

INTERROGATION OF
Major General Eugene Ott

Date and Time : 25 March 1946, 1015-1145 hours.
Place : Room 619, Meiji Building, Tokyo, Japan.
Present : Major General Eugene Ott
Mr. Frank S. Tavenner, Jr., Interrogator
Miss Gizella Koncz, Stenographer

Questions by Mr. Tavenner:

- Q. There was a conversation between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka on April 5. Were you present at that conference?
- A. I remember on April 5 a luncheon in Ribbentrop's residence. If this is in question, I was present; but in this luncheon there was no official conversation but only a luncheon talk where Matsuoka mentioned his intention to enter into some closer contact with the Russian government. Obviously just to find out how Ribbentrop will react and maybe he had the intention to ask this question more in public than in this closed meetings they had before because present was in that time State Secretary Von Weizsaecker, some two or three men of the staff of Matsuoka, Ambassador Oshima, Stahmer, and myself. So, it was a more large audience. Matsuoka asked this question and the Foreign Minister answered about in the way that warning him not to go too far. If this is meant, I had been present. But I had not been present in a former conversation.
- Q. At the conversation you have just referred to, was Singapore discussed?
- A. No. I don't remember it, I just remember this one thing. It was a luncheon not suitable for such a discussion.
- Q. I hand you Document #1882-PS purporting to be a record of a conversation between Foreign Minister Ribbentrop and the Japanese Foreign Minister, Matsuoka in Berlin on April 5, 1941 and I will ask you to read it. It is two pages in length.
- (Witness reads document)
- Q. Were you present during this conversation?
- A. No.

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- Q. Reference is made in this report to the fact that Matsuoka had stated that Japan was now awakening and according to the Japanese temperament, would take action quickly after the previous lengthy deliberations. This indicates, does it not, that Matsuoka had determined to bring Japan into the war against England in view of the entire conversations that had been conducted between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka?
- A. It seems so.
- Q. The summary given by Ribbentrop of the points he wanted Matsuoka to take back to Japan with him; namely, 1. That Germany had already won the war; 2. That Japan should predominate in the Far East, Italy and Germany in Europe and Africa; and, 3. That the entry of Japan into the war would hasten victory and that it was undoubtedly more in the interest of Japan than that of Germany that this fact be accomplished, this constitutes, does it not, a very strong appeal to Japan to enter into the war against England?
- A. It does. But it is very curious that Ribbentrop considered the war as already won in the moment when the Reich government prepared a war against Russia which had to be considered as a very difficult and dangerous thing.
- Q. Speaking of the war being won, reference was unquestionably made to the European powers and England. It was considered at that time that England was on her last legs, so to speak.
- A. Yes, but I think without reason. May I add that these three points are exactly the way that the Foreign Minister many times expressed his opinion about the situation in a kind of wishful thinking.
- Q. Nevertheless, this appeal for strong cooperation by active military measures on the part of Japan was in accordance with Basic Order #24 issued by Hitler?
- A. Yes, it was.
- Q. To what extent were either of these three points that I have just mentioned, discussed with you by Ribbentrop or any other representative

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of the Foreign Office during this period?

A. As a fact that it has been talked over with Matsuoka you mean?

Q. I want to know whether these three points constituting an appeal to Japan to enter the war against England were discussed by Ribbentrop or any other member of the German Foreign Office or the military staff with you?

A. I think when Ribbentrop summoned me in the conversation I mentioned in the Castle of Potsdam, where he spoke about the propaganda, in the last part of his talk he summoned me to do my best that Japan enters the war and on this occasion I think he referred to the third point generally, that it would hasten the end of the war, the victory, and it would be mainly in the interest of Japan.

Q. Did Ribbentrop suggest concern about bringing the war to a close before the United States should become involved in it?

A. It wasn't a way of expressing himself to show some concern. He declared that, if he spoke about America, that by this way of hastening the victory, America will be unable to enter the war.

Q. In Matsuoka's reply to the three points mentioned, he said, according to this report "that he, himself, could only report that he had long been of the opinion that every nation would be offered an opportunity only once in a thousand years. Japan was confronting such an opportunity, and she would have to assume the risk connected with it. She would have to act decisively at the right moment in order to take advantage of this unique opportunity." This again indicated a decision on the part of Matsuoka that the European war afforded the only opportunity that Japan might have for many years to come to take decisive action?

A. Yes.

Q. In view of your experience in Japan and your great knowledge

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of the Japanese customs and the manner of thinking, had you not discovered long before this period that Japan was embarking upon just that course; namely, that she recognize this as an opportunity to expel the white man out of Asia and that she was going to take advantage of it?

- A. That Japan intends to use the opportunities afforded by the European war for her own aims in the Far East, there were several signs. For instance, the occupation of Hainan Island, the advance in Indo-China, some pressure in the way of negotiations upon the Dutch East Indies to improve the raw materials supply, and a lot of talk in various circles which were not official about the time for using the situation for Japan. About the aim of expelling the white man, I was many times confronted with this idea from the side especially of German people too, which were afraid that it would be the end of the development; and I personally opposed this idea because I was convinced that Japan's development in the past had depended so enormously upon the assistance and competition of the white nations which had treated Japan mainly for commercial competitions as a favorite child, that I couldn't believe that Japan would be able in the near future to go ahead without many assistances of the white people.
- Q. But did you not feel that that was her intention and purpose?
- A. It was several times expressed as intention from fanatical circles but I personally didn't think that it could be the intention of the intelligent people which had even after a very successful assuming of the leadership in the Far East could only effectuate this Far Eastern domination by a very strong exchange of import and export with other nations and then the white nations would have certainly many chances to force Japan to regard their own claims and intentions. This was my opinion I several times had to express to German people too, which was of the same opinion you just mentioned.
- Q. Instead of referring to the movement as an effort to expel the white man out of Asia, let us consider it in a little less drastic light and call it the effort of Japan to establish supremacy in the South Pacific. Now it is perfectly clear that it was the purpose of the Three Powers Pact, which means

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the purpose of Germany, Italy and Japan, that Japan obtain economic and territorial supremacy in the South Pacific, is it not?

A. About territorial supremacy, this was not expressed in the Three Powers Pact, and I refer to several warnings from the Reich government when there was some danger of territorial ambitions of Japan concerning Dutch East Indies and Indo-China.

Q. Yes, but those warnings were all prior to December 1940?

A. I mean after the conclusion of the Three Powers Pact there were still presented, so in the moment of the conclusion of the Three Powers Pact, this wasn't expressed as an idea that Japan may get territorial supremacy. It was in the development of the situation. For my experience, the turning point of the using of the Three Powers Pact was when Ribbentrop asked Oshima to use his efforts for bringing Japan into the war against England. This was the beginning. Then it was obvious that the close relations effectuated by the Three Powers Pact were to be used in an aggressive way.

Q. At this point I want to go back and review with you matters relating to the conclusion of the Three Powers Pact. I now have available the Japanese records concerning the conclusion of that Pact. I regret that I did not have this data at the time we discussed the conclusion of the Pact, as it will now be necessary to review the entire matter, I think. I have before me the original draft of the Pact as presented by Matsuoka in which Article 3 was different in one particular from the Pact as finally concluded. You will recall you used the term "unprovoked attack". The exact language of this Article I will now read and it appears to be different and the word "unprovoked" does not appear to have been used. "Article 3: Japan, Germany and Italy agree to cooperate in their efforts on the aforesaid lines. They further undertake to assist one another with all political, economic and military means when one of the three contracting parties is attacked openly or secretly by a power at present not involved in the European war or in the Sino-Japanese incident." Now, the words "openly or secretly" are not in the Pact as finally concluded. I also have before me a record of the explanation that Matsuoka

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made at a meeting with the Emperor regarding the conclusion of the Three Powers Pact.

A. (Interrupting) In this first interview he had with the Emperor he spoke to us about?

Q. And on page 10 of that report Matsuoka said that "publicly or secretly attacked" by one or more powers refers chiefly to America. "Japan is now going into a military alliance with Germany and Italy with American as the objective. 'Secretly attacked' which Germany wants to insert into the text is understood to mean such cases as the American fleet entering Singapore or Britain allowing America to occupy an important British base in the Mediterranean Sea." It appears, therefore, that the words "openly or secretly" were urged by the German government as a part of the proposed Pact. I would like for you to consider this and having refreshed your recollection, give me the full details of what occurred with reference to this provision of the Pact.

