

WAR DEPARTMENT

Exhibit #50

File 60

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300

Transcript of original notes taken
by Capt Robinson U.S.N.R. in the
interrogation of Ginzakuro Mazaki

See also
Ex. 51

INTERROGATION OF
GENERAL JINZABURO MASAKI

Date and time: 2 December 1945; 1400-1730
Place : Room 816, Dai-Iti Hotel, Tokyo, Japan.
Present : Captain J. J. Robinson, USNR, Interrogator.
Commander D. R. Carr, USNR, Interrogator.
Lt. Col. B. E. Sackett, USA, Interrogator.
Hideki Masaki, Interpreter and adviser.
General Jinzaburo Masaki.

Introductory Statement (by R. to Hideki Masaki):

Mr. Masaki, you may tell the General that all of us are interested in finding out the true facts. Col. Sackett is an investigator with extensive experience in that field. Commander Carr is highly qualified in the Japanese language field, has lived in Japan and has high respect for Japan, a friendly interest in this country and its people, as you know. As for myself, I am a lawyer and interested in the administration of justice with fairness and effectiveness.

(Translated by Mr. H. Masaki to General J. Masaki)

Q.(R): General Masaki, will you tell us about your trial in 1936 as we are all interested in the administration of justice? The judges in your case were General Isomura and General Matsuki?

A.: Yes, and the third judge was Sekijiro OGAWA.

Q.: Did they ^{uphold} ~~continue~~ Totalitarian activities ^{before and} after the trial?

A.: In my opinion, they did not uphold totalitarian activities. Isomura is a man of character with no liking for totalitarianism. Gen. Matsuki's health was not so good and after the trial he died. Ogawa was promised a post as head of the legal section of the Army if he would find me guilty, so he was disliked by the totalitarians because he did not find me guilty. Ogawa was a member of the legal section of the First Division when I was Commander of the division, though he was not a direct subordinate of mine. After ^{the} 26 February incident he called and I told him not to make any mistake in the trial. Yet he was urged by the totalitarians to find me guilty.

Q.: Was not the principal conspirator Ishiwaraya?

A.: He was one, but the real plotters were the Choshu clique. I can substantiate that statement. First was ~~Iwase~~ ^{Iwase} KIRAHAI, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal; then Marquis KIDO and General Terauchi. These facts can be substantiated by Konye.

^{cops}
Kirahai IWASE,

Q.: Tojo?

A.: He was one of the members. Then he was a mere messenger for the clique.

Q.: When did the inner group first make known its objections to you?

A.: 1920 - 1921. I was Colonel and Chief of the Military Affairs Section. Shall I explain how it all started out? Since the days of the feudal system the people ~~overseas~~ ^{the} Secret Service Fund Case arose. This fund was not subject to audit, but could be used by the Army at discretion. The money could not be used, however, without approval under my seal and I refused my seal when I considered the use illegal. At another time, the Choshu people who were predominant hated me because they could not use the Secret Service Fund for their

^{of} — Province could agree with Satsuma Province but not Choshu Province, and when I was chief of the Military Affairs section

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J. J. Robinson
M. Carr

Make
Extra
carbon
for
Capt
Robinson
Room 542

own convenience. They tried to oust me from the War Ministry, so I was promoted to the 1st Infantry Brigade of the Imperial Guard.

Q.: What were the objectives of the inner group, both inside Japan and outside Japan?

A.: In Japan, the group, which was predominant in the Army, could be predominant politically, so the Tojo group intended to dominate the Army and on that basis to dominate politics. This was the Choshu group. Some from other provinces carried favor in order to realize their own political ambitions. I told you before that the antagonism of the Choshu Group to me started in 1921, but as a matter of fact it was generally believed that unless an officer was from Choshu Province, he was not a human being. (Choshu Seishun is limited to people from Choshu). Just as in the olden days, a member of the Taira Clan was not regarded as a human being. When I was Captain after graduating from Military Staff College, I found out the truth of that ~~truth~~ and that Choshu people were over-powerful and I made up my mind that these cliques must be crushed for the interest of the Army. I was so determined that it may have been ^{natural} that antagonism would come to the fore between the Tojo people and myself.

