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HEADQUARTERS
U.S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(PACIFIC)
APO 234
C/O POSTMASTER, SAN FRANCISCO

INTERROGATION NO: 373

PLACE: TOKYO
DATE: 9 Nov 45

Subject: Interrogation of Prince Konoye.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Prince KONOYE, Fumimaro was born in October 1891.
He graduated from Kyoto Imperial University in 1917 and in
1918 entered the Home Ministry.
1920 - Member of House of Peers.
1931-33 - Vice President of House of Peers.
1933 - Member of KOKUHONSHA, which organized the Greater
East Asia Association, a propoganda institution.
1933-37 - President, House of Peers.
June 1937 - Premier (1st Konoye Cabinet)
1937-38 - President East Asia Institute.
President South Sea Association.
President Iron Society.
President Uni-Cultural Society.
Jan-Aug 1939 - Minister without portfolio in HIRANUMA
Cabinet.
Jan 1939-June 1940 - President of the Privy Council.
22 July 1940-16 July 1941 - Premier (2nd Konoye Cabinet)
Oct 12, 1940 - Formed NGAA - National Government Aid
Association.
Mar 18, 1941 - President Greater East Asia League.
July 18, 1941 - Formed new Cabinet (3rd Konoye Cabinet),
after forcing foreign Minister MATSUOKA's resignation.
16 Oct 1941 - Resigned as Premier.
1944-45 - With HIRANUMA and KIDO became dominant political
figure, credited with selection of SUSUKI, HIGASHI-KUNI and
SAIDEHARA as Premiers.
1945 - With KIDO, forming revised constitution.

Division of Origin: Chairman's Office.

Where Interviewed: Aboard the USS ANCON.

Interrogators:

Mr D'Olier
Mr Nitze
Mr Galbraith
Capt Hedding
Mr Baran

Interpreters:

Mr Millard
Mr Ushiba (Konoye's secretary and interpreter)

Allied Officers Present:

Col Cole
Comdr Reeve
Lt Comdr Wilds
Mr Gilbert
Mr Bisson

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- Q. At what point did the prevailing opinion in this country-- by prevailing opinion, I mean governmental opinion--decide the war had to be brought to a conclusion--that the war was lost?
- A. This depends to a great extent on the viewpoint of the different people. There were individuals who from the beginning of the war felt it a hopeless cause.
- Q. When did you decide the war was lost?
- A. I was one who from the first felt that.
- Q. At what point did other people influential in the government, people like Marquis Kido, for instance, think the war was lost and that negotiations for peace should be started?
- A. Probably those men felt that at the time of the loss of Saipan--from that date on they thought it was a hopeless cause.
- Q. Why was nothing done after the fall of Saipan to terminate the war--what prospects were there still, which prevented the Japanese government from taking steps after the fall of Saipan?
- A. Efforts were made to terminate the war, but the Army and Navy, particularly the Army, put up strenuous efforts to forestall such action and were resolved to fight through to the end.
- Q. To pin it down, what does "efforts" mean?
- A. Just as finally the end of the war was brought about by the Emperor, so at that time efforts were made to persuade the Emperor, particularly through Kido, who was close to the Emperor, to get him to put an end to the war.
- Q. Who were the people who made such efforts to persuade the Emperor via Kido?
- A. The man who put forth the most earnest efforts is probably the present foreign minister. (YOSHIDA, Shigeru)
- Q. And those efforts were opposed by the Army and Navy?
- A. Generally, that's it.
- Q. What do you think were the strategic concepts of the Army and Navy from the very beginning? How did they originally plan to conduct the war and even after Saipan believe that they could successfully continue the war?
- A. It is almost impossible for us outside army circles to understand or know the strategy on which they based their plans.
- Q. In your capacity as Prime Minister, you must have had a possibility of reviewing their strategic plans.
- A. As a matter of fact, the premiers during those days did not know very much about army plans. They were not taken into the confidence of the military, except perhaps, Premier Tojo, who was on the Supreme Command. The others knew very little about the overall plans of the military. In fact, any requests for information were generally turned down.

- Q. But the Prime Minister did formulate--for instance, you yourself did--the foreign policy, which must have been inter-related somehow with the plans.
- A. Of course, efforts were made to collaborate with the army in the formulation of foreign policy, but the military generally interfered with foreign policy. In the opinion of the army, it was up to the army to save the situation whenever diplomatic moves failed. This called for military preparation, but in general, the military were an obstruction to the development of foreign policy. As an example, in July of 1937, at the outbreak of the so-called China Incident, which began at Marco Polo Bridge, the thing spread rapidly and the army called in troops and expanded the thing till a cabinet meeting was held and it was demanded of the War Minister just how far the thing would go and if it was possible to stop it, because it influenced the foreign policy. But the War Minister refused to divulge or talk much about the situation.
- Q. Since you brought up this example, let's discuss it for a minute. Would not you say at the same time that the entire policy of the government was such as to permit the army to do such things. The army felt the policy of the government was backing it up.
- A. Of course, it was the policy of the government to keep that incident down and not let it spread--they didn't want the thing to get out of hand.
- Q. On the 22d of December 1938, you, yourself, made the proposal for the settlement of the China Incident and this proposal involved practically an annexation of China.
- A. I didn't have any such intention as that--as to annex the country.
- Q. How else did you interpret this particular proposal which meant unity of Greater East Asia under Japanese leadership--if you would translate it into concrete terms?
- A. At that time, far from being the policy of Japan to annex China, we planned to maintain her sovereignty. However, from the military, economic, and even political standpoint, Japan was far stronger than China, and, therefore, it was necessary for Japan to take leadership in development of a unified Far East. However, there was no intention of destroying Chinese sovereignty.
- Q. In that case, would you say the army acted out of agreement with the government, or did the army translate into very simple measures what the government thought of in rather broad terms?
- A. As far as that statement which I made on December 22d was concerned, it was a moral statement, which, if followed to the letter, would not only have formed the basis for smooth agreement with Wang Chi Wei, but also would have formed the basis for unification with Chiang Kai Shek himself. However, the military used it and interpreted it for their own policies and furthermore, as a result, it was completely misunderstood by China, as well.