A. (Long pause) Could you just give me the definition of "openly or secretly"--about America--once more?

Q. I quote from Matsuoka's statement: "'Secretly attacked' which Germany wants to insert in the text is understood to mean such cases as the American fleet entering Singapore or Britain allowing America to occupy an important British base in the Mediterranean Sea." From this quotation it plainly appears that it was the idea of Germany that the words "openly or secretly" be used in the text of the Pact.

A. I stated about these questions twice. First, I told you there had been a special word attached to "attack", and I remembered "unprovoked" without being able to give you details about it. And when I have seen the document about the conversation between Ribbentrop and Mussolini, there we found the word "concealed attack", and then I told you I think I had been wrong and this had been the word. But I didn't remember that it had been explained in this way.

Q. That is a very important feature of the Pact as originally

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proposed and had very far-reaching consequences. Certainly you can, on reflection, recall the discussion regarding such a serious point as that?

- A. (Very long pause) If Matsuoka reported it this way to the Emperor, it is obvious that it has been discussed, because no Japanese would report to the Emperor things which are not really discussed. But I, in this moment, can't recall it. This point I am very uncertain in my memory as I have shown you by certain statements. It was the general point of view of Germany that she was afraid of every advantage of American bases near to the European theater of war and those both events of Singapore being used by the American fleet as a base or a base in the Mediterranean being used by the American fleet are to be considered as a spring-board for America to enter the war against Germany from much nearer starting bases.
- Q. This shows that it was the intention of Germany that action on the part of the United States even short of an attack under the common acceptance of the term would be the basis for joint military action against the United States?
- A. (Long pause) It shows that Germany was afraid of such actions and had intention to avoid it by the Three Powers Pact.
- Q. Do you recall under what circumstances those words "openly or secretly" were omitted from the Pact as finally concluded?
- A. As I think, the German government once more considering the uncertainty of a definition of this "secret attack" omitted it. If it had been by the suggestion of Matsuoka, or by the suggestion of our main legal advisor Gauss, this I can't remember.
- Q. Isn't it quite improbable that Germany would ask that such language be used in one conference and then again suggest that it be eliminated, and, on the other hand, isn't it more logical to believe that the secret protocol which Matsuoka presented was an attempt to define further the meaning of "open or secret" and thereby leave those words out of the original pact?
- A. I think so, but I in vain try to recall the contents of this secret protocol in this respect.

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Mr. Frank S. Tavenner, Jr., Interrogator
Mr. G. C. Hardin
Miss Gizella Koncz, Stenographer

Questions by Mr. Tavenner:

- Q. General Ott, I hand you again the report of the conference between Ribbentrop and Gen. Oshima and I will ask you to read again, in order to refresh your recollection of the document, the paragraph appearing on top of page 5 and also read the first sentence of the next paragraph.
- A. (Witness reads)
- Q. In the paragraph I have handed you, Ribbentrop referred to the assistance that Japan had given in enabling Germany to arm after the Anti-Comintern Pact was concluded.
- A. Japan had given assistance to Germany?
- Q. Yes. I will read you that part, "the Reich Foreign Minister continued by saying that it was Japanese friendship which had enabled Germany to arm after the Anti-Comintern Pact was concluded." Will you explain that?
- A. (Pause) I try to find an explanation. (Pause) I don't see what the Reich Foreign Minister meant with these words because materially I don't remember any assistance given exactly by Japan for the German armament, nor in new weapons, nor in blueprints. Every time that Japan tried to inform herself about the German armaments, sending mission after mission to Germany. And the Japanese army and navy

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kept their own armament so completely secret that I can't find out any exact event where we could profit for the German armament from what I or my colleague, the naval attache, found out from the Japanese armament. Political---(long pause)----I can't find an explanation for it.

- Q. During the period following the Anti-Comintern Pact Germany was furnishing arms and munitions to China, was it not?
- A. Shipping to it, yes. Just contrary it could perhaps have meant that this would be a very curious way that by attacking China, Japan has given to the German arms industry a kind of chance to send arms to China. This could perhaps be, but I don't think that he mentioned it to Oshima.
- Q. Could this expression of Ribbentrop also be justified on this theory that the Anti-Comintern Pact was a military alliance which strengthened the arm of Germany in world diplomacy and afforded an encouragement to Germany to do things in connection with her armament which she would not dared to have done without the collaboration and support of the signatory powers in that alliance?
- A. It is possible that Ribbentrop had this idea and I come back once more to his peculiar ambition. He was very fond of every pact he concluded and so he may have considered the Anti-Comintern Pact in this sense too. But the military side of the Anti-Comintern Pact was a very weak one. There was no military alliance concluded with the Anti-Comintern Pact, so it is after my idea, rather exaggerated to make to Japan this compliment as he made it. He can have that idea that the Anti-Comintern Pact had been giving some pressure towards Russia and by this way there had been some relief from this side in Germany to encourage Germany to arm. I may now stress the reality of the facts--the whole Anti-Comintern Pact had been in the German opinion and in the Japanese opinion a rather vague instrument and people were not very pleased about it because they didn't understand.
- Q. Wasn't it true that it was weak in comparison with the alliance

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of 1940, but it was the first step toward closer alliances and negotiations?

A. Of course, it was the first step, but a step which in that time had not been realized by the German and the Japanese public opinion.

Q. I understand that.

A. If it had been realized in such a way by the other nations, and if they considered this as a very serious step, I don't know.

Q. Are you familiar with the secret protocol to the Anti-Comintern Pact?

A. I never got it. We never got the secret protocol about the Anti-Comintern Pact. I heard later on that there was such a protocol existing.

Q. What is your understanding of the provisions of that secret protocol?

A. I heard later on that there is a secret protocol and I think there had been one provision, an exchange of military information. But the German Embassy here and our military attache never got this secret clause. We only had the order after the Anti-Comintern Pact to work in closer cooperation with the Japanese army exchanging information.

Q. There was a secret protocol to the Anti-Comintern Pact, and I believe, there was also a secret treaty in addition to the secret protocol.

A. Treaty?

Q. Yes, in addition to the secret protocol, is that not true?

A. About the details of the Anti-Comintern Pact my predecessor Ambassador Von Dirksen wasn't informed until the pact has been concluded. Then, as I know from him, he got the official published text and he didn't get secret parts. He found out later probably by some reference to secret parts from the Japanese side or the German side, this I don't know.

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We found out later that there were secret things included. He asked the German government to get this secret part, and he didn't get it. As I believe I got in that time the order to improve the exchange of information with the Japanese army and it may be of some interest that before the Anti-Comintern Pact had been concluded, I was taking part in maneuvers in Germany as military attache called back to be informed about the re-arming of the German army. I had asked for it because I was the only military man who didn't know the German arm compared with the Japanese who went to Germany on missions. I was called back for the maneuvers and on this occasion I had to meet Hitler during the maneuvers and he asked me on that occasion if I consider the Japanese army still so inferior in equipment and training as I had reported before. I told him I am very sorry not to be able to give a definite judgement because having no personal knowledge of the Japanese army I couldn't exchange information. The Japanese are only giving information if they get some too. To give you an exact judgement about the present situation, I asked to send a mission to Japan consisting out of experts of every new weapon; motorized, air force, and artillery. These people must be entitled to give some valuable information to the Japanese army. Such a mission of experts could work here for about three months. Then it would perhaps be possible to give you a judgement up-to-date. I can't do it now without such a mission. Hitler told me, all right. I think this is a wise advice and I will send a mission. After this speech, the Commander in Chief Gen. Von Fritsch summoned me and blamed me rather bitterly telling me it is impossible for him to send officers abroad, he needs all for the building up of the German army. I told him I am sorry but I will not be able to give you a judgement about Japanese military things. And I never got this mission. But they made a kind of substitute. That means they sent with the monthly courier coming through Siberia, a second courier who was an officer of the German army or navy who could act as a kind of expert. This courier was always an officer of the army or navy in order to accompany him and in order to have sent an officer here to inform the Embassy about the development of the German army; and to use him, if possible, as a kind of expert to exchange some information about his field of knowledge from the Japanese army. This officer stayed usually about one week only,

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then he had to go back so it was sometimes possible to have a visit together with him to some Japanese military establishment and to get some very scarce information. This was the situation of the exchange of information a fairly long time after the Anti-Comintern Pact. So, I really think it is a great exaggeration from the side of Ribbentrop. We attaches were always very much disappointed to learn only one-tenth of our own endeavor to be in contact with the Japanese army and navy.

