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INTERROGATION NO. 521

Place: Tokyo
Date: 10 December 45

Division of Origin: Military Analysis

SUBJECT: War Plans and Tactics

Personnel Interrogated and Background: General NISHIO Toshizo (JUZO) (Retired)

Former member SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL; Governor, TOKYO METROPOLIS.
Prior history: Graduate of Military Academy with highest honors,
1903; Army Staff College with 2d highest honors, 1910. Participated
RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR, Chief of Staff, KWANTUNG ARMY, 1934. Vice Chief,
ARMY GENERAL STAFF 1936. Cmdr, IMPERIAL GUARDS, 1937. INSPECTOR
GENERAL of MILITARY TRAINING 1938. C in C, Japanese Expeditionary
Forces in China, 1939. Retired 1943. Served on SUPREME MILITARY
COUNCIL 18 mos Apr 38 to Sept 39, and 2 yrs Mar 41 to May 43.
Apptd Governor of TOKYO July 44. Apparently understands but does
not speak English.

Where Interrogated: Japanese War Ministry

Interrogator: Maj Gen Orvil A. Anderson, USA

Interpreters: Lt Cmdr Walter NICHOLS, USNR
Mr MATSUZAKI Takashi, a Japanese National

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Q. I would like to explain to the General first that the purpose of this interview this morning is primarily to get an evaluation on the role of air in the support of military operations; first of all up in CHINA in the early period of the war and such provisional evaluation as he puts on the relationship of air to surface operations throughout the war. I'd like initially his evaluations on the phase of the war treating with operations on the Continent proper, in CHINA.

A. I don't know some of the smaller details. Towards the beginning of the war I was in command of ground forces in CHINA. Attached to my forces were HIKO SHUDANS which later became HIKO SHIDANS. A HIKO SHUDAN had the same function as a Flying Division and was made up of units of different types of planes: fighter units, bomber units. During my tour of duty they were called HIKO SHUDANS. I was not myself in control of the air force; I merely controlled their operations in respect to ground operations.

Q. You had what we call operational control. In the early campaigns in CHINA what was the normal mission, the employment, of the air in this joint operation, the air army operation? What was their normal role during the early phases when you first began operations?

A. At the very beginning of the war I had under my command only the forces along the railway between TIENTSIN and SAINON. At that time the only use I had for air forces was for reconnaissance purposes, and at the most we used ten planes on a mission, usually to inform us of enemy operations in the neighborhood. At that time the Army had no very important mission, and therefore we were unable to get much support from the Army Air Forces; we frequently used Naval float planes for reconnaissance.

Q. About what period in the operation did the Army employ its supporting air, whether it be Army or Navy, in a tactical role to deliver fire, to attack specific targets, to provide security forces against opposing air, other than reconnaissance? When did you expand out into the field of tactics?

A. At the beginning, as I have stated before, we used these planes only for reconnaissance. I returned to JAPAN in May 1938. Up to that time in the area in which I was in command, we didn't use planes for tactical purposes, other than reconnaissance.

Q. When did you go back again to CHINA?

A. I went back to CHINA in October 1939 as the commander of the GHQ of the CHINESE EXPEDITIONARY FORCES.

Q. What relationship did that have to the forces in MANCHUKUO?

A. At that time there was no specific connection between the KVANTUNG ARMY in MANCHURIA and the CHINESE EXPEDITIONARY FORCES. They were under entirely separate commands, and our only connection was through DAIHON EI in TOKYO (Imperial GHQ). I am not quite certain what the relationship between the two was.