- Q. By December 1938, it was fairly obvious the Chinese were not anxious to submit themselves to Japanese leadership. Were you prepared to go beyond moral incantations or not--that is, was Japan prepared to enforce the claims to leadership or was it solely an appeal to the Chinese?
- A. As far as I am concerned, I had no intention or feeling of enforcing this leadership.
- Q. In other words, you mean in your entire work of creation of different cultural institutions--institutions for China, Indo-China, Thai, etc.--you were only interested in cultural relations and cultural treaties with those countries? Is that what you mean to say?
- A. As far as my own personal feeling is concerned, there was no intention whatsoever of bringing about by force these policies and we attempted--at least I wanted to bring them about by culture, cultural developments and economic developments.
- Q. Do you believe the atmosphere which was created by the work of those institutions was inducive to the army to do what they did--did they create an atmosphere in which the military operations appeared as finding approval in the highest quarters?
- A. Of course, the object of these societies was not at all to carry on any kind of activities outside of their stated purposes, and so far as I know, the army didn't make specific use of them either. It is a little difficult to understand whether such an influence or such an atmosphere was developed.
- Q. What was your specific relationship to the army, that is to what extent was your policy in your various capacities as Prime Minister and when out of office, influenced by army desires? How was the army influencing you in your specific actions?
- A. In my activities as a civilian for betterment of various relations, I was under no influence. However, I must admit as a Prime Minister, many of the policies were influenced by the military and it was often necessary to work out certain compromises with regard to policy.
- Q. In your opinion, ever since Manchuria--ever since 1931 that is--what was the grand strategy of the army? What did the army try to accomplish and how?
- A. With regard to such a policy, I do not know at all. Just as I said in connection with the beginning of the China Incident, the military gave us no evidence of their policy. If we had known what the plans were at any time, we could have tried to forestall it by bringing a specific action to bear on a specific plan. I am of the opinion the army did not have an overall plan outside of a militarism or imperialism to develop the Empire, but sort of developed their plans as events developed too.
- Q. In the foreign press you were always presented as the man who was very much in favor of German-Japanese collaboration. Do you think that fitted the army program, or was it entirely independent of the army's preference?

- A. This whole thing began as an effort to form a bloc against communism. It was an anti-communistic movement and in the Summer of 1938, the time of my first cabinet, the military strongly suggested that this thing be turned into something stronger--an alliance with Germany--and brought pressure to bear on me, but the cabinet fell before much had been done about it, and later the war with Russia came, and the whole thing was dropped.
- Q. Were you aware at that time that the anti-communist pact which you concluded lined Japan against Russia?
- A. This was something, of course, before my first cabinet, but the military did want an alliance with Germany and the government couldn't stand for that, so this business took the form of an anti-bolshevist alliance. But the army wasn't satisfied, because they did want to have a full military alliance.
- Q. The outright Japanese-German alliance, however, was concluded during your second cabinet, is that correct?
- A. Yes, that's right.
- Q. Was that done under army pressure, or was it your preference too?
- A. As you know, the power of the cabinet is really in the hands of the War Ministry, because the War Minister is able to bring about the downfall of the cabinet at will. Therefore, since the military was so hard to get along with, my only alternatives were to bring about the downfall of the cabinet, or effect a compromise. Even if I should have dropped out, the general policy would go on anyhow, so the only alternative was to attempt to keep the policy going by compromise and do the best I could for the country. My desire was to put off the effects of the compromise and minimize the danger as much as possible.
- Q. After the alliance, the alliance with Germany in September 1940, what preparations were made by Japan to assist Germany if called upon?
- A. As far as the extent of preparations to help Germany, I know nothing, because it was military and I was not let in on it. However, this agreement which provided that should America attack Germany, Japan would come to her assistance and vice versa--was not an automatic agreement. The time and details of such assistance, should Japan strike America, was left entirely up to the Japanese government. That policy was one which they thought would help ease the situation.
- Q. In addition to military preparations, there must have been some economic preparations for the eventuality, of war caused by this alliance--assuming the alliance would necessitate Japanese entry into the war. Do you know what economic preparations were made for such a possibility?
- A. Rather than preparation, it was a question of study, since Japan depends to a great extent for her economy on America and England. The question was a study of what Japan could do with her economy in case of outbreak of such a war.