- Q. I am addressing my question particularly to the statement of Ribbentrop in this report about the friendship of Japan being valuable in enabling Germany to re-arm. Now, addressing your thought again to that specific question, do you not believe that the Anti-Comintern Pact, the secret protocol attached thereto and the secret treaty that was entered into at the same time with Japan, would strengthen Germany's hand in its program of re-armament and that Ribbentrop was necessarily alluding to this fact in his conversation with Oshima?
- A. I have no facts in my memory which prove real strengthening of the German re-armament situation. If there had been a strengthening in the energy of the leading German people to go on, this is possible. But facts proving the strengthening are unknown to me.
- Q. You think that the value of Japan's friendship was more in the line of propoganda value and political value than actual military assistance?
- A. This was my opinion every time.
- Q. And that is your opinion in regard to Ribbentrop's statement which we are discussing?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Ribbentrop in this paragraph also outlines the value to Japan of German victories emphasizing particularly the ability of Japan to penetrate into English spheres of influence in China and also

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eliminating France in Indo-China. You do agree that that is a correct statement, do you not?

- Q. Concerning Indo-China yes, because the activity of Japan concerning Indo-China began after the defeat of France. There must have been of course close contact. Concerning the English spheres of interest in China: I personally think that advances of Japan in China had been rather separated from the events in Europe. The China war has been going on a long time ago and I don't remember very striking successes of Japan which had been made possible by the binding of English forces or the lesser support. Oh, yes, one thing. Great Britain had proposed to Japan to close the Burma Road obviously afraid that Japan would use it supplying via the Burma Road to Chiang Kai-shek as a reason for the conflict. So, by this closing the supply for Chian Kai-shek had been diminished considerably. This, of course, is a consequence of the whole situation in Europe too.
- Q. Ribbentrop in referring to Japan's moving south into British spheres of influence in China was alluding to the help that the Three Powers Pact gave Japan in the accomplishment of that action as shown in his statement here. In other words, do you agree that the execution of the Three Powers Pact strengthened Japan's arm in its action in China?
- A. I think it did.
- Q. Did not the mere fact of the execution of the Three Powers Pact also increase the strength of Japan's arm in its progress into Indo-China?
- A. I think the strength of the Japanese politics and arms had been strengthened by the conclusion of the Three Powers Pact generally.
- Q. And does it not also follow that the execution of that Pact strengthened Japan in its advance towards Singapore and in its attitude towards Singapore?
- A. This I think is true as a consequence of the Three Powers Pact.

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At the time of the conclusion of the Three Powers Pact, you remember by the diary of Konoye that Germany expressly excluded the assistance of Japan in the war against Britain. This was the first point of the summary that Konoye mentioned in his diary made by Matsuoka the night after our first meeting.

- Q. In the paragraph to which I alluded and which you have just read in the report of the conference between Ribbentrop and Oshima, Ribbentrop said, "England too was considerably weakened. Japan had been able to close in steadily on Singapore." Does that not clearly show that there was concerted action at this time between Germany and Japan to the extent of agreeing on the part of Germany to an advance against Singapore by Japan?
- A. As far as the official information given to the German Embassy in Tokyo, I refer to the warning made by State Secretary Von Waezsacker. As far as the Foreign Minister is concerned, this statement made to Oshima can mean that there had been an agreement with Japan introducing Japan into advance against Singapore. But it can also be considered that he takes the facts made in the meantime by Japan as a general picture that these facts are now enabling Japan to go against Singapore. These facts will probably consist out of first, the Japanese increasing invasion into Indo-China and secondly, the obvious closer cooperation Japan had effected with Thailand. Because it was at the time of this statement that Matsuoka was called a mediator between French Indo-China and Thailand concerning some border disputes and he made this mediation very much in favor of Thailand. So these are two facts and points where you can see a closer surrounding of Singapore. If this had been made by contact with the German government before, which we never heard about; or if Ribbentrop now summarized the facts as an advantage against Singapore--this may be left open.
- Q. You stated that the advance by Japan toward Singapore was rather in conflict with the German idea as expressed by Waezsacker; but that expression by Waezsacker was back in June or July of 1940 before the Three Powers Pact was concluded?
- A. And again given to me via the military attache Col. Kretschmer when he came to Japan in the beginning of December.
- Q. December 1940?
- A. Three months after the conclusion of the Three Powers Pact.
- Q. But all of that is inconsistent with Ribbentrop's telegram to you in

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February suggesting that you do all within your power to bring an attack upon Singapore by the Japanese?

A. Yes. This telegram must have been about the same date and same time as this statement. It was the first time I got such an order just contrary to the former attitude.

Q. When you consider the telegram which you received, in the light of the conversation between Ribbentrop and Oshima the picture is entirely clear to you isn't it?

A. Entirely clear.

Q. And that picture is what, according to your opinion? What does it indicate to you?

A. The position of the German government to bring Japan into the attack against Singapore. May I remark one thing? I just read some days ago in the newspaper that about the same time there had been an exchange of letters between Hitler and Mussolini where Hitler complained bitterly that Franco refused his claim to invade Spain in order to attack Gibraltar. I think we never had any information about that. I think that this too played a role in the sudden decision for the order to attack Singapore because it was, of course, then of more importance than before to draw British forces to the Indian Ocean in order to relieve the situation in the Mediterranean.

Q. What newspaper article are you referring to?

A. The Nippon Times, three or four days ago--a Madrid broadcast in defense of Franco's situation. First time that I heard it. But I think it may be taken into the general picture.

Q. In this same paragraph Ribbentrop refers to Germany and Japan being in the same boat and then later states that Oshima agreed to what he had said generally regarding these matters. Does that not also confirm your view of a united plan and joint action on the part of Germany and Japan?

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- A. If you can consider Oshima's standpoint as the standpoint of the Japanese government. This is not absolutely sure. Having read this, last night I thought it over and I found out as I remember that Oshima didn't give any word about the ideas of his government. He said he will do his best but not a word how he had been instructed by his government and this was his first meeting with the Foreign Minister. Coming back as Ambassador he must have given his instructions. No, not a word.
- Q. I recognize the logic of your statement. The question of whether or not Oshima was authorized to so act in behalf of Japan is another question.
- A. Yes, but this question involves, of course, also the official attitude of the Japanese government at that time.
- Q. Now, I want to ask you a question regarding another phase of German and Japanese cooperation as shown by this conference. Near the end of the paragraph next to the last paragraph it is stated, "the European-African Hemisphere under the leadership of Germany and Italy, and the East Asian sphere of interest under the leadership of Japan. As he conceived it, for example, Japan would conduct trade and make trade agreements directly with the independent states in the European Hemisphere, as heretofore, while Germany and Italy would trade directly and make trade agreements with the independent countries within the Japanese orbit of power such as China, Thailand, Indo-China, etc. Furthermore, as between the two economic spheres, each should fundamentally grant the other preferences with regard to third parties. The Ambassador expressed agreement with this thought." In other words, according to this conference, it was intended that upon the completion of the war the American continent would be isolated by giving preferential treatment as between the Asiatic Sphere and the European and African Sphere, that is correct, isn't it?
- A. I think so.
- Q. What discussions did you have with officials in Germany which would corroborate that statement?
- A. Ribbentrop mentioned this kind of general idea of economic structure in my first meeting with him but there were no conversations about details. Later on. And I think that the Foreign Office at that time

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was not yet ordered to work out detailed plans for that. It was a kind of vision of Ribbentrop. It is possible and probable that he talked in the same way with Matsuoka, he or Hitler, in the meetings I wasn't present. I remember later on when the war with Russia had broke out already for some time, I got the big instruction including these points, of course, with the change of Russia. About these instructions at that time I had a talk with, I think, Foreign Minister Togo.

Q. Will you give the date as nearly as you can?

A. It was in the time when Germany had just advanced quite near to Batum in the Caucasus. I remember it in this way because Togo nearly in the same idea as I had didn't go into any details about this matter, but his own sorrow in that time was how do you think you can really effectively conclude your war against Russia. And so the whole conversation turned to the first approach of Togo to me to give a hint to my government that Japan would be willing to negotiate with Russia. This is the only occasion where I remember that I had been ordered with a concrete discussion of those things with the Japanese government, but it didn't realize because the Japanese Foreign Minister was much more realistic and was occupied by the Russian situation and told me these are things to be discussed much later on. Now let us talk to the point.

