

Interr. To J (19 March 46)

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON



DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS BRANCH, T.A.G.O.

CONTINUED INTERROGATION OF

General Hideki TOJO

Date and Time: 19 March 1946, 1400-1630 hours.

Place : Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan.

Present : General Hideki TOJO
Mr. John W. Fihelly, Interrogator
Commander Yale Maxon, USNR, Interpreter
Miss Myrtle B. Mills, Stenographer

Questions by : Mr. Fihelly.

* * * * *

Q Yesterday you referred to the "Four-Minister" and "Five-Minister" meetings. What ministers constituted each of these?

A I was not a Cabinet Minister then, but, from what I have heard, the "Four-Minister Conference" was composed of the Premier, the War, Navy, and Foreign Ministers, and the "Five-Minister Conference" included these, with the addition of the Finance Minister. I think it is important to mention why it was that the "Four-" and "Five-Minister Conferences" became or grew into the Liaison Conferences.

Q Yes, please explain. We have some information, but we would be glad to have any additional information you can give us.

A The Chiefs of Staff were not represented at the "Four-Minister" or "Five-Minister Conferences". When problems arose from the over-lapping spheres of authority between the Cabinet and the Supreme Command, the views of the Supreme Command had to be transmitted to the "Four-" or "Five-Minister Conferences" via the War Minister or the Navy Minister and, at time went on, particularly after the China Incident started and after Imperial Headquarters was set up in 1937, the Chiefs of Staff had to have closer relations with the government for carrying

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on military operations and because of the situation abroad.

Therefore, this method of working through the War and Navy Ministers was not so satisfactory and the Liaison Conferences, on which the Chiefs of Staff would be directly represented, were begun. The civil sphere of authority, of course, was handled by the Cabinet and not by the Chiefs of Staff. This business of the adjustment /chōsei/, as between the Supreme Command and the civil government, was always very difficult. The "Four-" and "Five-Minister" Conferences were not too successful and they were replaced by the Liaison Conferences, but even the Liaison Conferences were not wholly without difficulties.

When KOISO became Prime Minister, the Liaison Conferences were replaced by a Conference for the Supreme Direction of the War /Saikō Sensō Shidō Kaigi/. This, however, was a change in name rather than in form. When this did not work any too well, the Premier began attending Imperial Headquarters Conferences /Dihon-ei Kaigi/, but without participating in strategic or tactical matters. Even this latter was not too successful since the Premier had nothing to say about strategy or tactics. However, you may say that these four steps, to wit: the "Four-" and "Five-Minister" Conferences, the Liaison Conferences, the Conference for the Supreme Direction of the War, and the Imperial Headquarters Conferences, attended by the Premier, were four stages of the attempt to solve this problem of the overlapping spheres of authority. With regard to the overlapping spheres, there was a certain amount of success, but the political forces, that is to say, the political power, of the Cabinet, could not control the pure command sphere of authority of the Supreme Command.

I am not saying that the independence of the Supreme Command is a bad thing. There are some good points about it too, for example, being able to conduct operations without political interference. It was a good thing in 1890, when the Constitution was established, for the High Command to be untrammelled, but in these days where the influence of a single action is felt around the world, a certain amount of control

by the political authority is necessary. However, under the Japanese system, it was impossible. /The preceding portion of this answer was read back to the witness who agreed as to its correctness./

There was one important point that I would like to make clear. I have been talking about difficult problems of the Japanese Government system and of the independence of the Supreme Command. However, the foreign problems arising from the actions of the Supreme Command, I am responsible for.

Q So that the independence of the Supreme Command was good from a military standpoint but not good from a political or civil standpoint?

A The independence of the Supreme Command is good from a military point of view only if fighting were the only thing to be considered, but fighting today is also a part of politics. From the political point of view, under modern conditions, the independence of the Supreme Command requires consideration. I believe that under modern conditions, war is a part of politics - they are not separate any more.

Q Do you not realize that the position in which Japan finds herself today was due largely to the independence of the Supreme Command?

A To speak plainly, it was a big cause. Actually, it was, but in the trials I don't want to emphasize that too much. What I do want to plead is that we, as subjects, I and the Chiefs of Staff, did not discharge our responsibilities to the Emperor. It is not the Emperor's responsibility. The civil ministers ought to have understood the problems of command and the Chiefs of Staff ought to have understood the civil problems. All ought to have cooperated in discharging their responsibilities to the Emperor.

Q In what respects did you and the Chiefs of Staff not fulfill your responsibilities to the Emperor?