- Q. Do you know anything about such studies? Were such studies made and, if so, how could one get access to them? We would be very interested in seeing such researches.
- A. This study was carried on at that time by the Planning Board of the Cabinet. I don't know whether there would be any documentary matter.
- Q. Were any such documents submitted to you?
- A. Some of those were presented.
- Q. Do you have any copies in your private files?
- A. Those were all destroyed.
- Q. Do you know where one could secure copies of those particular studies?
- A. Perhaps. At that time Hoshino was President of the Planning Board and perhaps you could get them from him.
- Q. Do you know, by chance, the names of other members of the staff--economists or civil servants--who worked on those particular studies?
- A. These were carried out by the cabinet officers--the members of the Planning Board.
- Q. Were they cabinet members?
- A. Yes, they were members of the cabinet. Those would be easy to find by a study of records at that time.
- Q. Who was the chairman of this board in your time? Hoshino came in later. Until September 1941, who was chairman of the Planning Board?
- A. Suzuki.
- Q. Suzuki was chairman of this board?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you know the names of any other members of this board, or people who worked on material for this board?
- A. It could be looked up, but I don't recall.
- Q. After the China war started and the China war went very, very slowly, why did not the Japanese try to press this war to a conclusion? In the period from 1937 to 1940-41, did Japan do everything possible to win the war in China?
- A. During that interval, there were three cabinets and considerable effort was made as far as they were concerned to end it. At the time of my second cabinet, I even went so far as to write a letter to Chiang Kai Shek. I made efforts to work out a conciliation and the younger brother of T. V. Soong acted as a mediary in an attempt to work out some sort of conciliation with Chiang Kai Shek. Also, they tried to arrange through the Chief of Staff, Itagaki, for a meeting with this man at Chang Sai.

- Q. Why was it impossible for Japan to win an outright victory in China?
- A. I wonder if it was possible for us to gain an absolute victory over China.
- Q. You mentioned before that Japan was so much stronger. Why wasn't it possible--what prevented the Japanese from gaining a decisive military success?
- A. I don't think it would be possible to gain an absolute victory over China. For instance, there is the geographical factor.
- Q. Would you say Japan, throughout the Chinese war, employed all its military forces to win the war in China--that Japan did its best to win the war in China?
- A. They probable did their best to some extent, but to what extent, I, myself, don't know.
- Q. In December 1941 and in the following months, Japan displayed a very impressive amount of military power. Why was this military power previously not directed against China?
- A. It was almost impossible to gain a decisive victory over China and it wasn't felt in the long run it was necessary to put on as great a demonstration of power as it was later. In the latter part of 1940 it was felt that about the only way to bring a successful conclusion to the war with China was to get the help of America as an intermediary. And, infact, the reason negotiations were begun with America in the Spring of 1941 was to seek to bring about a conclusion to the incident in the Far East, on that basis.
- Q. In other words, did you believe there was a possibility of a political arrangement with China?
- A. I felt there was ample possibility of a political close to the war, through the mediation of America.
- Q. Concerning the direct negotiations with Chiang Kai Shek-- what success did they yield?
- A. There were no direct negotiations with Chiang Kai Shek.
- Q. Yes, but what of contacts through intermediaries?
- A. The negotiations just fell apart along the line somewhere. In fact, I don't know if my letter to Chiang Kai Shek ever reached him.
- Q. At what point did you approach the United States with a request to mediate in China--when was it?
- A. The first probably was in December 1940.
- Q. Did you suggest at that time a specific formula for the solution of the China affair?
- A. Those negotiations were begun at an earlier time, but the concrete plan or proposal was made April 18, 1941.

- Q. What did this concrete proposal consist of?
- A. One was an interpretation of the significance of the tripartite pact. I don't remember this too well, but I have the records which I will be glad to show you.
- Q. On the 30th of April, 1941, you proposed a peace plan to the United States. Did you believe at that time there was basis for a negotiation--that it could be possibly acceptable to the United States?
- A. I don't remember.
- Q. This plan consisted of four points: The first was demilitarization of the British and U.S. bases in the Pacific; the second point was that the United States should not seek to establish predominance over the American continent; the third point was that American influence should not extend further west than Hawaii...;...
- A. That's a falsehood. I never heard of it before.
- Q. This was reported as your program.
- A. If you will look at the very first draft of the proposals which were made in Washington on the 18th of April 1941, you will understand what I had in mind.
- Q. Why was it not possible--after negotiations with China didn't lead anywhere--to withdraw from China at that point?
- A. That was because of military opposition.
- Q. What was the political background of it? Why did the military feel they could not possibly do it?
- A. I made considerable effort toward such a move, but due to the opposition of the army, it could not be carried out. In fact, the downfall of my cabinet came as a result of disagreement over the matter of withdrawing from China.
- Q. Which cabinet?
- A. The third cabinet.
- Q. During the existence of the third cabinet, the final negotiations with the United States were conducted. Did you at this point try to suggest to Washington the proposal of withdrawing from China, or did you accept Washington's proposal that you withdraw from China?
- A. The basic policy of withdrawing from China was what caused the dissension within the cabinet and before such a concrete proposal could be made to America, the cabinet fell before the military.
- Q. During your second and third cabinets, the occupation of both parts of Indo-China took place. Were you aware of the fact that that had been interpreted in both Britain and the United States as a dangerous move leading further?
- A. I was aware, of course, of the danger of such an interpretation, but I felt at that time there was hope of negotiation with America, and good prospects that we could come to some sort of settlement. The army, on the other

hand, feeling such negotiations would break down, felt it vital to have military bases in the south, and kept up their penetration and expansion in that part of the country.

Q. To your knowledge, after your cabinet fell, did Japan consult Germany on its policy with the United States and the attack which took place later?

A. The question of informing Germany with regard to the negotiations with America, or the proposal made on 18 April, constituted a very great question in the cabinet--the government--and the thing was finally solved with Matsuoka feeling they should, and did, notify Germany of the proposal being made to America and the negotiations going on. On the surface, the Germans evinced little opposition to it, but beneath that, told Japan they would not welcome such a move at all and were against it. But as far as my own cabinet was concerned, there was little contact with Germany.