Q. In other words, at the discussion of Ribbentrop you had attempted to confer with Togo on the subject matter we are now discussing; namely, trade alliances after the conclusion of the war. Can you fix a little more definitely the time when that occurred?

A. In 1942 when Germany had advanced close to the Caucasus. I think it was in the summer of 1942. It was the springtime offensive of 1942 and must have been in the summer of 1942. This is the only occasion where I remember to have had a discussion about the order but without any entrance into the details.

Q. Did you receive those directions by telegram?

A. Yes. This division of the world into spheres of economic domination,

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or economic influence--this had a name, it had been called a charter. At noon I think I can talk the matter over with Minister Boltze and we can find it out. I would like once more to stress that Oshima's report about Japanese government ideas and intentions are not given. This is remarkable. On all occasions with Gen. Oshima, very important.

Q. I now hand you Document #C75 which is a copy of Basic Order #24 bearing date of March 5, 1941, regarding collaboration with Japan and I will ask you to read it. It is two pages. (Handed to witness)

A. (Witness reads the Document)

Q. What comment do you have to make about that?

A. This is a clear statement about the intention of the German Government.

Q. It is likewise a clear statement of the purpose for which Germany intended to use the Three Powers Pact, is it not?

A. In that time, yes.

Q. In the light of that document, would you not say that it is perfectly plain to you now that the various messages received from Ribbentrop by you constituted an attempt to carry out the objects set forth in this basic order?

A. Yes, I suppose so.

Q. Is the same true with reference to Stahmer?

A. Stahmer left Japan after the conclusion of the Three Powers Pact, which orders he got afterwards, I don't know. The first order for me in compliance with this plan I consider a short telegram of February, to do my best to introduce Japan into the war against Singapore.

Q. And then you later had the specific direction from Hitler to do the same thing?

A. On my visit to Berlin--I mean the first order.

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- Q. In other words, this basic order by Hitler declares that the aim of cooperation between Germany and Japan was actually to induce Japan to active operations in the Far East, that is true, isn't it?
- A. At that time, yes.
- Q. The language of this order also is that the seizure of Singapore as key position of England in the Far East would mean a decisive success for the total conduct of the war of the Three Powers. That shows, does it not, that Hitler viewed this pact as one in which Japan and Germany had a joint interest in a military way?
- A. Yes.
- Q. There was a joint understanding that the pact was to be used in a military way?
- A. I do not know if you can conclude this because this is a one-sided Germany draft.
- Q. I preface my statement by the fact that Hitler considered it so?
- A. Yes, this is obvious.
- Q. I want also to call to your attention that this order states that a date for operative conversations cannot yet be determined. That indicates definitely that it was decided that such operative conversations would take place?
- A. That means it was decided from the German side to ask the Japanese for that, but it shows in the same time that there had been never such discussions with the Japanese before.
- Q. That is, discussions in which you took part?
- A. Yes.
- Q. To what extent are you familiar with the Barbarossa enterprise?
- A. I am not informed about it. I think probably by hearsay that it has

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been the plan for attacking Gibraltar.

Q. Gibraltar?

A. I think so, yes, but I am not sure. May be even the plan of attacking Russia which was probably fixed already at that time. Perhaps you may ask our military attache, it is possible that he has knowledge about this Barbarossa plan--maybe he got sometimes information later on. Is it not here written that this plan should be kept secret toward the Japanese? Probably we too did not get any information in order that it doesn't leak out.

Q. I understand. But has any information come to you since that time that would enable you to know what the Barbarossa plan was?

A. No, but I think it came to the Embassy later on, maybe in later years when there was no reason more for keeping it secret. So probably the military attache knows it. I think it had been the plan of Gibraltar, because the Russian question is not mentioned at all in this statement. So I don't think that they used the name Barbarossa for a thing which they didn't mention at all in the plan. I think it was the plan for taking Gibraltar.

Q. This order is signed by Keitel. What position did he occupy?

A. He occupied the position of the Commander in Chief of the Fuehrer's military headquarters. He was the assistant of the Fuehrer in the coordination of the three armed forces; army, navy, and air forces and responsible for all operations. That means as advisor of Hitler. This draft gives you a proof about what I said concerning the military cooperation between the Japanese and Germans. Here too, the main fact, the main weight is placed upon giving to the Japanese the German war experience and it is said that even if we can't get much, we don't mind it. And there is another thing in the statement. I have to change to a certain extent my statement about the commissions of the Three Powers Pact. I told you the other day that they had been formed in December. But here it is stated the commissions to be formed, so I think this December meeting was only a formal meeting to discuss the formation of the commissions; at that time they were not yet formed, as you see. And it was in line with what I told you that Germany was very anxious to keep

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the main questions in the hands of the Foreign Minister because here too, these commissions are exclusively meant for having discussions about economic warfare.

- Q. In Article 4 of this document dealing with military commissions this language is used, "The working out of the details is the responsibility of the main commission with the cooperation of the armed forces high command."
- A. But, before, I think there is the words "to be formed."
- Q. That is true.
- A. It was called to my attention by Minister Boltze about these commissions. There was some confusion, about the meeting in April as I told you. It was impossible to have the commission meeting here because neither Matsuoka nor I were present at that time. I came back, it is true, on the 21st of April from Berlin, but Matsuoka came only on the 27th or 28th and was sick then. So it was impossible, and probably I made a mistake.
- Q. But there are two types of commissions in this Article 4. The first is the military commission to be formed and the second is that alluded to in the quotation that I just gave now, "the main commission." Now, what was the "main commission"?
- A. The main commission was a commission consisting out of the Foreign Minister of the respective countries and the two Ambassadors of the partners; assisted from time to time by some experts as here mentioned.
- Q. So, according to the language I quoted, the responsibility of working out the detail was that of the main commission with the cooperation of the armed forces High Command. In other words, the Foreign Ministers and the High Commands should work out the military details?
- A. The main commission or main commissions?
- Q. In the singular.
- A. This is for Germany and the armed forces High Command is Keitel himself.

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- Q. Then, who would be the members of the main commission?
- A. The members of the main commission mentioned here would be Ribbentrop, Oshima, Alfieri, and Keitel.
- Q. I hand you now Document C-152, a top military secret document, relating to a conference on behalf of the C-in-C, which I assume is Commander-in-Chief of the Navy with Hitler on March 18, at which conference Chief of the OKW, General Jodl, was present and I will ask you to read it. It is one page in length.
- A. (Witness reads document)
- Q. What comment do you desire to make in regard to that document?
- A. Regarding the first part, Greece?
- Q. No, I mean the part concerning Japan.
- A. The second part. It shows the determined opinion of Rader that Japan has to be introduced to attack Singapore and that he had about this question entered into contact with Admiral Nomura. But in that time obviously Rader was informed about the German ideas concerning Russia, and that it may be on his advice partly that this question had been mentioned to a certain extent to Matsuoka.
- Q. I call your attention particularly to this language: "Japan is indeed making preparations for this action,"--referring to the action against Singapore, "but according to all declarations made by Japanese officers, she will only carry it out if Germany proceeds to land in England. Germany must therefore concentrate all her efforts in spurring Japan to act immediately." Now, with what Japanese officers could such conferences have been carried on?
- A. In that time in Germany were, as I mentioned before, two big military and naval commissions. The one under the leadership of General Yamashita; the other one the naval mission under the leadership of Admiral Nomura.

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Q. Who were other members of those commissions?

A. I remember of the Yamashita commission, General Sato or Kato--I can't remember correctly. From the Nomura mission there was Admiral Abe. About the other officers, I don't remember the names. Maybe our attaches have it more in mind. Anynow, there were commissions of specially qualified officers and it is quite possible that they had talks about this question with Rader because they had left Japan just recently around Christmas or the New Year, 1940.

Q. Were those commissions still in Germany when you left Germany for Japan?

A. Yes. If I remember correctly, they came back about in June. I personally met Admiral Nomura in the hotel in Berlin--at the Adlon Hotel--one of the last days of March where he made a formal visit and on this occasion told me obviously impressed that he had seen very strong German submarine buildings on the French Coast. So he believed that the submarine warfare of Germany will be a very effective one in the next time.

Q. In the next time?

A. In the next time when he came to me because this building was going on. I don't remember any other conversations with him about the Far Eastern questions because I didn't know if he was especially entitled for such a thing.

Q. Did you have discussions with Yamashita?

A. No. I have not seen him. I think he was still making a trip in the occupied districts in the battlefields at that time, I think so.