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- Q. I'm referring to the theatre relationship. Was it possible, through theatre control, to use the Greater Chinese Forces to augment or supplement a MANCHURIAN operation or vice versa? Were those two forces linked together so they could be mutually supporting to each other in the event of a major operation?
- A. In cases where support was necessary, for the CHINESE ARMY, for instance, by forces of the MANCHURIAN ARMY, the IMPERIAL HQ in TOKYO would issue orders to the MANCHURIAN ARMY to detach specific forces, naming those forces, and would also inform the CHINESE ARMY what forces were to have command over the auxiliary forces sent from MANCHURIA. Therefore, all commands in regard to such relationship were issued by the IMPERIAL HQ in TOKYO. There was very little cooperation in that respect in the field.
- Q. They stayed in two separate commands, but in Superior Headquarters --
- A. I would like to enlarge on my previous statement by saying that occasions arose when forces of the MANCHURIAN KWANTUNG ARMY would operate in area controlled by the Northern CHINESE ARMY against the CHINESE Guerilla troops in the area. There were occasions when the forces of the Northern Japanese Expeditionary Forces in CHINA would operate within the MANCHURIAN Border against similar forces. In such cases, it was more or less understood and arranged for by the commanders of the respective forces locally that forces of one Army operating in the area controlled by the other Army would technically be under their commands. However, I can't give any specific instances offhand. When those guerilla troops in the MANCHURIAN area ran back to the Chinese area, then there was again cooperation.
- Q. Is the General familiar with the incident in 1939 that occurred on the RUSSIAN frontier along the AMUR RIVER? I believe it is called the NOMONHAN INCIDENT?
- A. At the time of the incident I was still in TOKYO, and all I know about it is just what I hear off the record. Therefore, anything I would say about it would be merely a matter of opinion.
- Q. That is perfectly all right. It isn't so much a matter of record as a matter of estimates, the opinions of the General on that operation, the significance of it.
- A. The cause of the dispute, of course, was disagreement as to where the boundary was. The RUSSIANS thought they controlled territory which the Japanese thought they were to control. The fighting took place over that dispute. However, as I understand it, the Japanese did not desire to make a big incident out of it. I don't know very much about the actual fighting that took place. I know that the RUSSIAN forces were highly mechanized units and that the Japanese did not come out very well in the fighting.
- Q. That was, on the ground?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Now we understand that in the air phase of that, that rather heavy commitment was made in the air, and the Japanese seemed to suffer quite a reversal; they lost very heavily in the air phase of that operation. I am very curious to know whether or not the results of that operation led to major changes, either in training or in plans for future operations. You see, there was a test, actually run, regardless of how it originated, where the Japanese air and the Russian air met in an offensive of rather major size. The Russians seemed to have better equipment or better training or something, because they scored a local success. We understand that the Japanese lost as much as four hundred airplanes and perhaps two hundred crews; that's quite a heavy loss, and I'm trying to determine what significance that had in Japanese reactions, modifying training programs, whether they felt that this reversal they suffered in attack operation in the air was a result of improper training, insufficient training, not the proper equipment, or

Q. other factors. Why did the Japanese feel that they had, I will say, this rather indecisive, rather costly operation? They suffered what I would call, in that operation, a reverse, a defeat almost, and what significance did it apply in plans for the building up of Air Forces, for training of Air Forces for future operations?

A. Since I was not particularly concerned with air, I do not know exactly what steps were taken to remedy the situation. However, I do know that, as a result of this incident, the Japanese realized that they would have to strengthen their air forces in MANCHURIAN BORDER AREAS. I am not sure what steps were taken towards increased training or manufacture of better equipment, but I know that we learned from this incident that we were in dire need of reinforcement and better establishment in MANCHURIA in order to protect against possible warfare with the RUSSIANS. I would like to apologize for my lack of knowledge of the Air Forces.

Q. I gather, then, that the incident led to, I might say a re-evaluation of the Air Arm. Did you mean, you needed just more airplanes in MANCHUKUO or did that give such overall significance to overall war that it affected the air program, the strength, the composition, the training of the overall air program?