Q. Before the attack on Pearl Harbor, was Germany informed such action was coming?

A. No. I have no knowledge of it.

Q. What do you think about it? What do you guess?

A. Since Germany was not at all in favor of Japan's attitude toward America at that time, there was not a lot of negotiation with Germany. In fact, Germany's attitude was rather cool toward Japan. And then my cabinet fell and Tojo came in. After that, I don't know what went on.

Q. Was your own interpretation of the German-Japanese Alliance such that Germany was bound to declare war on the United States after Pearl Harbor?

A. As far as my conception of it is concerned, Germany was not obliged to do that, for the terms of the agreement were such that if Germany were attacked, Japan was bound to assist her, and if Japan were attacked by America, Germany was bound to assist her, but this was not the case.

Q. In other words, it was a mutual assistance pact in case one or both parties would be subjected to attack--not attack themselves.

A. Yes.

Q. Could you give a short account of the last two or three months before the attack. Were you present at the Imperial conference on the 6th of September?

A. I made a proposal, or I sent a message to President Roosevelt in August, but the answer was delayed in coming. The army and navy thereupon became very impatient and said this is something that can't go on forever and we must set a time limit for these negotiations. For that reason this meeting on the 6th of September was called and at that time, as a result of the demands by the army and navy, a decision was reached.

Q. What decision?

- A. The negotiations would be carried on to the middle of October. Then, if it appeared there was little likelihood of bringing them to a conclusion, preparation for war would be made.
- Q. Were you present at the meeting?
- A. Yes. The original plan proposed by the army and navy was that if the negotiations should not reach satisfactory conclusions by the middle of October that war would be begun. The government, though, corrected--that is, they revised--that plan to say if by the middle of October the likelihood of bringing the negotiations to a conclusion was not apparent, then they would get ready to go to war.
- Q. In other words, by the middle of October the negotiations did not have to be concluded, but had to be progressing well.
- A. They had to be likely to succeed. In the middle of October, another meeting was called--an ordinary conference of the government.
- Q. Let's stay for a while with the 6th of September. What proposal to President Roosevelt did you contemplate? After the 6th of September, when negotiations were pushed ahead, what was the Japanese proposal?
- A. I don't remember these too well at the moment. However, I have all the records available and will be glad to show them to you.
- Q. You were present at this meeting. Of whom did the conference consist?
- A. Foreign Minister Toyoda, War Minister Tojo, Navy Minister Oikawa, Chief of Army Staff Sugiyama, Chief of Naval Staff Nagano, and myself.
- Q. Was Marquis Kido there?
- A. No.
- Q. How was the Emperor represented, if at all?
- A. He, himself, was there.
- Q. Was Tojo at that point the one who suggested in case the negotiations should not look favorable by the middle of October that the course should be taken towards war? Was it Tojo's suggestion, or whose?
- A. It was the Chief of Staff.
- Q. Who of those gentlemen represented this view?
- A. It was the army.
- Q. Yes, but who, specifically, of those gentlemen voiced this alternative?
- A. The proposal came from the army and eventually all of them concurred. However, we still felt there was possibility for negotiation, so we were willing to take a chance.

- Q. Did you ask at this particular point that Tojo and the Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Naval Operations suggest a strategic plan of how to go about a war if such a war would be their alternative?
- A. There was no such thing proposed. In fact, whenever the government was present, the army refused to take up military strategy.
- Q. Did the Emperor at this meeting ask Tojo and the Military as well as naval representatives "in case we go to war, how do you propose to conduct this war?"?
- A. Nothing was said regarding it. No demand was made for such counter-measures; however, the Emperor did emphasize strongly the need of carrying on negotiations with America--emphasized that they should carry those on with strength. At that time, he referred to a poem which was produced by Emperor Meiji, which was something pertaining to the problem.
- Q. Was your own feeling that those negotiations were likely to be successful? Was the formula submitted to the United States such that you believed Nomura might be able to achieve some success at that?
- A. I felt that if the army could be made to agree to a withdrawal from China, there was ample prospects for a settlement.
- Q. What was the next step? After the 6th of September, how did those negotiations proceed?
- A. Following that time, there were so many proposals made and so much went on that I would have to refer to my records, because I don't remember now the exact order of events. But that's all a matter of record.
- Q. When was the next Imperial conference?
- A. Up to the time I resigned, there were no more such conferences. The next meeting which I attended came at my own residence on the 12th of October, to consider the possibilities of settlement of negotiations with America in view of the fact that it was already near the middle of the month which was set as the deadline.
- Q. This was while you were still Premier?
- A. At that meeting, we felt there were possibilities for a successful negotiation. Tojo felt it wasn't possible and as a result of that clash of opinions, I was forced to resign.
- Q. When you resigned, whom did you suggest as your successor? The usual procedure we understand is that one suggests a successor.
- A. I made no proposal at that time. I didn't attend a meeting of the elder statesmen where proposals are made, but did submit to it a statement of my difference of opinion with Tojo as cause for my resignation.
- Q. At this meeting, at your private residence in October, who was present?