Q. What other conversations did you have to indicate that conversations were being had between members of the military and naval commissions and members of the Chief of Staff of the German army?

A. I had no indications for that and it is possible that until the arrival of Matsuoka and his talks with Ribbentrop and Hitler, there may have been no concrete discussions about these questions. This what Rader mentioned had been remarked often by Japanese officers in these

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quite theoretical talks about possible activity of Japan. Then always it was a kind of slogan, but of course, if Japan would act in some way, it is only possible if Germany has landed in England. This had been the slogan of nearly every Japanese, not only officers, but civilian people too, because it was the time were every people looked with great attention to the future because of the war. There was France defeated and a kind of stop in the military actions except the African war going on, so everybody asked themselves; now will the war go on in landing in England.

Q. How long before Matsuoka left Japan on his trip to Germany was it that you extended, or the German government extended its formal invitation to Matsuoka to come to Germany?

A. It may be three weeks or one month before he started. His visit was delayed a little by his role as mediator between Thailand and France, so he had to postpone his departure one or two times. He eventually departed, as I remember, on the 15th or 16th of March. And I think the invitation had been sent about the middle of February, maybe a little later, maybe a little earlier.

INTERROGATION OF
Major General Eugene Ott

Date and Time : 19 March 1946, 0930-1200 hours.
1400-1645 hours
Place : Room 619, Meiji Building, Tokyo, Japan.
Present : Major General Eugene Ott
Mr. Frank S. Tavenner, Jr., Interrogator
Miss Gizella Koncz, Stenographer

Questions by Mr. Tavenner:

General Ott: May I correct about the Barbarossa plan? I had been informed by my former military attache that the Barbarossa plan was the name for the Russian campaign program. He heard it some time later after the war had broken out. And one other thing about the commissions. The military attache doesn't remember any session of the military commission of the Three Powers Pact until the year 1943 where twice this commission met here in Tokyo. So at the meeting I sought to remember in April, obviously had been only a kind of demonstrative meeting of the Foreign Minister with two ambassadors. If military people from our side had been joining, I am not sure and the military attache tells me that he can't remember.

Q. However, meetings of the German branch of the commission could have been held without your knowledge?

A. It could have been without my knowledge.

Q. In fact the report of the conference between Raeder and Hitler shows that the Japanese military officials had been consulted in regard to preparations for attack on Singapore, does it not?

A. I think so, because he refers to the opinion of Admiral Nomura and Raeder in his statement refers to some opinion of Nomura. I think this is not constructive proof of the meeting of these commissions because, as I already mentioned, in that time it was a common remark of the Japanese people speaking theoretically of such a possibility that they always stressed the necessity that Germany had acted in the same time or before, so it could be also mentioning the common opinion of the Japanese officers brought to him by this big staff he had in Germany.

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Q. But if Raedar refers to a conversation of Admiral Nomura who was head of the military commission, that would indicate official talks on the subject as distinguished from mere expression of general opinion?

A. I think so.

Q. The telegram directing you to bring Japan into conflict with England by an attack on Singapore, the basic order #24 signed by Keitel setting forth the Fuehrer's order that it must be the aim of the collaboration based on the Three Powers Pact to induce Japan to take active measures in the Far East and to seize Singapore, the conference with Hitler in which Raeder stressed the importance of immediate seizure of Singapore by the Japanese and in which he referred to Japan's making preparations for this action, and the conference between Oshima and Ribbentrop make it clear that Germany had embarked on a plan to bring Japan into conflict with England in the Far East by an attack on Singapore, is that not true?

A. This is true.

Q. This decision or plan on the part of Germany existed before your trip to Germany, did it not?

A. Obviously.

Q. Ambassador Oshima, from the report of the conversation with Ribbentrop, had made it clear that he approved of Germany's plan and that he would do all he could to bring about the desired results, that is true is it not?

A. After the copy of the interview I have seen, it is true.

Q. Now, that describes the situation that existed when you made your trip to Germany and when Matsuoka made his trip to Germany?

A. Yes.

Q. Did Ribbentrop make an appointment with you for a conference immediately upon your arrival in Germany?

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- A. I think he had already left for Vienna to prepare the signature of Yugoslavia to the Three Powers Pact, so I got an order from him to accompany the official German and Japanese people going to Vienna by a special train in order to be at his disposal if he finds time during that day in Vienna to have a conference with me or going back from Vienna to Berlin in order to have a talk with me before Matsuoka arrives.
- Q. Now, having refreshed your recollection regarding many things and having also shown you documents which clearly explain the German plan at that time, will you now tell me all that took place in your conversation with Ribbentrop on the train as you returned to Berlin?
- A. The first contact I had with the Foreign Minister was the dinner in his special car in the train with common conversation in the presence of some of his younger staff people. At the end of this dinner, I think, we were for a moment alone and I used this opportunity to tell him that I was very much surprised and upset by the rumors coming to me from many sources about imminent danger of a German-Russian conflict.
- Q. Did not Ribbentrop make some remark to you before you broached the subject of Russia?
- A. I don't believe, and he didn't reply in a direct way. He had not given me any confirmation or any clear statement about the situation. After this remark he finished the dinner and told me I may wait to be called to his salon to refer to him about Japan. Sometime afterwards I was called and I met him alone. And, as far as I can remember, he asked my ideas about the Japanese possibilities of attacking Singapore. I used this opportunity which I had been waiting for after having got this short telegram which I had not executed, to tell him about in the same line as my report given to the German government after this so-called study of Lt. Gen. Kretschmer what we had found out in that time; that means the probable success of a Japanese attack, the advantage for Germany concerning drawing British forces from the Mediterranean and Europe to an outer post of the British Empire; stressing the disadvantages that Japan could not wage a long war owing to her lack of resources of the war industries and owing to

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the great menace to the Japanese rear from the side of American forces. If America would not enter the war, but I stressed as the main disadvantage the probable entrance of America into the war as contrary to our previous intention of the Three Powers Pact. I think I mentioned a talk I had before I started to Germany with the then Vice-Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Kondo, which I had tried to find out his ideas of the situation of the Japanese navy in the event of an advance to the south which had so many times been talked about in every circle. Kondo in that time was very reluctant and especially afraid that the navy would have great difficulties by the American submarines and airplanes. It is possible, I am not sure, that I had a map with me to explain the situation because it had been my intention to ask the foundations, the principles upon which this order I mentioned to introduce Japan, had been based and so probably I had a map with me. I asked the other day our military attache if he had prepared such a map for me; he told me no. He doesn't know about any map. I have not had the chance to ask the air attache, Gen. Von Gronau, if he had assisted me in preparing such a map. I think in that conversation Ribbentrop must have stressed the idea of his as expressed in so many documents you have shown me about attacking Singapore as he had ordered me and I think he refused the idea that America would enter the war. I think he used the argument I met in one of those documents, I think especially in the interview with Oshima, that he thinks America would be terrified to enter the war. But this opinion, I, personally, never shared. These are the details of the conversation which I believe had been made. After the conversation he asked me to give him a short dictation about the main points of the Japanese possibilities to attack Singapore. I tried in vain to remember the correct contents of this statement which I made very late in the night and which I had no copy of in my hands. I think it was in this line I just mentioned and giving the ideas of Kondo too. I had been asked before if I mentioned Sugiyama too, Vice Chief of the General Staff. This I don't remember and I asked the military attache, who I always called when I had a talk about military questions and he doesn't know about such a conversation with Sugiyama. So, it may be possible that I just had a brief talk with Sugiyama during an official meeting but I am sorry I can't remember it and I can't say if Sugiyama had been asked by me and if he had given any opinion. It is, from the side of Sugiyama unusual, because he was especially reluctant and

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silent. But it may be possible, I can't tell you.

Q. Do you recall in that conversation or in your notes having alluded to a demand by Japan that Germany guarantee her against an attack in the rear by Russia?

A. No.

Q. Do you remember in your conversation with Ribbentrop or by having made notes for Ribbentrop that the matter of Japan needing airbases in Indo-China was discussed or mentioned?

A. By me or with the Japanese?

Q. By you.

A. It is possible that I mentioned it because from a military point of view the airbases in Indo-China seemed a necessary foundation, a necessary pre-requisite, for a successful attack against Singapore. So, it may be possible I had been asked about it or I mentioned it myself.

Q. Do you recall that you did discuss that matter with Ribbentrop? I am not asking if it was possible, I am asking whether in fact you did have such a discussion with Ribbentrop?

