

INTERROGATION OF

FURUNO, Inosuki

Date and Time: 25 January 1946, 1000-1210 hours

Place : Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan.

Present : FURUNO, Inosuki  
Henry A. Hauxhurst, Interrogator  
1st Lt. Steve S. Yamamoto, Interpreter  
Miss Lucille C. Brunner, Stenographer

Questions by : Mr. Hauxhurst.

OATH OF INTERPRETER

Mr. Hauxhurst:

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. Yamamoto:

I do.

Q. You are Inosuki FURUNO?  
A. Yes.

Q. When were you born, Mr. Furuno?  
A. In the 24<sup>th</sup> year of Meiji, November 13, 1891.

Q. Did you graduate from college?  
A. No.

Q. Do you understand English?  
A. Only a little.

Q. What has been your business?  
A. News agencies.

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Q. That was your business when you were arrested?

A. All the time; for 35 years.

Q. State briefly what your newspaper experience has been since you began to work in the newspaper business.

A. In 1910, I began as an office boy in the Reuter's and Associated Press Agency (they had joint offices). I educated myself. I continued this work as office boy in the daytime and at night attended schools. In 1914 the International News Agency was established and I went into it as a translator. All during World War I I worked there as a translator. From 1920 to 1924 I served as a correspondent in Peking for the International News Service. From 1925 to 1926 I was the London correspondent for the International News Agency. In 1926 the International News Agency was reorganized into the Associated News Agency. In the final reorganization I became the Eastern Manager for the Associated News Agency and returned from London. In 1935 the Associated News Agency reorganized and was named the Domei News Agency. I became one of the Executive Directors. In 1939, the President of the Domei News Agency passed away and I succeeded him in his position. In 1941, there was a reelection for the head of this news agency and I was reelected and remained in this position until 1944. In 1944, another reelection and I was reelected.

Q. Are you now President?

A. I was President until October 1945, when it was dissolved.

Q. Were you the man who organized the Domei News Agency?

A. Not I, but my predecessor, IWANAGA.

Q. Did you have any financial interest in the Domei Agency?

A. No financial interest; no shares.

Q. Was the reorganization in anyway demanded by the Government? Did the Government have anything to do with the reorganization?

A. There was no relation whatsoever with the Government. This Domei News Agency was a union of press associations

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- Q. What did that agency do in the way of handling news?
- A. Its main duties or functions since this was a press association were the distribution of news to the other news agencies within the country of home interest, or financial interest, or foreign interest. More or less the agency whereby they distributed the governmental news to the various small newspapers in Japan. This agency was for the gathering of news and then dissemination of news to the smaller concerns in Japan.
- Q. Did they do any news collecting on their own, or only distribute the news that came in?
- A. They did both the collecting of news, as well as distributing. They had agencies to collect, as well as distribute.
- Q. Who determined the policy of the news agency?
- A. The news agency had a membership of approximately 80 to 100 members. These members were representatives of different newspapers in Japan and from these members approximately 25 or 30 Board of Directors were appointed. The Board set up the policy of the newspaper and they determined the budget, the general finances, etc., and other questions that came up.
- Q. Did they determine what news they would distribute and what they would not distribute?
- A. The general policy was determined by the Board of Directors.
- Q. How many times did the Board of Directors meet?
- A. About four or five times a year.
- Q. Who determined the policy between the time the Directors were not meeting?
- A. The Executive Directors who were on duty every day. They would more or less determine the policy when the Board of Directors meeting was not held.
- Q. How many Executive Directors did they have?
- A. Six.
- Q. Did they meet every day?
- A. Regular meetings were held only two or three times a week. However, all six Executive Directors were on duty every day and consequently when necessity arose they could be called upon. The Executive Directors were the ones that

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that determined the foreign and domestic policies.

Q. Were you a member of the Executive Directors Board?

A. Yes.

Q. When did you first become an Executive Director?

A. When the Domei Agency was formulated.

Q. That was in what year?

A. 1935.

Q. You have been an Executive Director all that time?

A. Yes.

Q. When these questions would come up as to what they should do they would determine what news they would release and what not to release?

A. Generally speaking, it would be looked upon as the duty of the Executive Directors to determine what news to distribute and what not to distribute, but since there was so much news accumulating in the office, the actual work of that nature was done by the editor.