- A. Foreign Minister Toyoda, War Minister Tojo, Naval Minister Oikawa, Chairman of the Planning Board Suzuki, and myself.
- Q. At this meeting was the possibility of a war more concretely discussed? Did they, at this meeting, get at some sort of possible strategy?
- A. There was absolutely no talk of strategy--simply a question as to whether there were possibilities of a settlement.
- Q. When Tojo announced he was pessimistic as to those possibilities--specifically, he said that war was inevitable--was the way this war would be conducted discussed? What were the prospects of winning this war?
- A. At that time, there was absolutely nothing taken up with regard to military strategy. The whole thing was limited to possibilities of the negotiations--whether or not they would be successful.
- Q. In other words, the alternative to their success--the possibility of war--was not discussed? Tojo said in this meeting chances of success are very small--in other words the chances of war are very great. Do you mean to say this alternative of a war was not discussed at all?
- A. They limited the thing entirely to the discussion of possibilities of negotiations, but the question of the alternative of war was not discussed.
- Q. What is your private opinion as a citizen not in your capacity as Prime Minister, but simply as a man who talked to Tojo? How did he expect to win the war--what was his concept of it?
- A. In all my contacts with Tojo, there was never any indication as to how the war could be conducted. The big question centered on the matter of withdrawing troops from China and when I suggested this, Tojo came back with the answer that to withdraw from China would have a devastating effect on the morale of his troops. Furthermore, giving in to America would simply postpone the evil day and in two or three years, there would be a more serious crisis.
- Q. Why do you think Tojo regarded the conflict of Japan with the United States as historically inevitable. What do you believe, in Tojo's mind, were the actual issues?
- A. I feel the biggest reason was the fact that since Tojo was committed to leaving troops in China, they had inevitably to lead to the conflict with America. He said it could not be negotiated.
- Q. That's slightly illogical. Before, you said even if you did give in and withdraw troops from China, the conflict with America was inevitable in a matter of a few years. Then you said even if they did not withdraw troops, war was inevitable. Let's try to get straight. Assuming you would have withdrawn the troops from China, do you believe Tojo thought a conflict with America was still inevitable?
- A. That simply was what Tojo told me. Tojo told me once that even if we withdrew from China, there would eventually be war and if they didn't withdraw, there would be war anyway.

- Q. And you have no opinion why there would be war anyway?
- A. All Tojo said was that if Japan then were to give in to America, then America would put greater pressure than ever on us and Japanese people would be forced by that pressure to rise up again.
- Q. What is your opinion on how long the war would last in the event there were a war?
- A. Before the war began I asked the opinion of Commander in Chief of the Japanese Combined Fleet, Yamamoto. He told me the fleet would be able to carry on the fight for about a year and a half and after that he wouldn't think it could. Having heard that opinion from the Commander in Chief of the Japanese Combined Fleet, I didn't see how the war could last more than a year or two.
- Q. Did you hear any opinions from the army side?
- A. The army was more optimistic than the navy. However, I didn't have too much confidence in the army statements because they weren't based on scientific reasons.
- Q. What plan did the army have for the termination of the war-- for bringing the war to a conclusion?
- A. The only thing that the army leaders had in mind was a fight to the bitter end. So if it hadn't been for the decision made by the Emperor, we would still be fighting.
- Q. I mean in the fall of 1941, what was their plan for bringing the war to a conclusion?
- A. I never heard of it. In fact, as far as I am concerned, I don't think there was any.
- Q. It is your opinion that they went to war with no prospect of ever bringing the war to a conclusion--that is, of fighting interminably?
- A. Looking at it from the outside, the conclusion is that the army didn't have much of a concrete plan for termination of the war.
- Q. We had the opinion that the gentlemen contemplating these plans were very able gentlemen, but we can't reconcile that statement, Prince Konoye, that there was no contemplation of how to end the war when they got into it.
- A. If they did have one, they never told it to us, so we had no way of telling, but it didn't seem that they had.
- Q. Weren't there certain discussions with respect to the availability of oil?
- A. As far as that's concerned, the fact that oil was scarce is what led to the army penetrating to the South.
- Q. Therefore, wasn't it discussed in 1941 that a penetration of the South would be necessary in order to secure oil?
- A. As I said before, at the time when there was discussion as to the possibilities of bringing negotiations with America

to a successful conclusion, the army proposed that they secure bases by penetrating to the south and at that time it was said they should go into the south in order to secure oil.

Q. Was there discussion as to how far southwest they should move?

A. In view of the oil situation, my cabinet did begin negotiations with the Netherlands East Indies over the oil question. That was begun at the time of my second cabinet--there were negotiations with the Netherlands East Indies about oil.

Q. I'm sorry, that isn't responsive to the question I asked. I asked if there were any discussions as to how far southwest they would move.

A. I didn't hear of any talk about going farther than French Indo-China.

Q. The impression we have gained so far is that you agreed to a declaration of war against the United States with no information at all as to how a victory was to be achieved or as to how the war was to be brought to an end.

A. While it constituted an agreement, it was a conditional agreement--it was conditional upon the possibility of negotiations succeeding by the middle of October.

Q. I want to get one point clear. We have no interest in your responsibility one way or another. All we want to get is a frank statement as to your impression of what was involved in the event you went to war. Again, I would like to have your impression of what Japan would have to face in the event of war. What steps would have to be taken and how those steps would have to be developed in the event Japan went to war.

A. The thing which impressed me most was hearing from the Fleet Admiral and looking at everything he said. I was determined to try to avoid war with everything we had. If war did start, I didn't see any hope for Japan.

Q. In other words, it was your opinion in December 1941 that Japan inevitably could not bring the war to a successful conclusion from Japan's point of view?

A. Just exactly as you say.....I felt there was no chance for success.

Q. I think we might turn then to the subject of how peace was finally arrived at. You stated that after Saipan it became even clearer that a successful termination of the war was impossible. You said that certain people began to take steps to lay the preparation for the termination of the war.