A. (Long pause) I don't recall what I discussed with him about this matter, but I believe that the discussion has been extended to this question because this question was of a special importance for the successful attack.

Q. Now, the question of time within which Japan could be prepared for such an attack was also a matter of vital importance, was it not?

A. Of course.

Q. Did you discuss that matter?

A. In a previous question it was mentioned from your side that the

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preparedness of Japan was for the end of May. I tried to find out if I had given such a date and on which basis. The basis for such a date, which I can't recall having fixed from my side, if it had been made after your documents, it would be, as I have found out in my conversation with the military attache, that he in that time of this study reckoned that the Japanese would need three months from the beginning of transportations until the moment when the troops and the necessary preparations could be ready for an attack. So, because this study mentioned, had been made in the end of January--February, March, April--this is a coincidence with this date of May. It is possible, this may be the basis.

Q. You are certain that your study of the problem in January resulted in a conclusion that it would take about three months for Japan to be ready for an attack on Singapore?

A. I personally didn't recall this time, but I had been told by the military attache that he mentioned it during the study. If this had been reported to the government too, this is probable because this is of some importance.

Q. A matter of that importance must certainly have been discussed between you and Ribbentrop who was inquiring about the preparedness of Japan for an attack on Singapore.

A. I think so--I can't recall--but I think you are right. I would like to stress once more that neither I nor the military attache recall exact conversations with the Japanese about such a date. So I believe now that when I discussed it with Ribbentrop, which I think had been done, it has been based upon our own ideas and opinions found out in this study.

Q. What further conversation took place between you and Ribbentrop on this general subject at that time?

A. In this moment?

Q. Yes.

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A. I don't recall more exact details but I think that on that occasion there would have been a questioning of Ribbentrop about the rear of the Japanese concerning Russia. It must have been, I think. In our study we considered that the Japanese wouldn't engage troops from Manchuria to the south because they had to secure their rear against the possible attack of the Russian side. So in the study we reckoned that Manchuria has to be kept safe against such an attack and probably I declared to Ribbentrop that we think the Japanese are taking the necessary measures in Manchuria to defend themselves against possible attack. About a guarantee from our side, I don't remember that that had been asked for or discussed.

Q. Is there any other point that you discussed with Ribbentrop at this time?

A. (No answer)

Q. What questions did Ribbentrop ask you which have not been included in the answers you have already given?

A. (Long pause) I cannot recall. By your further questioning I try to recall the possibilities of such a speech. Maybe that Ribbentrop-- but this I only can give as a faint possibility--asked me if the Japanese submarines would be able to interfere with the shipping in the Indian Ocean of Australia towards the Mediterranean, which was in that time of a certain importance. It was the beginning of sending reinforcements from Australia and India to Egypt where we were specially interested owing to the very changing fighting in North Africa. This may be possible.

Q. In his discussion with you about Singapore, did the discussion extend to the ultimate question of Japan attacking Australia?

A. No.

Q. What directions did Ribbentrop give you at the conclusion of your conference?

A. He may have repeated his order to do my best as ordered before.

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I don't recall it in this moment and because the visit of Matsuoka was imminent he may have refrained in this moment from directions because he had a chance to talk those matters over with the responsible Japanese Foreign Minister.

Q. Did he at any later time during your visit in Germany repeat his instructions to you to use your efforts in bringing Japan into an attack on Singapore?

A. He did. At the end of this talk I told you about propaganda in the Potsdam Castle, where after having spoken in a very long time about building up of a bigger propaganda which he meant especially to foster the German mindedness of the Japanese people, he eventually told me, "You have this order and you have to do your best to introduce Japan." Some days later Hitler repeated it once more to me in his farewell orders.

Q. By introducing Japan you meant bringing Japan into the war against England by an attack on Singapore?

A. Yes.

Q. It appears then that the talk of increased propaganda was directed toward military operations and not merely to improve German-Japanese relations generally?

A. This is a logical conclusion. But the way he gave me his ideas about building up of a propaganda was such a fantastic one that this building of a big hall would have needed about a year--so it is not in a logical line with an immediate military propaganda.

Q. Did Ribbentrop during the conference we are discussing state anything with regard to his anticipated conference with Matsuoka?

A. No, but it was a matter of course that having this conversation before that he probably would talk this matter over with Matsuoka too. How he executed it later on I don't know, except that he may have it mentioned in the first meeting with Matsuoka where I was present. But, as I explained already once, this conversation had been eventually brought to a sudden end and had been over-shadowed by the dramatic events with Jugoslavia.

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Q. Did you see Ribbentrop again privately before the conference between Hitler and Matsuoka?

A. No.

Q. Did you see him again privately before the conference between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka?

A. No.

Q. How long after your conference on the train was it that the conference between Hitler and Matsuoka took place?

A. I found a calendar of the year 1941 and I tried to fix the date of my arrival in Berlin and the arrival of Matsuoka. I think there was a difference of three or four days. This talk in the night train to Berlin took place the night of the signature of Yugoslavia which could probably be fixed by you. I think it had been on the 24th and as I believe Matsuoka arrived in Berlin the day after that and may have had his first meeting with Hitler one day later. So there was a time difference of two days in which I didn't see anybody more.

Q. Did the conference between Hitler and Matsuoka take place on the same day that the conference between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka occurred or were they on separate days?

A. Maybe on two days.

Q. The first of those conferences was the conference between Hitler and Matsuoka, was it not?

A. I think so.

Q. You attended that conference?

A. Yes.

Q. At whose invitation?

A. I think of Hitler's.

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Q. Who else were present?

A. But I was told to be present by the Foreign Minister, but I think the presence of the people attending such a conversation had been ordered usually by Hitler himself. Present on this occasion was from the German side, Hitler, Ribbentrop, Meihssner (he was Chief of the Reich Chancellery), myself, and Ambassador Stahmer. From the Japanese side, Matsuoka and Oshima.

Q. Now, after you have had more time to reflect upon these conferences and consider the questions that were involved, are you prepared to make a more complete statement of what occurred at that conference between Hitler and Matsuoka?

A. I tried to recall more details about this conversation, but in my memory is lasting a general impression of this conversation which was a kind of not concrete first approaching each other where the Fuehrer took the opportunity of mention towards Matsuoka the tension newly created between Germany and Russia with about the following words, "Our relations to Russia are correct but not friendly. There would be a danger of conflict only if Russia would dare to oppose the claims of Germany in Europe which Stalin will not dare to do." This remark of the Fuehrer, obviously influenced by the advisors as it is to be seen in the preliminary conversations with Keitel and Raedar, but he doesn't go further. Matsuoka and myself were impressed by this remark and Matsuoka tried to find out if there is a real danger of conflict. It was one of his main objects during his days in Berlin. I could refer to that later on probably. I don't remember that the Fuehrer mentioned in that occasion his dates of Japan attacking Singapore. Matsuoka himself referred to the Japanese politics in a very vague way and in a very long conversation and stressing especially his ideas of Hakku Ighu. But even for me being long in Japan, it is difficult to give you the sense of this idea--to bring to mankind the pleasure of the Japanese idea of the family, of peace, and the family of nations. Hitler became a little annoyed because it took much more time than he had expected and we heard in our conference hall the noise of the people assembled in the big meeting place outside of the Reich Chancellery and eventually the Fuehrer asked Matsuoka to come with him to the balcony of the Reich Chancellery. He went

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out with Matsuoka on one side and Oshima on the other side to be enthusiastically greeted by the Germans assembled since one hour. After the conference Matsuoka went back to his official residence and a little uncertain if he had met the right atmosphere by his conversation. He asked me, "Do you think it was a useful conversation from my side?" He never asked me such a thing before. I told him, "I am very glad that Hitler has seen the general ideas of a Japanese statesman," because I felt it necessary for Hitler to see this not concrete political ideas of a leading Japanese, which were after my experience in a certain contrast to the very straight words Oshima used to take regarding Japan and Oshima, I think, the day after that conversation told me rather upset, "Now you see that I had been right in telling you in Japan before I left that a visit of Matsuoka is not useful because he is only troubling the ideas of the Fuehrer by vague words, and I think it is better to exclude ambassadors from the other talks." Obviously because he considered that the statements of Matsuoka would hurt his clear-cut attitude, and eventually this influence of Oshima, I think, lead to the order that a further conversations had to be made without the presence of the ambassadors, except the next one with Ribbentrop.