Q. When you were President of the Agency and the editor had any question about policy what would the editor do?

A. In the event the editor did come up with a problem as to what procedure to take on certain news he would come to me and I would take action. In other words, if a question of doubt in the editor's mind he would come to me and I would take whatever action I saw fit.

Q. Were there any questions that came to you which you thought you could not determine yourself?

A. Most of the problems that were brought up to me had been already considered with the censor before being brought up to me. Consequently, there was hardly an occasion where a problem could not be handled by me.

Q. Do you remember any instance where they had this difficulty with the censor and came to you as to what they should do - where there was a difference of opinion between the editor and the censor and then came to you?

A. There were many occasions when the editors and the censors did not agree on news and the problem was brought to me. However, the censors had the upper hand and if the editor and I would think such news should be published

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and this was disagreed to by the censors, naturally, the censors had the final say.

Q. Give me the kind of a question that might come up?

A. Before the war the Domei News Agency could publish any news from the foreign countries from the news agencies such as Reuters or United Press, but after the war the wartime censorship was organized and they would have the first-hand say as to what Domei could or could not publish. After the war started there were countless items on which they had disagreed.

Q. If they disagreed, did the censor always have the final say?

A. The censorship always had the final say.

Q. When was the censorship started?

A. There always was a small element known as the Censorship Bureau even before the war; however, after the outbreak of the war the restrictions became much more severe and consequently I can not state when the Censorship Bureau was established. I believe if you were to consult the Home Ministry they would be able to give you definitely the time when the Censorship Bureau started.

Q. What do you mean by the censorship became more strict when there was war. What war?

A. From about the time of the China incident censorship became progressively stronger.

Q. Did they start the censorship after the Manchurian incident?

A. Yes, the censorship became stronger ever since the Manchurian incident.

Q. Did they consider they were at war at that time?

A. No. Until the outbreak of this World War II with America most of the news from America or Europe could be published without too much trouble from the censorship. The Home Ministry had most to do with newspapers and communications, but subsequently the Board of Information had all dealings with the newspapers - now the Board of Information has all the responsibility of censorship because they have a representative from the Home Ministry, from the War Ministry, and the Navy Ministry, and the Foreign Office on this Board.

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Q. The Chinese incident, did you consider you were at war?

A. I do not think so.

Q. Were you ever connected with the Board of Information?

A. The Board of Information had an element within it called the advisory or the counsellor club and this club had as members mostly the newspaper heads of the various newspapers and consequently I was a member.

Q. How long had this Board of Information been set up?

A. I can not offhand recall definitely, but I believe it was sometime around 1940.

Q. Were you on this Board at that time in 1940?

A. The Advisory Council was not formulated until a while later, and consequently I was not a member of the Board of Information upon its establishment in 1940.

Q. Why was it established in 1940?

A. The Government, which included the Home Ministry, Navy Ministry, War Ministry and Foreign Ministry would have conflicting reports on various matters and consequently the news agency and communications had their respective problems. This presented such a problem that they had to establish another organization and consequently this Board of Information was formed.

Q. At what time in 1940 was it formed?

A. I believe it was in early 1940. Until that time the Home Ministry was responsible for the censorship.

Q. Do you remember the names of the Chief Censors of the Home Ministry?

A. I can not recall at the present time, since I was only one of the members of the Advisory Council, but if you would refer to the Home Ministry I believe there should be some reference in their files.

Q. Do you know what Minister directed the policy of the censors other than the Home Ministry, the War Ministry, the Navy Ministry and the Foreign Ministry? What man really did it?

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A. After the outbreak of war the policy of censorship was stressed mostly from the War and Navy Ministries.

Q. What do you mean by outbreak of war?

A. The war with Japan and United States.

Q. If they were not at war why did they in the early part of 1940 have to establish this Bureau of Censorship?

A. There was a dire need for a Board of Information since period of the Manchurian incident and even when Japan withdrew from the League of Nations. The War Ministry would say that it did withdraw and the Foreign Minister would say not, and the outlook from the newspapers would be conflicting as to what attitude the Government really had as to the withdrawal from the League of Nations. Citing this as an example, there was a need for this Board of Information. Looking at this for an example the newspaper would have no idea which side of the story to believe, the War Ministry, or the Foreign Ministry - there would be conflicting statements within the Government.