A. I know that prior to the NOMONHAN INCIDENT the Japanese air forces had already embarked on a program of expansion. Although I do not know that this involved reorganization and change of equipment, I know that they were in a process of increasing their forces. I believe that, although this incident may have had some influence on it, the incident came just in the middle of this process. The Japanese were not able to show well in the incident simply because we did not have the planes available. I am not certain to what extent this influenced the process upon which they had already decided; I do not believe I can give you very much more information regarding the NOMONHAN INCIDENT. Possibly if you interrogate people from KOKUHOMBU who were in KOKUHOMBU at that time; in TOKYO, you would probably get a better answer to your question because they would be familiar with the facts.

Q. The reason why I am particularly interested in this incident is that it represents, as we see it, the first occasion on which Japanese air opposed a fairly effective enemy air. You see, it was new in Japanese military experience, and I felt that it must, or should have had, a significant effect on Japanese planning, on Japanese measurement of military capabilities measured in terms of this new air arm. That is what I was shooting at, whether the significance of this lesson had immediate effect in the composition, the development in composition, of the Japanese military forces, air ground and water. I have been trying to explore this subject along that line: This was the first major air engagement for the Japanese?

A. I can't think off-hand of any one who might have been in the KOKU HOMBU in TOKYO studying the problem at this time. However, I think there may be some one left who had experience in KOKU HOMBU at that time and I will see that an investigation is made, and if there is such a person I will see that you get his name. The man who was in charge of the expansion of the Japanese Air Forces during that period died of sickness a short while ago; therefore, he isn't available. However, I think possibly that some of the younger officers who were working on the problem are available.

Q. When the General went back to CHINA as CinC - I think in October 1939 - what was the overall plan, the overall objective that, for Japanese operations in CHINA proper, he took back with him?

A. In October of 1939 when I became Commander of the CHINESE EXPEDITIONARY FORCES, I was ordered not to expand beyond the boundaries of the territory already occupied by the Japanese forces. My main duty was to police the area and to act mainly as a peace preservation force. If I were to carry on operations outside the limits of the area at

- A. that time occupied by the Japanese, I was to obtain permission directly from the IMPERIAL HQ in TOKYO. Occasionally, of course, CHINESE forces would attack us on the boundries of the area we occupied, in which cases we would carry on offensive operations in order to beat them back to a safe distance. However, aside from that there was no overall plan of strategy--i.e., we had no specific target or areas which we were intending to occupy other than those which we held at that time.
- Q. How far south was that line in 1939-- to SHANGHI?
- A. The areas controlled by the Japanese Army at that time over which areas I had supreme command were in NORTHERN CHINA, roughly following the boundaries of the YELLOW RIVER from the north right down through SHANSHI Prefecture, and at the Southern border of SHANSHI Prefecture, the boundary line took a big cut in because there was a large Chinese force just south of SHANSHI Prefecture. Then the line came out again to HANKOW and slightly south to TUNGTING Lake, and then generally South of the YANTZE River to CHANGSHA, then roughly across to SHANGHAI. The one large-scale operation which the Japanese took part in during my tenure of office was an attack on ICHANG by occupation forces from HANKOW, the purpose of which was cut off the large body of CHINESE TROOPS North of HANKOW from supplies. The problem of disposing of sporadic attacks by Chinese forces North of HANKOW was a difficult one, and although the Japanese forces went out several times to repel Chinese Troops attacking in this area, the line shifted back and forth; we would repel the troops, then they would attack again and come down; then we would repel them again. That went on frequently. Eventually the Japanese had chased the Chinese back into the mountains out of the plain. Then, in order to concentrate on the Chinese troops in the YANTZEE RIVER area West of HANKOW, we launched a drive towards ICHANG which we occupied. By the time we had reached ICHANG we had withdrawn our Northern forces south again so that the line was only slightly North of HANKOW, and stretched out to ICHANG. However, we discovered ICHANG was a strategic point, and it was necessary to hold ICHANG in order to secure the region West of ICHANG; therefore, we decided to hang onto that, and our line stretched from North of HANKOW as far West as ICHANG in a salient, then back again toward the South of HANKOW.
- Q. How much air did you have in this area under your control during this period?
- A. Although I was in command of the GHQ of the CHINESE EXPEDITIONARY FORCES, the operations around HANKOW were planned and carried out by the staff of the forces in that area; therefore, I am not too familiar with the details of air support to ground troops. However, I know that in that operation there were perhaps a total of 150 planes used, although the figure might be as low as 100 and might be as high as 200. I think, perhaps, heavy bombers were used but I believe that the chief types of planes used in the operation were medium bombers, fighters and reconnaissance planes. As I said before, I did not plan this campaign, and all operations and counter-attacks carried out by Japanese forces were under the command of the local commanders where the CHINESE attacks occurred. However, in this particular campaign I issued orders for the air forces in the vicinity of HANKOW to cooperate with the ground forces, although the decision as to what manner they would cooperate was left up to the local commanders. Also I dispatched about one division of reinforcements to that division from NANKING and SHANGHAI. Regarding the details of the fighting, I don't remember too much because I wasn't in charge.
- Q. You don't know the system of targets, types of targets, against which those Japanese air forces were directed?