- Q. Did any other person take part in the conversation when Hitler was present?
- A. If any, then only in unimportant matters. Usually if the Fuehrer spoke, nobody could speak more.
- Q. That brings us up to the conference between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka. Who were present at that conference?
- A. I believe I was present and present too were Stahmer, Oshima--oh, yes, present too was the interpreter who was always present, Schmidt. He was the official interpreter always accompanying Hitler in his conferences with foreign people because Hitler didn't speak a foreign language. So I think he had to translate the English talking of Matsuoka and the German talking of Hitler. And he is the man who had to make the records which I have not seen.

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Q. Explain a little more in detail the practice of making records of conferences.

A. The practice of making records of conferences had been as I think-- I have not been officially informed about it--that Schmidt made short notations in order to give him a chance to translate it and after the conference he put his short notations in an elaborate way on record. So if the records are in every word the exact wording of the conferences, this I don't know. I never have seen that he made a shorthand writing of the full text.

Q. German Staff officers were also trained, were they not, in the duty of reducing to writing after a conference the substance of the topic of conversation?

A. Yes.

Q. Was that a general practice of the staff officers?

A. Usually there had been made a kind of Aufzeichnung about the main contents of such a conversation and this Aufzeichnung had been taken to the official documents. I learned this practice later on as used mostly by Weizsaecker, the Secretary of State. For instance, as you have seen in this Aufzeichnung about his conversation with Kurusu. But the people present in the Fuehrer's conversations were not ordered to make such a kind of memorandum. This was the duty, as I know, of the official interpreter Schmidt. These records of the whole conversations between Matsuoka and Hitler and Ribbentrop had been claimed by Matsuoka in a telegram to me when he started, after the neutrality pact with Stalin, from Moscow to Japan. Then he sent a telegram to me, that he might have the records immediately sent to Japan about his conversations with Hitler and Ribbentrop. Of course, to enable him to have a written document in his hands. I gave this claim of Matsuoka to the German government without getting any reply.

Q. Do you know whether or not such a record was sent directly to Matsuoka?

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- A. I don't know, but I don't think so because I heard later on that it is a practice sometimes annoying the partners of the conversations that Hitler refused to give records of his own speeches. Matsuoka didn't come back to his claim when I told him that I asked my government about the records and I hadn't got a reply.
- Q. Of course, the same request could have been made by his representative in Berlin, Ambassador Oshima?
- A. Sure. Probably it had been made, but owing to the practice I heard about, probably without success. I remember especially that on all occasions Weizsaecker wasn't present.
- Q. Now having had an opportunity for further reflection and thought on the subject of the conference between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka, on the first occasion of the conference between them in Berlin, will you now state your recollection of it?
- A. (Long pause) In the light of the documents you have shown to me about the preliminary conferences of Hitler with his advisors and the talk Ribbentrop made to me, I believe it nearly certain, without recalling the fact exactly, that Ribbentrop asked Matsuoka for the Japanese entrance into the war against Great Britain. I had been told in this connection by Minister Boltze and Councillor of the Legation, Von Marchtaler, that Matsuoka should have replied that he will take over the matter after his return with the government. I personally don't recall this answer of Matsuoka, and during my time in Berlin with Matsuoka, I had no following conversation with Matsuoka about this question. It may be that Matsuoka considered himself obliged to be silent about a further conversation between him and our leading statesman. The main thing I remember as a consequence also of this conversation was his endeavor to find out that if there is really an imminent conflict with Russia. This question was, in my opinion, more important for him at that present time than the question of Singapore. I am sorry not being able to recall more details of this conversation and I think it was comparatively short by the interruptions.
- Q. Let me refresh your memory by reading to you excerpts from this conversation which occurred on March 27 at which Ribbentrop, Matsuoka, yourself and Oshima were reported as being present.

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A. Stahmer too, as I believe.

Q. Do you think Stahmer was present at that first conference?

A. I think so, I am not absolutely sure, but I think so.

Q. "Ribbentrop speaks throughout reviewing successful U-boat Atlantic campaign, ridiculing the Alte Klamotten of the American aircraft. He says that Hitler is much interested in the question of Japanese active war against England; a quick attack on Singapore would, he believes, bring a rapid conclusion." Does that refresh your recollection?

Q. I can't recall it, but it is coincident with the ideas announced to me before. This about "old stuff" about American airplanes, he never mentioned before, but it has been, I am sorry, his opinion.

Q. Do you not recall that Ribbentrop mentioned Hitler's view about the advisability of Japan coming into the war against England and do you not recall the thought being expressed that Japan make a quick attack on Singapore to bring the war to a rapid conclusion?

A. (Long pause) I can confirm that it has been Ribbentrop's opinion. That he talked in this way I considered it nearly certain, but I can't recall the exact talk.

Q. Do you recall the general trend of the conversation being in accordance with that quotation without descending to particulars; do you now recall that the subject matter was discussed?

A. I think I can recall it.

Q. I will now ask you if this quotation refreshes your recollection on another point of the conversation: "This would put Roosevelt in a very difficult position. In a practical way it would be very difficult for him to start anything against Japan. In case Roosevelt should undertake anything against Japan he should be aware of the fact that the problem of the Philippines would be solved according

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to the Japanese desire. This would create such a loss of prestige for the President that he could probably not consider any action against Japan for a long time." Does this refresh your recollection on this point?

- A. It refreshes my recollection that it has been the idea of Ribbentrop of terrifying America. I don't recall the exact words.
- Q. Do you now recall after I have read this portion of the excerpts from the conference that this general matter was discussed although you are unable to recall the particulars of the matter?
- A. I found to my surprise in the recollection given to me by Minister Boltze and Marchtaler who had heard it later on not by me, but by Minister Kordt, who was in that time present in Berlin and waiting for his departure as Councillor of the Embassy to Tokyo. He was the successor of Minister Boltze and who was in close personal contact with the before mentioned interpreter Schmidt, that Matsuoka should have given this reply as before mentioned, he would talk over the matter with the Japanese government. I personally can't recall this answer given by Matsuoka. But the information coming from this side has a great degree of the truth.
- Q. Your answer related to a reply of Matsuoka. My question was whether or not you recall that such a discussion regarding Roosevelt took place in which the Philippines were mentioned?
- A. No, this I don't recall.
- Q. Now, I desire to read you another portion of the excerpts which may refresh your mind. It is as follows: "On the other side, this conquest of Singapore would give Japan absolute over-lordship in this part of East Asia and conclusively cut the Godrian knot of the East Asian problem."
- A. I remember having heard Ribbentrop making such a speech. If it is recorded on this occasion, I think it had been made at this time.

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- Q. You have already described how Ribbentrop was required to leave the meeting. Was there any conversation after he left the meeting? In other words, did the meeting continue for a short time or did the meeting end at the time that Ribbentrop left?
- A. As far as I remember the meeting, we had been waiting for a short time to see if the Foreign Minister comes back. And eventually, I think, we were told that there is no more conversation today owing to a sudden important event.
- Q. Did you discuss the matter further in Ribbentrop's absence?
- A. No, we didn't.
- Q. Do you recall that the following matters were alluded to during that conference: That Germany in warring against England had calculated on American aid to England and that America has three alternatives; 1. To arm itself, 2. To help England, and 3. Fight at some other place.
- A. I am surprised to hear those details.
- Q. You do not recall them? Do you recall that Matsuoka took the standpoint that as soon as the European war started, Japan must attack Singapore and end British influence in that area?
- A. No.
- Q. You have no recollection of that?
- A. I have definitely no recollection. My recollection to this conversation is really a very general one and I am surprised to hear so many details about America and to hear this reply of Matsuoka. And having got this information coming obviously on the side of the interpreter Schmidt to my Councillor Kordt about a promise of Matsuoka to talk over the matter with his government, I should think that if Matsuoka made such a reply which is much more important and decisive than the other one, that Schmidt should have mentioned it to my source Minister Kordt too.

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Q. Is Minister Kordt in Japan now?

A. He had been called to Washington by the American government in the end of December after having many questions in Shanghai and as far as I know sent to Germany, it seems to me, in a kind of advising expert to the American forces. His whereabouts in this moment, I do not know but he had been in Washington about Christmas time of 1945.

Q. The record shows that a conference was held between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka on the following day, March 28, 1941. Were you present?

A. No.

Q. Do you have any knowledge of what occurred at that conference?

A. No.

Q. In order that your picture of the situation may be more accurate, I am going to read you certain excerpts from that conference:
"Ribbentrop: Now two of the strongest countries in the world who possess a young, powerful and fearless spirit are given a chance which comes only once in a thousand years.