(Hideki)

Q.: Now, with the inner clique in control, what were they trying to do in Japan. To eliminate the Emperor, to get Japan into war? To establish Communism?

A.: The idea is that the group was first provincial and then ideological group. ~~Army~~ (General) I shall have to explain in more detail later. There was an ~~ambition~~ ambition to dominate the Army and through it the country. More recently, a faction appeared. In the Totalitarian group ~~which~~ some wanted to transform Japan on a given plan. They wished to Nazify or to Sovietize the country. I believe that the Manchurian Incident was caused by these ~~plans~~ totalitarians.

Q.: (S) How would the Manchurian Incident help in that regard?

A.: The Totalitarians hoped to precipitate an incident in Japan, but the situation was such that there was no hope at that time, so they thought up the incident in Manchuria. I do not think it was caused by a few plotters. Perhaps you know better than I the background. They tried to establish a State in Manchuria according to their own plan, and to transplant the totalitarian plan in Japan. I perceived that possibility when the Incident broke out, so I endeavored to keep the plan from being transplanted.

Q.: Who were the chief instigators?

A.: Itagaki, Hanada, Katakura - among the officers. Among the civilians were Dr. Shumei OKAWA, Isamu FUJITA.

Q.: Okawa was a rich man subsidizing the radicals, wasn't he?

A.: I do not think he was a rich man but he got the money - perhaps from the Army. (Smiling)....I take this opportunity to present the case for General Honjo, who committed suicide. He was my classmate, an honest, sincere man; he was not guilty at all. He was virtually confined to his room and knew nothing of the Incident.

say that I do not want to speak ill of the dead. On the contrary, I want to

presently when ordered to be placed in custody as a suspected war criminal.

Q.: Which of these plotters are still alive -- all of them?
A.: They are all alive.

Q.: How did you present opposition?
A.: When the incident broke out, I was in Formosa. ~~recalled to Tokyo~~ ~~When the Japanese troops were being dispatched to the Northeast Provinces, I instructed Honjo to recall the troops, and I made up my mind to stop the Incident from spreading beyond the Great Wall. I knew nothing about the plot until after it broke out. A few months later I was recalled to Tokyo. Finally, I made up my mind to go to the Great Wall and stand on it (arms raised) and to stop the forces there. Prince Kan-in said that would be a final measure, there may be some preliminary measures.~~ ~~So I sent letters to General Muto, Commander-in-Chief of the Kwantung Army. His personality and his magnetism were instrumental in stopping the Japanese forces south of the Great Wall. It was Koiso's Chief of Staff's idea to spread hostilities to Northern China but I knew the United States would intervene just as in the case of the Chinese Incident and involve the Japanese people in difficulties. I saw that no Japanese troops remained in the Shanghai Area. General ~~Roci(?)~~, the War Minister, concurred.~~
A few months after the incident broke out I was recalled to Tokyo
Araki,

Q.: What year?
A.: September 1931, the Manchurian Incident; 1932, the Shanghai hostilities broke out. I was appointed Vice Chief of Staff in January 1932.
A.: (further) I knew Japan would be defeated by the United States if hostilities spread. Right after the outbreak of this war, I warned that Japan would be defeated. I was asked to speak at FUKUOKA and SAGA by General HONJO, the President of the Board of Assistance to Service Men (GUNHOGUIN). At that time, in making speeches I could not expressly say that Japan would be defeated but I said that Japan would have to face the situation that Japan is now facing. At least one person ~~agreed with~~ my view. The Governor of the Prefecture recently apologized to me for not having understood.
JIN-

Q.(S) How many times, and when, did you speak?
A. In 1942 I spoke two times as requested by Honjo. If I had spoken on any other occasions I would have been arrested by the members of the Tojo cabinet. It was Honjo's idea to encourage the Japanese people and win their support for service-men. Admiral TAKAHASHI(?) and General MATSUO were listed, and he finally included me because he was short of speakers. I told Honjo I would speak only if free to express my own view. I used circumlocution but I could be understood.
General Araki(?)

