upon the people of Japan?

A. The people in the Imperial Rule Assistance Association were leaders - people like the Prime Minister and Governors of the various prefectures in Japan and they were able to govern or control in any way they desired.

Q. What changes took place in Japan among the people as the result of this new control?

A. It became obligatory on the people to obey the Imperial Rule Assistance Association - to absolutely obey.

Q. What methods of control of the people were used by this organization?

A. I was not an influential member of this organization and I am unwilling to say just how control was effected but I am certain that the Army and Navy and Prince Konoge - who were all very influential in this organization - had a hand in the control of the nation through this organization.

Q. Do you know of any instances in which anyone was punished in any respect by the leaders of this association?

A. I do not know exactly but I think there must have been instances. I cannot think of any specific instance in which people were punished.

Q. This society, if I understand you correctly, was similar to the Nazi Party in Germany?

A. Yes, it was the sole party in Japan that issued orders.

Q. In Germany people were put in concentration camps. Did that happen in Japan?

A. I do not think that this association went as far as that. They had not been in existence long enough. Instead of being punished the people who opposed this party were expelled from the Society.

Q. Did the police have anything to do with the enforcing of the program of this society?

A. This actually represented the government, it was the government and the governors and mayors of cities and prefectures carried out the orders and the police came under the jurisdiction of the governors and therefore had to carry out orders of the association.

Q. What was the real purpose of this society?

A. The object was to control the population and to make them obey the dictates of the government. The police forces throughout the company were not powerful enough and the job of this society was to reach everyone in the nation and to be able to control them effectively.

Q. For what purpose did the leaders of this association wish to control all of the people in Japan?

A. I think that war had already been decided upon and to effectively control the people this organization was formed in this manner.

Q. About when would you say war was decided upon by the leaders?

A. I do not know but I do want to point out that Japan is different from western nations and if the leaders, and especially the Army and Navy or, in other words, the militarists have decided to wage a war the populace have nothing to say.

Q. Then you would say that the purpose of this society was to better control the people if war broke out or if Japan decided to go to war?

A. If people like me opposed the war it would create a disturbance generally and it was with the intention of controlling every antiwar thought and idea that the leaders operated this association.

Q. Then at the time this society was formed in 1940, the leaders must have been preparing for war. Is that true?

A. I think so.

Q. Who were the leaders at that time who you think were preparing for war?

A. The Army - Mr. Tojo.

Q. Against whom were they preparing for war in 1940?

A. I do not know whether it was against the United States, Great Britain or Russia. But I am certain that it was in preparation for war.

Q. Why would the leaders be preparing for war against any of those countries in 1940?

A. Because of the assistance given to China by the western nations - the "China Incident" which could not be settled and people generally thought the western nations were to blame for the prolonged war in China. That would lead to war - that was the argument put up to the nation through the newspapers.

Q. Were you ever active in this society?

A. I was only a member of the political society. I was opposed to the first society and was always in hot water.

Q. When was the Imperial Rule Political Society formed?

A. I think it was in March or April 1942. I am not certain. I am certain that plans for the formation of this Imperial Rule Political Society had been formulated long before.

Q. Was it the purpose of the Political Association to increase the control over the people to an extent greater than that exercised by the Imperial Rule Assistance Society?

A. The Political Association was an organization in which membership of all politicians and members of the Diet was compulsory. The first Association - the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, membership was not compulsory. It was just a mutual organization. The first organization is for the control of the population and the political organization was for the control of the politicians and they existed simultaneously. They still existed at the time of the surrender.

Q. Were not the politicians members of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association?

A. Many were not members of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association but membership in the Imperial Rule Political Association was compulsory for all politicians.

Q. When you use the word "politicians" what do you mean?

A. There are two classes, members of the House of Peers and Members of the House of Representatives or members of the Diet.

Q. Then the Imperial Rule Political Association was formed to control all members of the Diet?

A. Exactly, that is why I had to be a member of this Imperial Rule Political Association.

Q. You were in the army between 1919 and 1921?

A. I was a first class private in the army from 1919 to 1921.

Q. Between 1921 and 1926, were you employed?

A. I was doing nothing during the five years. I had a lot of trouble with a broken arm which would not heal.

Q. From whom did you get your support those years?

A. I had means of support - my own means of support.

Q. Where and how did you acquire the monies during that period?

A. My father had died and I inherited from my father.

Q. What was the extent of the inheritance?

A. Everything was in the country and it was not very extensive but it was sufficient.

Q. In terms of yen, how many yen did you inherit from your father?

A. Perhaps twenty or thirty thousand yen, in addition to land and houses and other fixed property.

Q. Did your father leave a will?

A. A will is not necessary here. I am the eldest and therefore I inherited.

Q. Could your father have made a will?

A. No. When the family is large, to avoid trouble sometimes wills are made.

Q. How many brothers and sisters did you have?

A. Three boys and one girl in my family.

Q. You were the eldest son?

A. Yes, I was the eldest.

Q. What was the value of the land and the house that you inherited?

A. I am not certain.

Q. Approximately how much?

A. I think at the present time it would be worth 100,000 yen.

Q. What year did your father die?

A. 1920. This is his anniversary.

Q. At the time of your father's death in 1920, what was the value of the land and the houses you inherited?

A. It was at least 10,000 yen in money and bonds.

Q. Then you would have inherited a total of approximately thirty to forty thousand yen in all?

A. I suppose that would be about it but I am not prepared to give exact values for the houses I had.

Q. What was the total estate of your father divided among the four children including you?

A. No. I am the eldest and it was not divided. But I was responsible for the education and other matters of my brothers and sister.