A. That, of course, wasn't in the army. It was outside of the army--people who began to work on the Emperor. Of course, such negotiations had to be carried on in the strictest secrecy because the situation was such that it was at the risk of one's life to do anything like that.

- Q. Who were the people, of your own personal knowledge, who were of that opinion?
- A. The present Foreign Minister Yoshida was one, also Admiral Yonai and Admiral Okada. These were all of the upper rank of men--of higher classes of men who carried on such activities. As far as I know, there was none of the lower ranks.
- Q. Is it true they had a meeting in December 1944?
- A. For some time there were meetings of a group of former Premiers.
- Q. And they were of this opinion?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did the businessmen have any opinion on this subject?
- A. The majority of the business world was against the war from the beginning and even during the war they tried to bring it to an end.
- Q. What were the chief things they were concerned about were the war to continue--this group of the Premiers and the businessmen?
- A. They were afraid of a revolution--a sort of communistic revolution.
- Q. If the war continued how would that have occurred?
- A. They were afraid if the war were to continue the country would be defeated and that would result in the downfall of the ruling classes--the upper classes--and a state of communism would result.
- Q. What steps did they foresee in the gradual defeat of Japan from that point on? From the loss of Saipan?
- A. They thought for one thing the air raids would be intensified. They were afraid of the complete isolation of Japan from the rest of the world by blockade.
- Q. In what respect did they fear the air raids?
- A. They were afraid mostly from the standpoint of the effect upon the populace--the possibility of the breakdown of the morale of the people.
- Q. They feared that more than they did the effect on the war production of Japan?
- A. The leading class--the ruling class--was greatly concerned over the possibility of defeat in war, which would result in a general upheaval and revolution in the country.
- Q. Did this group have any influence on the appointment of Koiso as Prime Minister in substitution of Tojo?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did they participate in the prior removal of, I believe it was Shimada, as Navy Minister, three days prior to the fall of the Tojo government?

- A. This was brought about mostly by the activities of Admiral Yonai, who worked for the resignation of the other man.
- Q. Was it felt that Koiso's cabinet might reconsider the question of continuation of the war?
- A. This cabinet, of course, took up the matter earnestly of trying to bring a conclusion to the war. That was their stipulated objective, but the situation was such that they couldn't do it.
- Q. Did all the members of the cabinet know there was a problem before them as to the continuation or non-continuation of the war?
- A. Probably some thought there was and some didn't realize that was the big issue.
- Q. What steps did the Koiso government take to explore ways and means of bringing about a termination of the war?
- A. I had no direct connections with the cabinet at that time and don't know what they worked on, although I do know of their efforts to get in touch with Chungking.
- Q. What did they hope to accomplish by getting in touch with Chungking?
- A. Apparently they were attempting to work through Chungking for negotiations with America and Britain.
- Q. Do you recollect at about what time that was?
- A. I don't remember exactly--I think it was somewhere around April.
- Q. Do I understand this was during the Koiso cabinet or the Suzuki cabinet?
- A. Just at the time when the change was about to be made from one cabinet to the next.
- Q. Who recommended to Marquis Kido that a change be made in the Prime Ministership in April 1945?
- A. It was evidently through the group of former premiers.
- Q. What were the considerations in choosing Suzuki over and against any of the other persons as premier at that time?
- A. The feeling was that they should try to bring the war to the end and it was the consensus that Suzuki was most likely to be able to do this.
- Q. Did all of the Suzuki cabinet realize they had this important mission?
- A. Yes, they did, which is in considerable contrast to the Koiso cabinet where it wasn't realized.
- Q. What were the first steps considered necessary in order to lay the ground-work for this important change in policy?
- A. The biggest realization was that in order to have any influence on the army--that is, to bring the army to a decision it would be necessary to work through the Emperor.

- Q. Was there any consideration of the steps that would be taken with respect to the people?
- A. They felt working through the people would have little effect, if only they could get the Emperor to take the necessary action to settle the army. There was no special effort made to work through the people.
- Q. Were you familiar with the change in propaganda that was initiated at the time the Suzuki cabinet came into power?
- A. There was no sudden change in policy--they didn't come right out and announce their plans. It was more subtle--but there was a drastic reduction in the intensity of propaganda and it began to turn gradually.
- Q. Was more or less information given as to the real military situation at that time?
- A. The army's whole policy was one of secrecy and they didn't make much announcement of the real situation.
- Q. What problems were involved in securing a decision from the Emperor to terminate the war?
- A. The first thing was to work through or win over the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. If they could just do that, that was all they would need. The really big thing was to overcome the army. Their only hope was appealing to the Emperor and the only way to the Emperor was through the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal.
- Q. Was it your opinion that if the Emperor had issued an Imperial rescript as early as April that the army would have been satisfied to obey it?
- A. Even in July when the thing came up, there was a demonstration and uprising, so if it had come earlier, there would have been greater confusion on the part of the army. They might have followed it, but there would have been these uprisings.
- Q. Was the danger of uprising a consideration in the mind of the Privy Seal?
- A. When that was proposed, of course, they were prepared then for the possibility of such a thing and he took his step realizing the personal risk to himself.
- Q. I take it you're referring to August?
- A. Yes, in August.
- Q. And had it been done earlier, would there have been a more serious problem, and what factors contributed to the decrease in the risk of disorders in the event of an Imperial rescript?
- A. The big thing was the deterioration of the war effort; then with the entry of Russia in the war and the dropping of the atomic bomb, it did a lot to prepare the way for this next move.
- Q. Do the order in which you mention those indicate your impression of their relative importance?