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A. The bombing campaigns against CHUNGKING and other large cities were directed by Central Headquarters. However, in operations which required close cooperation between the air forces and the ground troops, the field commanders had the direction and selected the targets for the air forces to attack. However, I believe that the main targets of the supporting air forces in this HANKOW incident were the enemy forces in the front lines and the forces to the rear of the enemy lines, and the bombing of the Chinese Army Headquarters behind the lines. Aside from that I don't know what the plan was. A situation which arose very frequently during this operation and various operations in CHINA was one in which the Japanese forces would go out and capture a strong place, but since our forces were very small in number and the Chinese had large forces, these forces would very frequently be surrounded and cut off by the Chinese forces, as we became over-extended. Therefore, one of the main uses for the air force was to bomb Chinese forces surrounding other Japanese forces in an attempt to break up their encirclement so that we could get auxiliary forces through to those which were isolated, but as to details I cannot give information. Generally speaking, I don't know how many forces the Chinese had in the field, but I think the difference was such that where the Chinese had one division, the Japanese had only two battalions.

Q. Now you spoke of bombing CHUNGKING which brings back to mind also SHANGHAI: In the first operations earlier in the war against SHANGHAI and later in the war against CHUNGKING, what was the purpose of those bombing operations? What was the thing which you expected to achieve by bombing earlier in the war? There were some operations run against SHANGHAI and later against CHUNGKING; primarily, what was the purpose of that, what did you expect to gain?

A. At the time of the bombings of SHANGHAI, I was in NORTHER CHINA and don't know exactly what specific targets were selected or what the purpose of the bombing campaign was. However in the case of CHUNGKING, we carried out several raids with the main purpose of destroying military installations such as factories producing munitions and war materials. However, we didn't know the exact location of such factories, and also our accuracy was very poor. Therefore, I don't believe that we had much success in our bombing campaign against CHUNGKING. We also had great difficulty because of poor quality of the airplanes and problems encountered in the distance of the target and various other technical problems involved in such a long-range bombing campaign which rendered it very difficult for us. However, I do believe that the main purpose in bombing CHUNGKING was to destroy the military installations of the CENTRAL GOVERNMENT there.

Aside from these bombings, I believe that the really primary purpose for which the Japanese air forces were used was an attempt to knock out the CHINESE AIR FORCE before they could get much reinforcement, because we knew that the CHINESE AIR FORCES were being supplied and were gradually building up. We wanted to defeat them completely before this process could develop to a great extent; that was more important than the bombing of CHUNGKING.

Q. If the General knows, how effective were the CHINESE AIR OPERATIONS in limiting the Japanese tactical war program in CHINA as a counter-force to the air and ground operations? What trouble did the General have from the CHINESE AIR FORCE? How profitable was it in limiting Japanese military operations?

A. While I was in command in CHINA, this CHINESE AIR FORCE was still very small and poorly equipped. The Japanese estimate of the CHINESE AIR FORCE strength at that time was somewhere between 100 and 200 planes; at the most 200. I believe that during operations under my command, at least that many CHINESE planes were destroyed; however, they were receiving reinforcements; therefore, the number stayed about level and might even have increased.