Q. If I remember correctly you said you became the head of KOKUSUI TAISHUTO in about 1933?

A. It was in 1931. I became head of the KOKUSUI TAISHUTO in about August 1931.

Q. You were the financier of a magazine called Kokubo?

A. About 1926 I had a man by the name of Kiumra Fukumatsu publishing this magazine for me. I had plenty of money and that

is one reason they wanted me to be the head of the KOKUSUI TAISHUTO organization.

Q. You were then the owner and publisher of this magazine, is that correct?

A. Yes, it was solely mine. Nobody else had any connection with it.

Q. You were the president of the ICHI KAWA UTAEMON Production in Ayameike Nara Prefecture until about 1939, is that correct?

A. I organized it.

Q. What kind of an organization was it?

A. Motion pictures.

Q. When did you organize it?

A. About 1926. I do not remember the exact date.

Q. How long did this organization stay in existence?

A. Just about one year.

Q. Was it financially successful?

A. Yes. The reason for its success was ICHII KAWA UTAEMON. He was a very famous actor and could not agree with the other producers and as I had means I decided to back this man and we were very successful and the company became independent.

Q. What was the reason for dissolving the company?

A. I became disgusted with the actions and lives of the actors and producers connected with the company and I decided to dissolve the company.

Q. What was the net profit of that organization after its year's activity?

A. I do not remember but it was about 70000 or 100000 yen. That profit was not my own profit. We made a profit and I was able to take out my investment.

Q. What was the amount of the original investment?

A. Between ten and twenty thousand. The buildings were supplied by the Electric Railroad line to Nara as they looked upon this as a good advertising project.

Q. Did anyone else invest any money in this project?

A. No.

Q. If I understand your figures correctly you invested 10,000 yen in cash and after a year's operation the production company was dissolved and you netted profits of between sixty and ninety thousand yen. That is, you invested ten thousand in cash and received back seventy to one hundred thousand?

A. The 70,000 or 80,000 yen is clear profit.

Q. How long was the magazine Kokubo in existence?

A. The publication was spasmodic and I think it was being edited until about four or five years ago. My younger brother was at one time connected with the magazine.

Q. Was the magazine a financial success?

A. No. After the death of the editor I could find no one to do this work.

Q. Was the magazine Kokubo connected with Kokusui Taishuto association?

A. No connection except through me. I was president of both.

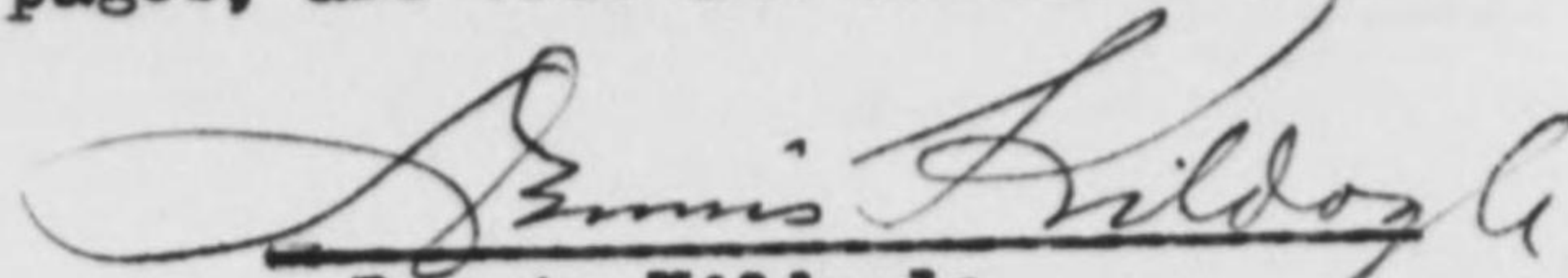
Q. The words KOKUSUI TAISHUTO in English mean National Mass Party. Is that correct?