- A. It is pretty difficult to say which was worse or more important.
- Q. Had there been any anticipation that Russia might enter the war against Japan prior to the time it actually occurred?
- A. I don't feel anyone thought she would come in at that time-- at the time she did.
- Q. What would the result have been had the United States announced that it did not intend to invade Japan, but merely intended to continue the use of air power over Japan indefinitely?
- A. Just the thought of the continuation of the air raids would have had considerable influence regardless of anything else.
- Q. Is it correct that the army's plan at the end was to resist an invasion with full mobilization of Japan's remaining resources, and cause the United States a great many casualties and possibly throw back the invasion?
- A. Yes, that was the plan of the army.
- Q. What plan would they have adopted in the event we would have made such an announcement as I previously described?
- A. I don't know what they would have done.
- Q. In your opinion, would their position within the Empire have been strengthened or weakened by such an announcement?
- A. You mean from the standpoint of the confidence of the people?
- Q. This and their position with the Emperor.
- A. The longer the war continued, the more feeling there was against the army, so that the statement itself would have had less influence than the actual prolongation of the war.
- Q. How much longer do you think the war might have continued had the atomic bomb not been dropped?
- A. It is a little hard for me to figure that out.
- Q. What would your best estimate be?
- A. Probably it would have lasted all this year.
- Q. It would not have been terminated prior to 1 November--- is that correct?
- A. Probably would have lasted beyond that.
- Q. What would the reasons for that have been?
- A. It is very difficult to pin it down to actual reasons, but it is just a sort of general feeling, without much actual basis.
- Q. Was Marquis Kido persuaded of the advisability of discontinuing the war prior to August 1st?
- A. From what I heard, Kido gave his advice to the Emperor first around April of this year.

- Q. Was it reluctance on the part of the Emperor to make this drastic decision which delayed it from April to August?
- A. The Emperor wanted to end hostilities just as soon as possible, but the situation in the country as a whole was such that he evidently hesitated because of conditions.
- Q. Was there hope that the negotiations initiated with the Russians might come to a favorable conclusion as late as August?
- A. You mean through Russia or with Russia?
- Q. Through Russia with America.
- A. They thought that perhaps if they could get something short of unconditional surrender there was a chance of getting it through Russia.
- Q. What were they prepared to give up in connection with those negotiations?
- A. They felt they were prepared to make any sacrifice--give anything--so long as they could preserve the country and save face. That's so it wouldn't be actual surrender--so it would save face.
- Q. Why was it decided not to initiate negotiations directly with the United States?
- A. The army opposed any direct negotiation. It was only by proposing that the negotiations be carried on through Russia that the acquiescence of the army was secured.
- Q. Why did the army prefer to negotiate through Russia rather than negotiate directly?
- A. Because America had said there was nothing beside unconditional surrender she would accept, while the army though if they worked through Russia it would save face.
- Q. In your opinion, would increasingly heavy B-29 fire and high explosive raids have the same effect as the atomic bomb had on speeding the determination to make peace?
- A. Fundamentally, the thing that brought about the situation was the prolonged bombing by the B-29.
- Q. Was the effect of the atomic bomb on their political discussions different in kind and nature than the effect of the B-29's?
- A. I don't think there was any special change as to type of conferences. It just hurried it up a little bit.
- Q. Did not the Emperor realize by the end of July that Japan was defeated?
- A. Of course.
- Q. Japan realized that the B-29 attacks would be even greater in August than it was in July?
- A. They expected that it would become increasingly severe.

- Q. And in September it would be greater and even more devastating than in August?
- A. Yes, of course, because they realized it was increasing right along in intensity.
- Q. I understood you to say that if had it not been for the Emperor's rescript the Japanese would be fighting today. Is that correct?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Could Japan have continued to fight with these increasing attacks of the B-29's?
- A. There was bound to be a limit as to what she could do.
- Q. Yet you said if it weren't for the Emperor's statement they would be fighting today, did you not?
- A. Of course, that was a conditional statement. There was a limit to what they could do. They would do what they could.
- Q. Hadn't they almost reached the limit?
- A. Of course, they were nearing the limit, but the army would not admit it. They wouldn't admit they were near the end.
- Q. Would they not have been forced to surrender, therefore, even if Russia had not come in or even though we had not dropped the atomic bomb?
- A. The army had dug themselves caves in the mountains and their idea of fighting on was fighting from every little hole or rock in the mountains.
- Q. Would the Emperor have permitted them to do that?
- A. I don't think the Emperor would have let them go that far. He would have done something to stop them.
- Q. What was Japan afraid Russia would do that our atomic bombs and B-29's would not do?
- A. The greatest fear of Russia was the psychological fear.
- Q. Were you afraid Russia would occupy Japan?
- A. The fear I refer to was the fact that Russia had been thought of as a neutral country up to that time and for Russia to suddenly come into the war had a great psychological fear and that was the fear I was talking of.
- Q. On an entirely different subject, did Hitler know of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor before the attack was made.
- A. I don't know.
- Q. Do you consider there was much collaboration between Japan and Germany, even though they were allies?
- A. I don't know, but I don't think there was any close collaboration.