Q. Who finally determined how that would be, which department or ministry, the Army, the Navy, or which one, who would determine what news would be given out?

A. The Home Ministry at the time, that is, before the Board of Information was established.

Q. Is that true from the Manchurian incident to the China incident down to the formation of the Board?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you remember any incident when the Domei put out any news for which they were criticised?

A. There were many occasions when they were criticised for news published and occasions when editors were questioned at the Police Bureau for news that had been published.

Q. Is that all they did to them - criticise?

A. There were numerous occasions when the editor was called to the Police Bureau and the Gendarmie and detained for news that was published which did not meet their approval.

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Q. Did it ever happen to you?

A. No.

Q. Will you give instances that you remember where such things happened, where editors were called in and put in jail for publishing news the censor disapproved of.

A. Offhand, I can not think of any instances; they are too numerous to mention, but if you were to refer back to the Home Ministry files I believe you can get the information.

Q. Were any of your editors put in jail for going against the censorship?

A. Yes.

Q. How many?

A. They were not actually put in jail, but detained until the full investigation was carried out and there were about 10, maybe more, editors that were questioned.

Q. When the editors got into trouble for going against the censors did you, as President or Member of the Executive Committee, approve of what they did?

A. Yes. When the editors who got in trouble were publishing any items or news which the censors did not like and for which they were called to the police, I approved of what they did. The policy of the editor was my policy.

Q. Why were you not taken down?

A. Because these cases were not big cases, so to speak, so they did not call the Director down to the Police Bureau or the M.P.'s.

Q. Were any of the other members of the Executive Committee of your Domei Agency called down?

A. I don't think they were.

Naturally speaking, the judgment is left to the editor at the desk and consequently he would know all about what item had been put through and he would be the fitting one to be called. I remember no instances where any of the Executive Committee was called.



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- Q. Do you remember of any instance where the Home Ministry gave you news to send out which Domei Agency had not collected?
- A. No. Usually the news office and the communications office have persons attached to the Home Ministry and they act in the capacity of liaison, so there was no occasion when there was news coming directly from the Home Ministry.
- Q. Do you know of any instance where news was sent out by the Home Ministry as propaganda?
- A. Always there is a reporter attached to the Home Ministry from the news agency and the communications agency and these reporters have a club and all items to appear in newspapers come to the newspaper through the club.
- Q. Do you recall any instance where news was circulated by Domei which you knew in fact was not true?
- A. There may have been mistakes or false items appearing in the newspapers which were not seen at the time of printing. However, in those cases later - it may take a few days - a correction would be published when it was discovered.
- Q. Domei, your Agency, was receiving news from all over Japan and from all over the world and you knew the facts. Now, did the Government, either through the Home Ministry or Censorship, ask you to print anything that you knew by reason of your knowledge to be not true?
- A. No. There were occasions when news was received at the Domei which the Home Ministry or the Censorship had said should not be published.
- Q. Give us some specific instances.
- A. The latest example would be on the atomic bombings. Domei, my newspaper, thought that any and all news coming in to the agency should be published and have the people know about it, but the Censorship stated that the people should not be informed on the details of the atomic bomb. Any news coming in from America or Europe commenting on the Pacific operations or battles were stopped by the Censorship.
- Q. Do you remember any instances in connection with the Manchurian incident?
- A. I do not recall, because I was not at the desk acting as an editor. You can get instances whereby they were told not

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to publish certain items if you were to question the editors at the time.

Q. Do they in connection with the assembling of this news print a paper of their own?

A. No, Domei does not publish a paper. Domei acts only in the capacity of distributing news to the various newspapers and no publication was done directly. All the larger newspaper concerns in Tokyo are collecting the news directly from the Government instead of getting it from Domei.

Q. What is the largest newspaper in Tokyo?

A. Speaking from the standpoint of circulation, I believe the YOMI-URI. The largest three papers in Tokyo were the aforementioned, the YOMI-URI, the ASAHI, and the MAINICHI.

Q. Do you know who owns and runs YOMI-URI?

A. The head of the YOMI-URI was SHORIKI, and was succeeded just recently by BABA.

Q. I believe you said that in the early part of '41 this censorship was increased and made more strict. Do you know why that was?