A. The reasons for taking this name were that at one time there were two organizations in Japan. One was called KOKUSUIKAI, an organization of gamblers, and another was called SHAKAI TAISHUTO. These two were both well known but in great dispute and when I decided on a name for my organization, I combined the two KOKUSUI TAISHUTO and my idea in combining these two names was that although

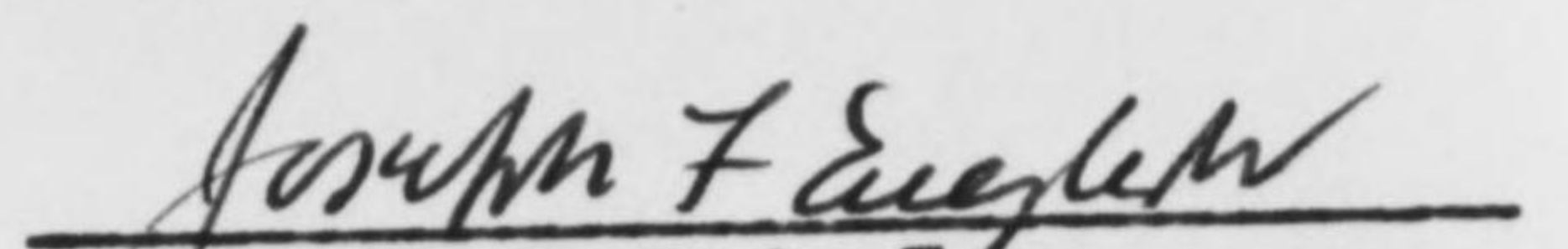
the name would represent two parties in great dispute, my intention was to build up a society opposed in every way to the two parties mentioned before - on the basis of putting good wine into bad bottles, or under bad labels.

CERTIFICATE OF INTERPRETER

I, DENNIS KILDOYLE, 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 ten (10) pages, are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

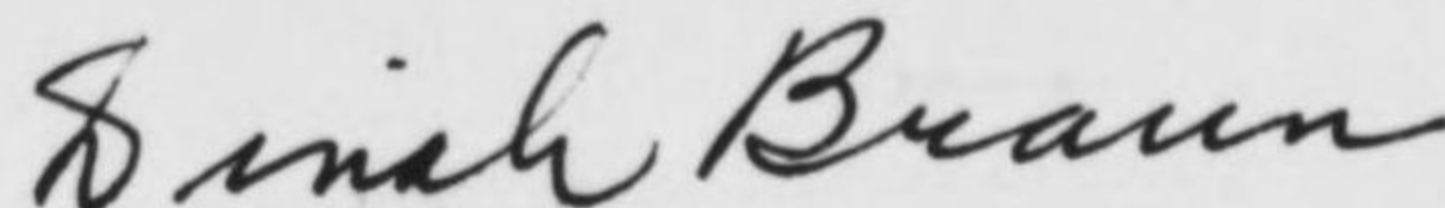

Dennis Kildoyle

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 30th day of January, 1946.


Joseph F. English, Esq.
Duly Detailed Investigating Officer
International Prosecution Section
GHQ, SCAP.

CERTIFICATE OF STENOGRAPHER

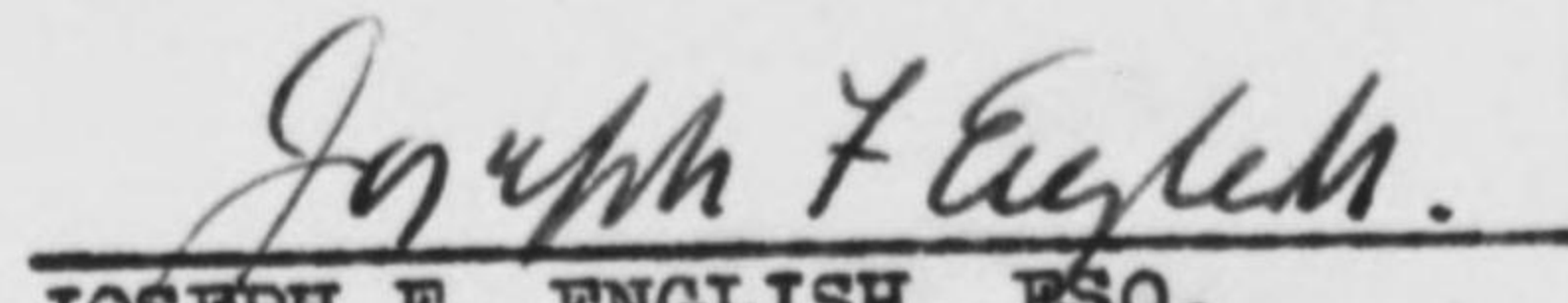
I, DINAH BRAUN, hereby certify that I acted as stenographer at the interrogation set out above, and that I transcribed the foregoing questions and answers, and that the transcription is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.



CERTIFICATE OF INTERROGATOR

I, JOSEPH F. ENGLISH, ESQ. Certify that on the 18th day of January, 1946, personally appeared before me SASAGAWA, Ryoichi, and according to DENNIS KILDOYLE, Interpreter, gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth therein.

Tokyo
January 30 1946


JOSEPH F. ENGLISH, ESQ.