Q.(S): Do you have copies of the speeches?
A.: I will try to find them.

Q.: Did you have any conferences with ^{the} Tojo group? If so, how recently prior to 7 December 1941?

I had no ~~off~~ occasion to meet up with them.

A.: When war broke out, I ~~was~~ was on the retirement^d list. I did not like to attack the Tojo group and they did not attack me.

Q.: (S) When did the General first hear definitely that Japan was to go to war?

A.: I felt the crisis of an American-Japanese war on November 3rd (MEIJA^I SETSU, a Japanese holiday) when going back from my native province to Tokyo by train. Prince Kan-in boarded the train at Osaka. I went to his car for a few words. I knew the prince was scheduled to go to KUMOMOTO~~in~~^A in Kyushu, ~~but~~ the train was ordered back to Tokyo. ✓

Q.(S) Did the Prince discuss the forthcoming war with the General?

A. It was just a feeling. I was reading newspaper ~~reports~~ ^{reports}. I was a ~~career~~ soldier so I have a sense of ~~responsibility~~ ^{responsibility} in the presence of the Emperor. I said, "This is a serious matter". The Prince said, "yes, ^{right} we cannot do this. ^{heartedly} neither ^{used} the word "war". ✓

(continue next page)

Q. Did the Prince indicate when the war might start?
A. No.

Q. How long before 1941 was it that the general had ceased to be on the inside?
A. In 1935, when I was removed from my position as Inspector General of Military Education.

Q. You still had friends on the inside?
A. No one among the principal ^{and} generals remained to continue the struggle.

Q. What were the objectives of the totalitarism then?
A. The ^{new} group was under way.

Q. With what objectives?
A. The establishment of the totalitary ^{ian} system in Japan, and so long as I remained in office they could not appoint such officers to important positions.

Q. (Sackett) Why did they want to have totalitarism government?
A. In order to prepare for a possible war in the Pacific. It was considered to be necessary to establish a totalitarism ^{ian} system, because without a totalitarism system, fighting strength could not be increased.

Q. (Sackett) What was the objective in wanting to go to war then? Did ^{they} you want to gain territory or what?
A. It seems to me that the objective was partly internally to equalize the wealth of the people, because the people felt there was too much discrepancy in the distribution of wealth. They hoped to redistribute wealth and ^{to} equalize wealth. They thought Japan could not keep ^{her} independence if this were not done.

Q. Do you not sympathize with those objectives?
A. I was fundamentally opposed to totalitarism. My opposition to the totalitarism idea is a personal characteristic. The main cause was ^{my} investigation of the cause of the German defeat in the last war. I was sent in 1924, to Germany ^{and} to investigate the causes of the German defeat. ~~In that investigation,~~ ^{an} incident gave me a profound impression. A friend of mine, a Colonel of the German Army, followed me to the station when I was leaving Weimar. He said that one very important fact is that Japan must not follow the foot steps of Germany (of 1914). He said that Germany was strictly disciplined in time of peace and in the early days of ~~the other~~ war while the Allied Powers seemed loosely disciplined ^{in the early} days of war. But as the war situation became more critical Germany became ^{less} strict, while the Allies became more strict. These simple words made a profound impression on me. I realized that dictatorship can maintain strong discipline and morale when things go well, but that when things go wrong dictators must flatter the people. On the other hand ^a democracy ~~has a foundation~~ on the peoples will, ^{with} ~~no~~ ^{remains strong} I talked of this to many well-known politicians including ~~Hatoyama~~, and all agreed with me. I said that Tojo's politics were childish. ^{Hatoyama,}

