

WAR DEPARTMENT

Exhibit # 24

Case # 82

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Original transcript of notes
taken by Capt P. J. Pennington in
the interrogation of Major Hisashi
Tada

P. J. Pennington
1st Lt Inf
4 Dec 1945

①
老行殺、攻意、報告電報
開戦、事決、知、心、夕
宣戦、布告、電報、
後、手、元、受、取、三、分、
其、電、報、奔、信、時、刻、
日、宣、戦、布、告、攻、意、實、施

Exhibit A

M. Tada

②
採、記、憶、
約、時、間、前、
三、分、三、十、九

Exhibit B

M. Tada

思、
十、分、
三、分、
三、分、
三、分、

EXHIBIT # _____ INTERROGATION OF VICE ADMIRAL HISASHI MITO

Date and time : 26 November, 1945, 1445-1730.

Place : Room 334, NYK Bldg., Tokyo, Japan.

Present ; Capt Bertram W. Tremayne, Jr., JAGD, Interrogator.
S/Sgt Tatsuo R. Fujii, Interpreter.
Vice Admiral HISASHI MITO, witness.

Q. What is your name, please?

A. HISASHI MITO

Q. Are you in the Japanese Navy?

A. I am in the Navy Department. I am Vice Minister of the Navy Department.

Q. What is your rank?

A. I am vice admiral.

Q. When did you get your present rank and present position?

A. I was promoted to vice admiral Nov. 1, 1945, and became Vice Minister Nov. 20, 1945.

Q. State what previous positions you have held in the Navy or Navy Department from 1941 until the present.

A. I became chief of staff of the 6th Submarine Fleet in Jan. of 1941. In October of 1942, I became Commander of the 1st Submarine Squadron. In June of 1943, I became chief of the Personnel of the Naval Bureau. I was made rear Admiral in Nov. of 1942. In the early part of May 1945, I became Commander of the Toba Defense Area. My responsibility was to defend Ise Bay which is near Yamada, south of Nagoya.

Q. Where do you live?

A. At 2327 Midori ga oka, Meguro Ku, Tokyo.

Q. How old are you?

A. Fifty four.

Q. What was your education?

A. I graduated from the Naval College and then from the Naval War College. The War College I attended for two years.

Q. Did the 6th Fleet participate in the Pearl Harbor Attack?

A. Yes.

Q. What was its part in the operation?

A. Its duties were patrol and observation and the attack of enemy ships should they approach. The plans were to have the midget subs enter the harbor and after attack had begun, to launch their torpedoes.

Q. Were the midget subs under the command of the 6th fleet?

A. Yes.

Id. M.

- Q. What units made up the 6th fleet?
M A. One cruiser, the KATORI, 3 submarine tenders, I believe the TAIGE,
M YASUKUNI MARU and HEIAN MARU, 18 submarines and 5 midget submarines.
- Q. When did you first learn about the plan to attack Pearl Harbor?
A. I learned about it the first part of November, 1941, when the orders were issued from the combined fleet.
- Q. (At this point the witness wrote out an answer to the question which is attached as Exhibit B and is translated as follows, "I think it was in the early part of November that I was informed of the existence of a plan to attack Pearl Harbor.")
- Q. Who gave the orders to you?
A. They were transmitted to me verbally.
- Q. Had your commander been given written orders?
A. No, I believe his were verbal too. Written orders were not received, so far as I know, until the last part of November.
- Q. Who gave your commander the verbal orders?
A. I believe it was Admiral Yamamoto.
- Q. How were the written orders designated?
A. I'm not sure, but I believe it was referred to as Order No. 1.
- Q. Do you recall the date of that order?
A. No, but the verbal order was given in advance so we could make preparations.
- Q. Was the order, when finally received printed, mimeographed, or typewritten?
A. It was mimeographed.
- Q. How many pages did it contain?
A. I don't recall exactly. I believe the orders for Pearl Harbor were included in the General Orders for the whole war operations. I think that the Pearl Harbor operation itself was two or three pages. It could not have exceeded seven pages.
- Q. What were the details of the Pearl Harbor plan?
A. The Air Force would constitute the main attack. Surface craft would remain outside and observe the effects. In case the enemy naval craft should get out of Pearl Harbor, the Navy was to carry on combat. However, Navy craft were not to take part unless necessary in which case a special order would be issued. The mission of the midget submarines was to attack after the main attack had begun. The larger submarines would remain off shore and observe. However, they were too far off shore to observe much.

1d. M.

- Q. Where were you during the attack?
 A. I was on the KATORI which was out of the combat zone.
- Q. How long a time in advance of the attack was it expected that the American forces would know the attack was coming?
 A. We were absolutely sure that the U. S. forces would not know of the presence of the submarines. As for the planes, they were quite certain that they could reach the objective or be in close proximity before being discovered.

- Q. Then this was to be a surprise attack?
 A. As far as I know, the plans were to declare war and attack Pearl Harbor immediately thereafter. It was my understanding that there would be about one and one half hours between the declaration and the attack. As our flagship was in the Marshall Islands, I received no direct word from the Combined Fleet, but we received word from an aircraft carrier that the attack had begun. Therefore I presumed that the war had been declared. About the 2nd of December, I was informed by the Combined Fleet that Japan might enter war with the U. S. and therefore we were to take the necessary precautionary measures. Specific orders, it was said, would be forthcoming at a later date. It was said, however, that probably there would be no attack before Dec. 8. On the 8th, a radio was received from Combined Fleet saying that war had been declared, but due to the length of the wire and the time necessary for decoding, I did not know whether the declaration came prior to the attack or not. Upon figuring the date and hour at a later time, I came to the conclusion that the declaration was transmitted about one and a half hours prior to the time of the attack.