- A. CHINESE AIR OPERATIONS had very little effect in respect to ground operations by Japanese forces. However, I remember one incident, the date of which I can't recall, which was the bombing of the HANKOW Naval Air Station by Chinese Air Forces at which time the Japanese Naval Bombers stationed there sustained a certain amount of damage. Aside from that I can't recall any spectacular example of effectiveness of the CHINESE AIR FORCE during my period of command over the armies in CHINA.
- Q. In other words, the opposing air force was negligible in its effect on Japanese surface operations?
- A. Yes, practically no effect. While I was there, the CHINESE air force didn't raid NANKING even once.
- Q. During your period of tour in CHINA as CinC, were you familiar with the overall economic war plan? What were the Japanese expecting to get out or planning to get out of CHINA for the cost of their military operations in there for the occupation?
- A. Originally, the Japanese Expeditionary Forces to CHINA took with them their own food and their own military supplies, but as we occupied more and more territory we began to live off the land and became dependent on local food crops and rice crops for our provisions. All during my control over the CHINESE EXPEDITIONARY FORCES we had arranged to buy with military currency equipment necessary and any materials necessary which were obtainable in CHINA. Those items which we could not obtain, such as military stores, certain kinds of military equipment, were still sent from JAPAN. Towards the end of my tenure of office in CHINA, the Japanese were sending various barter goods from JAPAN into the CHINA area to be exchanged for commodities obtainable in CHINA, so that we had both the Military Currency being used, and a barter system using goods made in JAPAN to be exchanged for goods obtained from CHINA. Gradually, when the NANKING Government took over, the Military War Notes were withdrawn, and all economic arrangements were handled through the NANKING GOVERNMENT so that passed out of the hands of the military.
- Q. There was no significant military commodity that was included in the plan of occupation, necessary for the conduct of war other than just, we might say, almost the normal, what might be classed, routine trade? What I was shooting at is, whether the Japanese plans envisaged the obtaining of a military commodity of significance to war operations - from this occupied territory?
- A. At the beginning of the campaign we had no plan for obtaining military stores of any kind of military equipment of any kind in CHINA. Throughout the campaign we had to continue sending our own military stores from JAPAN. About the only commodities we were able to obtain in CHINA was food and just a small amount of arms and small equipment, but largely speaking we had no plan of obtaining in CHINA any large necessary military equipment.
- Q. While the General was in CHINA, did the Japanese ever develop a plan to effectively cause the defeat or the surrender of the CHINESE opposition forces under KAI-SHEK? Was there ever a plan developed and endeavored to be carried out leading to the defeat, the removal of the KAI-SHEK opposition, or was it merely a matter of an armed occupation of a given area with no overall plan that would force the capitulation of the opposing CHINESE forces? You see, I gathered that you just took over an area and policed it.