The United States

strength based

Q. Did the young officers movement have any influence on the ^{ian} Generals' ideas in regard to totalitarism?
A. In the 1920's I observed that the young officers were profoundly influenced by National Socialistic ideas and by Dr. Shumei Okawa, and when I became head of the Military Academy I established contact with the young officers and ^{of them} fully realized that they were under the influence of such ideas and some ~~have~~ ^{even} not had communistic ideas. I endeavored to rectify this trend, but before I fully succeeded, I was transferred to command the 8th Division. I was reading articles written by Dr. Okawa and at one time I was nearly induced to agree to think that state socialism ^{would be} the only way to save Japan. But I ~~was~~ still reflected and I arrived at the conclusion that the ^{principle} Prince of Japan is diametrically opposed to state socialism. In some respects both ideas, state socialism and the totalitarism idea, may look to be the same, just as sea water ^{at} mean tide does not indicate whether the tide is flowing or ebbing. There must not be a single unemployed person, They must be saved, whether by state socialism or by Japanese principles, but the methods are diametrically opposed. State socialism approves violence. State socialists don't hesitate to take by violence ~~but~~ those who have and redistribute ^{but} my idea of the Japanese principle is according ^{to} harmony, ~~and~~ ^{and} I believe this idea can be

Whatever idea we may have

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DRAFT

(Gendarmerie)

applied all over the world, not only internally, but internationally. After this idea Machinaga of the Kempeitai (John Gendarmerie) warned me that I was too outspoken and that Seisanto regarded me as anti-reformer. On the other hand, I was regarded by the elder statesmen as radical, and I was caught between these two extremes and I found myself in a very difficult position.

Q. It seems that some are interested in knowing why you were supported by the young officers.

~~Right~~

with the intention

A. After the February 26 incident they took a long time to investigate. It was said that since the young officers supported me so ardently, it was impossible that I did nothing to win their support. As a matter of fact, I did not do anything or say anything to win their support. I finally told the questioning officers about what they have heard from me, or what they know of what I have done, and I could not realize myself why I was supported by the young officers. I can think of only three factors: ~~the~~ the fact that I always told the truth and nothing but the truth. This is the teaching which I received from my grandfather and from my father. ~~the~~ ^{Secondly} maybe my principles of education. I realized that the ideas of the younger generation and of the older generation were very different, and that if there is ten years age difference, the ideas of people maybe very different in the family and then these ideas sometimes ~~lead~~ ^{give rise} to trouble. I think the older generation is more to be blamed for such troubles. The younger generation of course must be blamed some, but it is important to remember that the younger generation never have been old, while the older generation ~~was~~ ^{was} once young and they can remember their younger days. As Mr. Yukichi FUKUZAWA, the founder of Keio University, said, "The educator ~~must~~ ^{must} be loved before ~~education~~." We may be loved by children, by giving them candy but

we cannot be loved by grownups by giving them candy. (P)

he is capable of educating."

it's no use asking me that. Ask all these young officers

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D R A F T

It seemed to me that the greatest attraction for young people is the truth. It is not a question of who is right and who is wrong, but it is a question of who is telling the truth, which attracts younger people, more than anything else. And when young people came to see me and expressed their views, I never scolded their views or used authority or force or compulsion in educating younger people. Just as we tell babies to come here when they begin to crawl or run, by showing them toys or something attractive, I lead the young people by showing them an idea progressively. My idea of education is not compulsion, but inducement and progress.

Another factor was that almost all of the ranking officers established corrupt contacts with moneyed interests and politicians. I believe that I was the only general who could tell the young officers not to meddle in politics. So the young officers perhaps thought that I was the only person who could save Japan, since I had no connection with corrupt political parties or financiers. I was told that one young officer involved in the February 26 incident stated this view to the Chief of Police of Kanagawa Prefecture.

Q. (Sackett) Put in your written story, General, the facts as you have stated them above. Tell what you did to counsel the young officers. State also after the conversation with the Prince, what was the next time you talked to anyone connected with the government?

A. (Conversation with H. Masaki) I will read my diary, but I can't recall talking to anyone else. I didn't know that war would break out on December 8. It was a surprise to me. General Obata came rushing to my house and cried, "We are defeated."