(This answer not being clear to the interrogator, the witness wrote a statement in Japanese, the original of which is attached, as exhibit A which is translated as follows:

- " I learned of the commencement of hostilities through the wireless reports of the attack by the first wave. I received the declaration of war message immediately after that and, as I recall it, the declaration of war, as judged from the time of dispatch of the message, appeared to have been made about an hour before the execution of the attack." The witness added verbally that he ~~was certain~~^{believes} the radio originated in Tokyo.)

- Q. Did the mimeographed order set the date for the Pearl Harbor attack?
 A. No, it contained no specific dates. It said to take precautionary action and said the dates would be forthcoming later.
- Q. When did you first receive the specific orders about the date of the attack?
 A. I don't remember receiving written orders specifying the exact date, but I was under the impression the attack would take place shortly after the 8th of December because of the previous order.
- Q. When did you learn the date the attack would begin?
 A. There was a radio saying X-day would be the 8th of December,

W. M.

- Q. Did this radio come before or after receipt of word that the attack had begun?
- A. The times I received the messages were in the order I have previously stated.
- Q. What did the message from Tokyo say?
- A. It stated that a declaration of war had been made.
- Q. When was it transmitted from Tokyo?
- A. I don't recall clearly, but I think it was 0300, 8 Dec. Tokyo time.
- Q. Whose name was on the radio?
- A. I think it was the Chief of the Navy General Staff, but I'm not sure.
- Q. Who was the chief of the Navy General Staff?
- A. If the radio had been sent through the Chief of the General Staff, it would have been signed by Admiral Nagano.
- Q. Why do you think a declaration of war preceded the attack by an hour?
- A. Because of the time when the radio from Tokyo was transmitted. The time shown on the radio from Tokyo was about one hour earlier.
- Q. When did you first learn that a declaration of war had not been made before the attack?
- A. I am still under the impression that a declaration of war preceded the actual attack.
- Q. Why do you have that opinion?
- A. I am of that opinion because of the time of transmission of the two radios. However, quite recently, I have heard that the delivery was delayed. Therefore, I am in doubts.
- Q. Did you attend the Naval War Games at Tokyo in the Naval War College during September, 1941?
- A. Yes. But I don't recall the exact date. I am certain it was in September.
- Q. What Naval Officers were present?
- A. There were officers from the Navy ^{General} Staff and from the Combined Fleet.
- Q. Was the Minister of the Navy present or represented by officers from his department?
- A. No.
- Q. Were Army officers present?
- A. Yes, from time to time, but not as participants.
- Q. What was your role in the games?
- A. I participated as staff member of the 6th fleet and I was primarily concerned with the submarines.
- Q. Were you on the N team, A team or B team?
- A. The sides were divided into Blue and Red. I was on the Blue team.

- Q. What was the problem? What were you working out?
A. I don't know much in regard to the problems of the other fleets, but the problem of the 6th fleet was to observe and follow the enemy fleet without being observed. Secondly to figure out a way of blocking the enemy fleet in a harbor over a long period of time, and thirdly to attack enemy shipping and various other methods of submarine warfare.
- Q. In these games, did you have any particular enemy in mind?
A. No, it was just an overall plan.
- Q. Wasn't the Pearl Harbor attack planned at these games?
A. Absolutely not.
- Q. Where was the Pearl Harbor attack planned?
A. As previously stated, we worked out our plans in the latter part of Nov.
- Q. But someone had to plan it before then did they not?
A. Looking back upon it now, the Combined Fleet must have had plans, but I did not know of them.
- Q. Were you aware of the secret discussions at the Tokyo war games about the Pearl Harbor attack?
A. No, I was not.
- Q. Whose responsibility would it have been to see that the declaration of war arrived in the U. S. before the hostilities began?
A. It was the Premier's.
- Q. Who was the Premier?
A. General Hideki TOJO.
- Q. Wasn't it also the responsibility of the Foreign Minister?
A. As the Foreign Minister, I think he should have the responsibility also.
- Q. Who was the Foreign Minister at that time?
A. It was TOGO or SHIGEMITSU. I don't recall exactly. At that time I was with the fleet. I think the chief responsibility was with the Premier, but the Foreign Minister had the duty of carrying it out.
- Q. Do you know where there is a copy of the operational order?
A. No.
- Q. What were your instructions in the event you saw another ship on the way to the attack?
A. Orders from the combined fleet specifically stated we would not take part in any combat. The submarines were to submerge. If fired on by the enemy, we were to do as the circumstances might require.
- Q. Was there any plan, to your knowledge, for Japan to declare war on the U. S. before attacking Pearl Harbor?
A. I have always been under the impression that a declaration of war would be and had been made prior to an attack on Pearl Harbor.

/s/ M.

- Q. What gave you that impression?
 A. Because of the transmission times of the radios.
- Q. But did you know of any specific plans for such a declaration?
 A. No, I did not. Such matters were not within my jurisdiction.
- Q. How could an attack be planned without knowing whether the enemy would or would not be pre warned of the attack?
 A. Plans were made with the expectation that the submarines might be observed even before a declaration of war and especially so afterwards.
- Q. How much time was to elapse between the declaration of war and the attack?
 A. I do not know, but I was under the impression that the attack would take place immediately after declaration and that there would be no appreciable length of time between them.
- Q. Do you have any other information on the matters we have discussed?
 A. No.

Hisashi Mito

三 戸 壽

HISASHI MITO, Admiral

I, Tatsuo R. Fujii, hereby certify that I acted as interpreter at the interview set out above, that I truly interpreted and translated the English questions into Japanese and the replies thereto from Japanese into English, and that the English translation of the answers set out above are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Tatsuo R. Fujii

TATSUO R. FUJII

Bertram W. Tremayne, Jr.

BERTRAM W. TREMAYNE, JR.
 Capt, JAGD