- A. During my operations in CHINA I did not know of any plan to bring the incident to a close by forcing a decision upon the CHUNGKING Government. In respect to making the war difficult for the CHINESE Government, the Japanese carried on a large-scale offensive to cut the CHINESE off from supplies coming in from abroad for which purpose we captured NING-PO, a city just south of SHANGHAI which was the center of CHINESE commerce, and through which supplies were reaching the Chinese Government and enabling the CHINESE Government in CHUNGKING to continue the war. The ZAIBATSU of CHINA centered in NING-PO. Aside from that I know of no large-scale plan to bring the war to a close.
- Q. Did the General have any plans from TOKYO setting up his forces as reserves or reinforcements to come to MANCHUKO in the event of hostilities developing up there against the RUSSIANS in the MANCHUKUOAN Area?
- A. I had orders from TOKYO that, should war break out between JAPAN and RUSSIA along the MANCHURIAN BORDER, a large part of the forces in CHINA were to be withdrawn and poured into the MANCHURIAN front. That was a standing order. However, the only work done on it was studying methods of withdrawal, etc, and there were no orders other than that should such a situation occur, those forces would be withdrawn.
- Q. During your tour of duty in CHINA, did you know of the overall war plans of JAPAN with respect to the Northern Frontier, MANCHURIAN frontire, with RUSSIA? Was it the National objective to keep out, to prevent, an incident up there or were there any war plans leading to probably the removal of the Northern threat in the event of successes in Europe for any other reason? Did you know the overall military policy with respect to the NORTHERN FRONT during this period or time you were in CHINA?
- A. I beleive that, from the very beginning, the Japanese armies were prepared for a war with RUSSIA. However, in the meantime, the CHINA INCIDENT occured, and the situation developed more or less without plan, just getting more and more complicated. I do not beleive that the JAPANESE Military had any real plan originally for fighting the UNITED STATES, for instance, and that our plans were based mainly on the thought that we would fight RUSSIA and I think we just got dragged into war with the UNITED STATES by circumstances arising out of the CHINA INCIDENT.
- Q. Now when the war did break out with the UNITED STATES, what effects did that have on JAPANESE strategy with respect to the Northern Front, with respect to a war with RUSSIA? Did that tend to affect a change in concept on the desirability or the probability of military operations against RUSSIA in the SIBERIAN FRONT?
- A. On a question like that I would really have to give you my personal opinion, as I was not informed. Would you like my personal opinion?
- Q. I was wondering if, while you were a member of the SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL, that matter of policy with respect to RUSSIA came up for consideration and what the attitude of this SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL was regarding the desirability of operations or avoiding operations on the RUSSIAN FRONT because of the fact that you were now occupied and engaged with the UNITED STATES, even after you came back from CHINA and sat on the MILITARY COUNCIL?
- A. Generally speaking, the plan of strategy of the Japanese Army was changed so that we would now do everything possible to avoid the outbreak of any disagreement with RUSSIA on the border and would concentrate in trying to eliminate AMERICAN air bases in CHINA or the possibility of establishment of air bases by the AMERICAN forces in CHINA, therefore putting more importance on the CHINESE CAMPAIGN than on the situation on the MANCHURIAN FRONT.

- Q. At that time, the major objective became a matter of countering American efforts to get an air force established in CHINA proper, down on the Southwest flank rather than up on the North flank?
- A. I was retired in May of 1943, and so I am not too familiar with what happened in CHINA other than what I have heard through unofficial sources, but I believe generally speaking, as I said before, the emphasis was now placed on the CHINESE THEATER in an attempt to intercept AMERICAN attempts to bomb JAPAN from CHINESE areas.
- Q. In connection with this change, with the outbreak of war with the UNITED STATES, we note that the Japanese continued to maintain in MANCHURIA, a very large Army and a fairly strong air force. Was this entirely because of a lack of confidence in the RUSSIANS that you left this fairly large force-- what looked like about 800,000 to a million men on the ground and probably something in excess of a thousand airplanes--deployed on the NORTHERN BORDER for two or three years after the outbreak of war with the UNITED STATES?
- A. Having signed these treaties with RUSSIA, and RUSSIA being the type of country that it is, we were afraid the RUSSIANS would reverse their decision at any given time. We could put no faith in our treaty with RUSSIA; for that reason we were forced to maintain large forces in MANCHURIA. I have not had this from any official source, but it is what I have heard, and I think it is very reliable, that before the outbreak of war with the UNITED STATES, JAPAN kept its best troops in MANCHURIA, the second-best troops were used in CHINA, and the worst troops were just held in reserve in JAPAN. Although at the end of the war the number of troops in MANCHURIA remained approximately the same; these best troops which we had stationed there had been removed and sent into other theaters so that by the end of the war we had a large force in MANCHURIA but mostly poor troops with lack of training and possibly even lack of equipment. Prior to the outbreak of war with the UNITED STATES we were forced to maintain these picked troops on the MANCHURIAN border because we believed that the RUSSIANS had even greater forces lined up along the other side of the border.
- Q. What was the job of the SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL which you went to on March of 1941? What did it do?
- A. The functions of the SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL was: To inform the EMPEROR of developments in the military organization of JAPAN. Generally speaking, if the EMPEROR had not been inquisitive and desired certain types of information from the SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL, there would have been no specific use or function of the COUNCIL. In other words, it served only as a channel of information on military matters to the EMPEROR. At times, members of the SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL inspected troops and performed functions like that, but largely speaking, their main function was keeping the EMPEROR informed of military developments.
- Q. Then, as a member of the SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL, particularly in the line of inspections, when did this COUNCIL, if they did, sense a need which we saw evident in programs, for an ever-increasing build-up of your air arms, both your Navy arm and your Army arm? Did they never make specific recommendations on the composition of the military forces, either to the EMPEROR or to the Army and Navy?
- A. The functions of this SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL were somewhat similar to those of the PRIVY COUNCIL in the Government, e.g., in the question of enlarging the air force and developing an airplane program, etc, those matters were not handled by the SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL but went directly from SAMBO HOMBU, the Staff Headquarters of the Air Department, direct to the WAR MINISTRY to the EMPEROR, and such decisions were entirely outside of the scope of the function of the SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL. The sort of duties which we would perform would be, recommending to the EMPEROR certain fundamental changes in military regulations or matters of discipline, etc, relative to just military