Q. (Sackett) Did General Obata or anyone else tell you how the plans were drawn for Pearl Harbor and Malaya?

A. No ^{one} before the out break of war. There was a monthly meeting of generals on the retired list at the War Ministry. After the China incident, ^{General} Kunishige, ^{Tanaka} used to ask the Army officers, "Why ^{didn't} you attack Singapore?" Their reply was that before the out break of war they did not have enough forces. The actual strategic plan must have been known to a limited circle.

Q. Who was in that inner circle?

A. Technically only the Chief of the General Staff and the War Minister, are the persons who know the whole strategic plan, but practically such plans are known to the Vice Chief of Staff, the Vice Minister of War, and the Director of the Operation Bureau in the General Staff Office, (Sakusenbuchō).

Q. That is all War Department, what about the Navy?

A. The case must be the same with the Navy.

Q. (Sackett) Who, in the Foreign Office at that time, would have known?

A. (Laughing) The Army never tells anything to the Foreign Ministry.

Q. (Sackett) After the war started, did you hear at the retired generals' meeting or elsewhere, who made the decision that war should start on 8 December?

A. I have never heard anything in regard to the out break, but in the Japanese system, no other person but the Chief of the General Staff of the Army, and of the Navy, the War Minister, and the Navy Minister, ~~are the only ones who~~ can make such decisions.

Q. (Sackett) You never heard any discussion of the details of starting the war, or of notifying the other countries?

A. I have never been told, even ^{since} after the out break of the war. I was unwilling to ask. The Army was corrupt already. It is not important to discuss, but I cannot tell what I do not know. Particularly as I respect and have a friendly feeling for the United States, because my teacher was an American, and when I ~~have been~~ ^{was} in the United States, I ~~have been~~ ^{was} treated very cordially. I feel now that what Japan could not accomplish by herself, or by the Emperor, is being accomplished by the United States. I now have, therefore, mixed feelings of pleasure and regret.

Q. (Sackett) You took no part in government after 1935?

A. Never.

Q. In 1942, 43, 44, 45 you lived ^{quietly} at home and had no ^{duties of kind?} job at any time?

A. No, except Chairman of the Educational Association of Saga Prefecture.

Q. It has been ^{said by someone} stated that you were Military ^{Counselor} ~~Consul~~ to the Japanese Expeditionary Forces in China.

A. That is ridiculous.

Q. It has been ^{said} also that you were a member of the ^{council} ~~counsel~~ of the Home Defense League.

A. I do not know what that means.

Q. If it means that you were in the volunteer fire fighting organization of the neighborhood for saving houses after bombings, you may have engaged in such activities?

A. Yes. I am aware that I have made enemies because I have been too straight-forward to suit them, but the fact that I was acquitted, shows that I ~~have had~~ never done anything wrong in my personal or official life; otherwise, I would have been executed. I would have been dismissed at least. The acquittal, therefore, proved my innocence and I am always ready to answer any questions. At my trial following the February 26 incident I was called in without having time for preparation, but I was acquitted.

Q. Did you have a counsel?

A. (Laughing) No. (Continuing) On December 27, 1936 when I was in prison the prosecutory ordered my release. Terauchi intercepted the orders and by telephone ordered that I be kept in prison.

Q. Is that the Terauchi who is now at Saigon, or elsewhere in French Indo-China?

A. Yes.

Q. He is one of the leaders in this inner group?

A. I don't think he is so capable of leading. I think he is a mere tool of the Akira Muto group, including Iwasa and the rest of the Tojo group.

Q. (Sackett) ^{Will} do you have the complete list of names of the inner group ^{in your statement?}

A. Yes.

Q. What about Yamashita? Was he in the inner group?

A. Formerly he used to collaborate closely. He had the same ideas. He was not a member of the Totalitarian Military Group, but after he was appointed Chief of Staff in North China under Terauchi, I began to feel that he was evading me. I have no conclusive evidence, but he seemed to have a changed attitude toward me.

Q. (Sackett) Did the Navy have an inner group too? How did they get together?

A. No group was formed intentionally, but it was known that the Navy had two groups because of personal feelings, the fleet group and the land group.