- Q. Do I understand you to say that the attack was made on Pearl Harbor without anyone in Japan knowing how they were going to win the war?
- A. That's what I said and that's the situation as it was. They told me they didn't think they could finish the war in a year even, but they still went ahead with it.
- Q. My comment is, that is most amazing.
- A. It is, In spite of the fact that the Commander of the Combined Fleets would voice such statements as he made to me, that they should go ahead! In fact, it was on that basis that I saw no hope in the situation and I tried my best to negotiate with America.
- Q. Since the United States had obviously been so reluctant to go to war with Japan and since we know the Embassy in Washington was advising Japan of the reluctance of the United States to go to war, wasn't it suggested that after two or three defeats had been administered the United States, a compromise peace would have been relatively easy to obtain?
- A. That is true and I know that prior to the war, particularly in the navy, there were some who thought if they could hit Americans hard a few times, they might have some hope, but it was the general opinion that if there was a long war, there was no hope.
- Q. What, in your judgement, would have been acceptable compromise to Japan in the Spring of 1942?
- A. On the basis of such a supposition, it is still difficult to figure what they would have accepted.
- Q. Prior to your resignation in 1941 when you apparently were considering the possibilities of a war with the United States, you inquired of Admiral Yamamoto as to his estimates as to how long the war would go. Did you ask similar questions of the higher army officers.
- A. I made no such inquiry of the army--I realized it was no use.
- Q. Is there any inference in asking Admiral Yamamoto? In other words, in what medium did you consider--that is, land, sea, or air--that the war would be decided?
- A. This was not a formal question. It was simply a casual question. I happened to be talking with the man and it was a casual question that came up. It wasn't a formal attempt at trying to find out something.
- Q. At that time, in your opinion, in which medium of land, sea, or air, did you think the war would be decided?
- A. On things like that it is very difficult for me to try to decide for myself which of those mediums it would be decided upon.
- Q. The initial moves in the war, which were essentially amphibious moves on the part of the navy, do you think were in complete agreement with the army. Did the army agree with such moves?

- A. I not only knew little of actual operations during the early part of the war, but even in cabinet meetings practically nothing was given out by the army or navy.
- Q. In your personal opinion, do you think in the moves made in the initial stages and early in 1942 the army were advised? Did the army have any say? Did they agree to the scope of the operations which were at that time primarily naval?
- A. While I had no personal connections, it was generally felt and it came to my attention all throughout the war that the army and navy were continually in conflict and there was constant difference of opinion between them.
- Q. In the decisions of major importance which had to be approved by the Emperor, was it not necessary for the army and navy to be in agreement?
- A. While they had to agree openly to get that across, still at heart there was plenty of disagreement.
- Q. You were largely connected in your work and thought with the idea of an Asia co-prosperity zone. How did you conceive of an economic organization of this co-prosperity? What would be Japan's role in this zone, which would include the Netherlands East Indies, China, the Philippines, etc.?
- A. The use of these various phrases such as the co-prosperity sphere and the new order in East Asia were things for the scholars to argue over, but as far as actual concepts of them, they were rather vague.
- Q. What was your private notion? How did Japan's economy fit? What advantages would Japan derive? Would it be a matter of export markets? Was it an outlet for investments? Or what did Japan mean by assuming leadership of this co-prosperity zone? You were yourself, a leading member from the beginning of various organizations such as the Greater East Asia League. What was your concept?
- A. The things of which I was head were largely cultural associations. For instance, the Dobun Kai was for the purpose of arranging for the transfer of students from China to come to study in Japan and vice versa; and then I was head of the cultural association of Thailand, and then there was a medical association I was head of. There was no specific object. It was rather general--of cultural relationships--building up the East and establishing peace and things like that.
- Q. Was the Asia Development Board, which was established while you were Prime Minister, purely a cultural effort?
- A. That was simply an attempt to bring into the cabinet affairs concerned with China alone and it was opposed by the Foreign Minister. Of course, it included everything. It was the foreign diplomacy in connection with China, and was brought into the cabinet.
- Q. In other words, you mean you never had any conception of the organization of the Greater East Asia co-prosperity zone--that is the economic aspects of it?
- A. Not specifically. I had no specific conception of it.

- Q. Did the army have such a conception? In the imperialistic desire--you used the word "imperialistic" before--in the imperialistic desire to dominate this zone, did the army have any ideas of what to do with those spheres once they got there?
- A. I don't know exactly what they had in mind. It may have been rather vague for them too, but it certainly was plain they had in mind dominating the Far East.
- Q. What did they intend to do with it? What was their prospect on how to increase Japan's might with those resources?
- A. As far as I am concerned, I know nothing specific about that. All I do know is that in the high command there were a great many plans and policies along that line.
- Q. Could you indicate what policies were formulated after December 7, 1941 or immediately before? What they intended to do with this area after they had occupied it? How to integrate it into the Japanese Empire?
- A. The military must have had something like that in mind, but as far as I am concerned, I don't know what they had in mind.
- Q. I understand that the military were independent from the Prime Minister and that their plans, therefore, were not submitted to the government, but what about the economic matters which were clearly under the jurisdiction of the cabinet?
- A. The military undoubtedly had plans concerning these territories, but they kept them under the surface and only brought some aspects of minor phases of them to the attention of the ministries concerned. Apparently they had the power to do what they wanted without having to divulge too much to the ministries concerned.
- Q. After the war broke out, in view of the Emperor's desire for peace, and since the Premier during the period of the early Konoye cabinets had no access to the strategic plans and aims of the army and navy, then in an attempt to understand the governments of that period, would it be safe to say that both the Emperor and Premier were figureheads, with the final power resting with the army and navy?
- A. There is no other conclusion than that. However, it must be recalled that at the time things broke out, Tojo was Prime Minister and representative of the military; so, of course he was in on it.