A. By that I mean that the news coming in from America and Europe could not be published at all without the consent of the Censorship.

Q. How about news going out from Japan?

A. All the news that was approved by the Censorship for the papers within the country was dispensed to the other countries without any problem at all.

Q. Were you on the organizing committee when the Imperial Rule Assistance Association was formed?

A. When the Imperial Rule Assistance Association was about to be formulated they also had a group known as the preparatory committee, which was composed of members from the other clubs or societies, and I was invited into the Preparatory Committee of the I.R.A.A.

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Q. Did you act on that Committee?

A. Yes, I attended the meetings.

Q. Were you an officer of that Committee?

A. No, I was not an officer.

Q. Were you ever associated with the National Activities Committee?

A. There is an article of incorporation set up by the Executive Directors stating to the effect that no members of the Domei will partake of any political activities.

Q. Did you ever act on a committee or association formed to study ways and means to carry on the war?

A. No.

Q. Was there ever a committee or association for carrying on war for 20 years?

A. No. I have no knowledge of such a club or society.

Q. When did you first feel that Japan was going to enter into war with the United States?

A. I did not think there would be a war between Japan and America and was surprised when the declaration of war existed because until then I had thought that some sort of negotiation would take place between American and Japan.

Q. Was there anything that came into your office, the Domei, that led you to believe that Japan was preparing for war with the United States?

A. No.

Q. Did you know about the special meetings of the Cabinet in July 1941, when that matter was considered?

A. I can not recall definitely, but was not that a special meeting in connection with the China war?

Q. Not in 1941. Were you in favor of the Greater East Asia policy the Government was carrying on?

A. Just prior to the outbreak of war Domei despatched many correspondents to Washington and New York, hoping for some sort of agreement to be reached in negotiations. Domei

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thought from the standpoint of news it would be essential that they have correspondents in Washington and New York, and also with the idea of trying to have a satisfactory conclusion in the negotiations.

Q. When did they send these correspondents to New York and Washington?

A. There was an office of the Domei set up in New York prior to that?

Q. When?

A. Immediately after the organization of the Domei News Agency there was an office set up in London and New York. The two correspondents were despatched especially for the negotiations sometime in April or May 1941.

Q. Did you have an office in Washington?

A. There was no office of Domei in Washington, but it was set up when the special correspondents were sent.

Q. What was the name of the special correspondent sent to Washington?

A. KATO, Masuo.

Q. Is he in Japan now?

A. Yes.

Q. Is he still working for Domei?

A. Domei was dissolved but in place of it a KYODO TSUSHIN has been formed and organized, and KATO is there now.

Q. When was Domei dissolved?

A. October of last year - 1945.

Q. Are you connected with the new work?

A. No.

Q. Who is the correspondent that you sent to New York?

A. IWAMOTO (I can not recall his first name).

Q. Where is he located now?

A. I believe he is now in Tokyo and in some way connected with the new organization, KYODO TSUSHIN.

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- Q. Do they do the same kind of business Domei did?  
A. Yes, this organization was set up because Domei was dissolved.
- Q. Was Domei dissolved by the Government?  
A. It was dissolved on the action of the National Board of Directors.
- Q. Did the Executive Directors decide to send the correspondents to New York and Washington?  
A. I despatched these two correspondents to Washington and New York and later it was approved by the Board of Directors.
- Q. Do you know Mr. SHORIKI?  
A. Yes, I do.
- Q. What is his reputation as a newspaperman?  
A. I had heard that he is a very active newspaperman.

CERTIFICATE OF INTERPRETER

I, Steve S. Yamamoto, Serial No. O-888916, 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 thirteen pages, are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Steve S. Yamamoto, Lt.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 2 day of  
Feb 1946.

Henry A. Ham Hunt

Duly Detailed Investigating Officer  
International Prosecution Section,  
GHQ, SCAP.

CERTIFICATE OF STENOGRAPHER

I, Lucille C. Brunner, 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.

Lucille C. Brunner  
Stenographer

CERTIFICATE OF INTERROGATOR

I, Henry A. Hauxhurst, certify that on 25th day of January, 1946, FURUNO, Inosuki, personally appeared before me, and according to 1st Lt. Steve S. Yamamoto, Interpreter, gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth therein.

Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan

2-2-46

Date

Henry A. Hauxhurst