- A. organization--purely matters of regulations regarding training and things of an administrative nature. We would occasionally inform the EMPEROR of, and with his sanction, approve the changes.
- Q. In other words, this SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL did not treat with strategic concepts? It had nothing to do with operations--were for administrative and executive rather than strategic?
- A. Yes, just purely administrative.
- Q. I see; so that the general, beginning in March of 1941, more or less went out of the active military combat echelon and came back under this?
- A. It is exactly as you say; since 1941 I have been no longer concerned with actual operations.
- Q. I assume that the General did keep more or less abreast of the war as it progressed, even in his new job. I wonder how you personally now feel in the matter of military structure? Do you feel that, prior to and during this war, JAPAN paid sufficient importance to her air forces, or do you feel that maybe you were a little too stingy in the provision you made for strong air in this war? We find that the Japanese started out pretty much as we did, with not a very big air force--it looked pretty big from a nominal size, but not in the terms of a great big war. I'm wondering what your views are now, if you were permitted to go back and plan it all over again, how would you have balanced your forces to increase the probability of success in war as between air forces and Naval forces? Do you feel that you entered the war, in other words, properly expanded in the air arm?
- A. On the basis of studies of the first World War, the general opinion in Japanese military circles, with which I agreed, was that eventually there would no longer be a protracted trench warfare and some day we would have wars conducted entirely by air forces. However, in the matter of the distribution of strength in the Japanese armed forces, there was a great deal of difference of opinion. Although the Army was doing what it could with materials available, to enlarge its air forces prior to the war, there was no one who came out with the opinion that all the emphasis should be placed on the air forces rather than on the ground forces. I believe that the Army was developed proportionately to the best of the ability of the Japanese industrial capacity. However, since I believe myself that it was air power which beat Japan, the general feeling would be, in my own personal opinion, that, as suggested before, future wars would be fought entirely in the air. It is very unfortunate that the Japanese were not willing to make the decision to discard land forces and throw all their creative effort in an air arm capable of carrying on such a war.
- Q. I think you mean, minimize the land forces, not discard; i.e., put a heavier investment into the air weapon. I think that this war established that. I was just wondering how you felt. You have been in a position to watch this as it grew, swung into use?
- A. We never dreamed that air power could have affected the progress of a war to such an extent, and we believed we could carry on with ground forces through this war, but developments have proved otherwise.
- Q. Does the General have some other comment that he'd like to treat with? I believe we've pretty well covered the field in your participation in the war?
- A. I have nothing on my mind that I want to discuss.

END OF INTERROGATION