Q. (Sackett) How does Admiral Nagano fit into the picture?

A. It was ~~never clear~~ which party he belonged to, ~~he~~ was always ambiguous.

Q. Yamamoto?

A. He hated the Army and opposed the Army and naturally so, because I believe ^{widely believed among admirals and generals that his attitude was} the Army was wrong.

Q. (Sackett) Why did he hate the Army? Was it because of a difference regarding war plans?

A. I don't know about war plans, but he was against war with the United States, but a group in the Army was driving Japan into war.

Q. (Sackett) What was the attitude of the Chief of the General Staff toward war in December 1941? Was he a member of the inner group? If not, why? If so, how?

A. I don't think the Army Chief of Staff really intended to start the war, because after I was ousted, no generals, except those who were docile could assume commanding positions, so the Chief of Staff would be compelled to start war.

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#1
Q. Who was the Chief of Staff in 1941 and why was he placed in office?
A. Sugiyama. He was an excellent soldier when young. He was attaché in France, Director of the Military Affairs Bureau, Vice Minister of War and Commander of the 12th Division before he was Chief of Staff. But when he became old he lost his excellence. He seemed rather dull-witted and without firm principles. He was swayed by others. That was one reason why he was chosen and why Japan started war.

Q. Who was responsible for choosing him? Tojo?
A. There is no conclusive evidence, but everything was being done which Tojo wished.

Q. Tojo dominated?
A. Yes.

Q. Was there a special group inside the inner group?
A. Yes. (Naming them) Ikeda, *Akinaga*, Muto, Hashimoto. Akamatsu did not have much influence, but he was in the special group.

Q. Did this special group have a special name?
A. No name.

Q. (Sackett) Where did the name Cherry Blossom Society come from? (Sakura-kai).
A. I do not know the actual reason, but the Cherry Blossom is frequently used as an emblem of the Army and a symbol of the Warrior Class. Members of the Sakura-kai ~~Society~~ are listed in a document submitted (by H. Masaki to Captain Robinson USNR).

Q. Was it dissolved, and when?
A. Possibly after the October incident late in 1931.

Q. Can you bring us documents connected with these plots and other matters?
A. Some of the documents are dispersed, in the custody of friends and elsewhere, and it will take time to bring them in, but I will do so.

Q. (Discussion of reason for the General being detained from leaving Saga City. American officers were Lieutenants Moss and Heran, CIC) *As a General have ever you been treated with personal violence?* *Has the*
A. I have heard rumors, but I fear no threats.

Q. Would you care to name the teachers to who you referred *as contributing to your friendship for the United States?*
A. My teachers were Mr. James K. Schierer and Mr. Charles M. Bradbury of Philadelphia. I have been very sorry to learn that Mr. Schierer is dead. (H. Masaki stated that he was one of the few people who understood the general.) I was a student under him in the Prefectural Middle School at Saga City. Mr. Schierer came back to Japan after the Manchurian incident. He introduced me to Ambassador Grew and we had lunch together.

dark APPRAISAL OF WITNESS *Hideki*

The witness is 70 years of age, *and is* but is vigorous and alert. He has a ruddy complexion, keen eyes, small nose, slight receding chin and forehead. He speaks Japanese rapidly but clearly. He is of average height. At the interview he was dressed with wing collar, black coat, striped trousers, and a grey silk tie. His manner is cordial and cooperative. His son, ~~Hideki~~, is associated with the Central Liaison Office and with the Japanese Foreign Office. An extensive CIC report on the General includes the statement that his son, ~~Hideki~~ has been kind and cooperative in assisting Americans and other foreigners in China and elsewhere during and before the war years. No statement made by the General or by his son has been found to be other than accurate and trustworthy. ~~It appears~~ that the General was purged from the Army in 1936 by the Military Clique, because he refused to assist them *and* that they court-martialed him, but that he was acquitted by the court, and that he has taken no part in military or political affairs since 1936. *He should make*

a good impression as a witness, so far as his information is material. His son, Hideki, would be valuable to assist as interpreter.

All evidence so far taken indicates

Some documentary data on the Feb. 1936 incident and trial, and other assistance, may be obtained by Capt. Robinson