- A Men use systems; men should not be used by systems /Hito ga seido wo tsukau seido ni hito ga tsukawareru ni arazu./ This is an important principle. If I and the other men had fully understood this, the Supreme Command should have taken account of the political aspect of things and adjusted military operations accordingly. We should have risen above the system in which we found ourselves, but we did not. It was the men who were at fault. /Read back to the witness who agreed as to its correctness./
- Q To whom do you refer when you say "we"?
- A I mean myself and the two Chiefs of Staff, especially myself.
- Q When did you first come to realize the truth of this situation that you have just explained?
- A From the time I became Prime Minister I have felt it poignantly, and I imagine that not only I but all Prime Ministers have felt the same.
- Q According to information we now have, both MATSUOKA and KONOYE used the phrase "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" as early as 1938 to 1940. Are you not aware of this fact?
- A They used the words, but the idea was different. Just as I have said. They used it to refer to Japan, Manchuria, and China. The scope was different. The scope was limited to Japan, Manchuria, and China. The scope was different. The scope was limited to Japan, Manchuria, and China, but, after the Greater East Asia War, the scope of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was definitely demarcated. I can't find it here /referring to his little book/. It is a question of what other people said and not what I said, but I dare say, they did say it. However, I think it was with the meaning that I have explained before.
- Q The second KONOYE Cabinet came into power in July 1940. A part of its announced policy was the creation of a New Order in East Asia. Is it not true that shortly thereafter, representatives of Japan and representatives of Germany discussed in detail this New Order in East Asia?

- A You mean in Japan or Germany?
- Q Either or both places.
- A I don't know about the detail, but I dare say they discussed it. It was the Foreign Minister's business. The treaty aspects of it were under consideration, I imagine.
- Q Were not reports made to that effect to the Cabinet in which you were War Minister at that time?
- A I dare say, since it is reasonable to suppose so, but I don't remember such small details as that. I don't remember definitely whether it was reported or not, but it seems natural enough.
- Q Were there not discussions held here in Tokyo prior to 27 September 1940 with regard to the New Order in East Asia and other provisions of the Pact?
- A The Foreign Minister and STAHMER were talking, but I don't like to say that they were talking about this or that when I was not concerned. This was the Foreign Minister's business.
- Q Do you not remember that the Foreign Minister - wasn't it MATSUOKA - reported to the Cabinet on the progress of these negotiations?
- A MATSUOKA was Foreign Minister, but I don't remember that he made a series of reports.
- Q MATSUOKA was in Tokyo just prior to the signing of the Three-Power Pact, was he not?
- A I think so.
- Q Do you remember that he made any report to the Cabinet on this matter?
- A I do remember that STAHMER came from Shanghai and that, after a short period of conferences with MATSUOKA, the Three-Power Pact was signed. The discussions had been going on prior to

to that as to whether Japan should sign the Pact or not, but the actual putting through of the thing was done in a matter of days.

Q STAHMER came to Tokyo as VON RIBBENTROP's representative for that particular purpose, did he not?

A I think so - yes.

Q What was the nature of the discussions before this, and where had they been going on?

A I don't remember clearly, but I think that the War, Navy, and Foreign Ministers met a number of times on the problem and were informed by the Foreign Minister as to the status of the talks, but I don't remember that the Cabinet was so informed.

Q What do you remember that you, as War Minister, learned from these meetings, particularly in regard to Japan's desire for a New Order in East Asia?

A I don't remember.

Q If anything had been said at these meetings to the effect that Japan would not get the cooperation of Germany in setting up a New Order in East Asia, you would have remembered it, would you not?

A There was no such thing as that, I think.

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Certificate of Interpreter

I, Yale Maxon, Cmdr., USNR, 11-35-72
(Name) (Serial Number)

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 6 pages, is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Yale Maxon
Yale Maxon, Cmdr., USNR

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 12 day of August, 1946.

John W. Fihelly
John W. Fihelly

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

Certificate of Stenographer

I, Myrtle B. Mills, 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.

Myrtle B. Mills
Myrtle B. Mills

Certificate of Interrogator

I, John W. Fihelly, certify that on 19th
day of March, 1946, personally appeared before me TOJO
Hideki, and according to Commander Yale Maxon, USNR,

Interpreter, gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth therein.

John W. Fihelly
John W. Fihelly

TOKYO
(Place)

12 August 46
(Date)

Interrogation of Hideki Tojo
19 March 1946
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