"Ribbentrop: U.S.A. will have to stay on its own continent; Japan-- Far East; Germany with Italy--Europe and Africa. Russia will have to be watched closely. Russia could not come into the Three Powers Pact. Germany handles Russia dilatorily and watches it carefully. Matsuoka, you must be prepared for eventualities; Germany will destroy Russia if Stalin's politics do not harmonize."

A. The beginning of this speech of Ribbentrop is completely in line with his usual terms of expression, especially the "thousand years", and the "young and fearless" nation he always used in considering Japan and Italy.

Q. "Matsuoka: It does not want long war with America. If Japan occupies Philippines, Roosevelt's prestige would get a severe blow. If Japan

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conquers Singapore, the greater part of the world would be under the control of the Three Powers Pact and America would find itself in an isolated position." There was another conference on March 29 between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka. Were you present?

A. No.

Q. Karinhall--is that a place or a building?

A. This is the residence of Goering.

Q. Goering is marked as being present at this conference.

A. Between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka and Goering?

Q. Are you certain you were not present?

A. I had been in the conference at Karinhall but Ribbentrop was not present. It was an invitation of Matsuoka to meet Goering in Karinhall.

Q. When the initials RAM are used, to what does that refer?

A. Reich Aussen Minister, which means Reich Foreign Minister.

Q. I find that I am in error. The reference to Ribbentrop is in connection with the paragraph that precedes the one that I had in mind. So I desire to correct that. The Foreign Minister was not present at this conference. What occurred at this conference which I see occurred on March 29, 1941?

A. It was a big, official dinner and a show of Goering's art treasures and luxurious life in Karinhall. Before the dinner, there was a short conference between Goering, Matsuoka, myself--if Oshima was present or somebody else, this I don't know. In this conference, Goering spoke in his capacity as the man of responsibility for the air forces and for the war supply of Germany, about the mutual cooperation.

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Q. Cooperation in what way?

A. In exchange of the technical assistance as provided for in the Three Powers Pact.

Q. And also as provided in Basic Order #24?

A. Yes. I recall that Goering asked for Japanese supply of essential war materials such as rubber and, I think, tungsten and asked Matsuoka if the Japanese could give any important invention to Germany regarding war industry. Matsuoka mentioned a Japanese invention concerning steel production. I think it has the name of Mishima steel production. An invention known generally in the world as a rather important improvement of a special sort of steel, but which had not until now been presented to foreign nations. And Goering promised from his own behalf that the German experiences about dive bombers could be given to Japan if possible, by sending some experts in this matter to the Japanese air forces. If this conversation had been made on the exact base of a cooperation towards Singapore, this I don't recall. As far as I remember, I think it was technical conversation about details of an improvement of the, until that time, rather lacking exchange of military details.

Q. General Ott, in view of the extensive plans and purposes of Germany in bringing Japan into the war with England, do you seriously think that these ideas of cooperation were merely that of an exchange of information as distinguished from information vital in the waging of war?

A. Surely not. But I don't recall that Goering stressed the question of Singapore.

Q. Let me read you this excerpt from that conference:

A. (Interrupting.) I think Schmidt was present too.

Q. "Goering: Germany will give Japan its bombing methods knowledge. If Japan enters the fateful way of a great power in the Far East, so must it, as do all political men who reach a great goal achieve

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it only through war. Germany will help Japan in the future fully and entirely under such circumstances." Does that not mean, General, that the conversation was pointed at military cooperation in the proposed conflict between Japan and England?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you not now recall that such a conversation took place and that this conversation was directed toward military cooperation in the proposed conflict?

A. Yes.

INTERROGATION ADJOURNED AT 1200

RESUMED AT 1400

Q. What are the duties of the Foreign Minister in Japan as you conceive them to be?

A. The duties of the Foreign Minister in Japan are to cultivate the foreign relations; to act upon the orders of the Emperor or the government in corresponding to foreign relations and to present his own advisors to the Cabinet. He has to take the responsibility for his word towards the Parliament.

Q. Do you consider that in Japan the Foreign Minister is principally responsible for the foreign policies?

A. He is principally responsible for the foreign policies as far as these policies have to be executed. He is dependent in matters of importance, that means treaties, upon the decision of the government; to the Emperor in matters of paramount importance. His activity is in reality always been limited to a certain extent by the strong influence of the army and navy upon political matters and their possibility to approach the Emperor directly. So it had many times been a kind of struggle between the Foreign Minister and the armed forces in the question of politics.

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- Q. I notice so frequently from messages sent by the Foreign Minister to the Ambassadors and from messages from the Ambassadors to the Foreign Minister reference to the fact that the information was reported to the military and naval authorities. This bears out your conclusion that there is a close alliance in the work of the Foreign Office between the Foreign Minister and the Military and Naval aids.
- A. A close alliance when the Foreign Minister is not opposed in his politics by the army and navy, but if the Foreign Minister is not a man convenient to the armed forces this information given to the military and naval authorities when it sometimes had been just to limit his activity, if it had been given by some ambassador or by his staff. There had been, after my opinion, a special fault in the Japanese Constitution that the famous Meiji Rescript gives to the heads of the army and navy the right of immediate reporting to the Emperor. So the Foreign Minister is many times not informed if from those sides there are politics prosecuted which may be not known to him or not in line with his politics. For instance, this concerns Shidehara, the present Prime Minister. When he was Foreign Minister his politics were opposed by army and, I think so, by the navy too. Later on he found sometimes a kind of conflict between army and navy or army at least and the Foreign Minister Arita which proved itself for instance, in the negotiations Arita made with the British government and which was not favored by military people and so, only to give you an example.
- Q. Now, the reverse of what you say is that the Foreign Minister, therefore, if he expects to succeed in his policies must necessarily have those policies in line with the thought and principles of the military and naval authorities?
- A. Yes.
- Q. It would, therefore, follow that the Foreign Minister in practice must work out his policies with the military and naval heads, is that not true?

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- A. This is true. There may be one exception, but more theoretically. If he is a very strong man and in the same time the heads of the army and navy are personally inferior to him, it could be possible that by his energy and efficiency he could bring his policy making convenient to those people which is in the first moment not considered as convenient to the armed forces. I think that such a man could have been SHIGEMITSU. I have not a special example before my eyes, but considering his personality I think he could have been able to do such a way. But without such a special exception, your consideration is right.
- Q. You do not consider that Matsuoka possessed the qualifications to constitute such an exception, do you?
- A. His way to finish in a quite unusual quick time the Three Powers Pact has shown that he is able to impress his quickness of action upon the military people too. But if he had to act in this respect against the will of those forces, this I do not know, this I do not believe. So I can't judge it correctly.
- Q. Your opinion is that he was very efficient in carrying out his program but that you do not feel that it was necessary for him to coerce or compel military and naval authorities to agree with his policies?
- A. I think so. But that he has been able to bring them so quickly to united politics, this is, after all experiences of Japan, quite unusual.
- Q. I am not certain that you understood exactly my meaning. Notwithstanding this demonstration of ability to accomplish a thing once started, it was true that the military and naval authorities agreed with him in principle on the policies he followed?
- A. Yes. This is why I told you this is not an example which could be proved that he is a man able to impose his will to the armed forces against their former intentions.
- Q. Who were the military and naval chiefs of staff at the time of Matsuoka's trip to Germany?
- A. The military Chief of Staff was SUGIYAMA. The Naval Chief of

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Staff was either Prince FUSHIMI or already Admiral NAGANO--this I can't tell you in this moment. I believe that FUSHIMI had already retired. He had been a long time Chief of the Admiralty Staff.

May I add something? I think sharing of the responsibility in foreign politics had been demonstrated after the war of Japan broke out in the fact of the Imperial Headquarter, where army, navy and Foreign Minister were represented to give principal advice to the Cabinet about the continuation of the foreign questions. Mainly, of course, of the conducting of the war, but of the foreign relations too.

Q. Did not that same condition exist from 1937 on after Japan had started the China Incident?

A. I think not in this clear way. I think the Imperial Headquarter had only been established after the Pacific war broke out. Before they had a kind of smaller Cabinet. That means, the four or five ministers conference composed out of the Foreign Minister, Prime Minister, War Minister, Naval Minister and usually the Finance Minister.

Q. That was known as the Committee of Five?

A. Yes.

Q. My information is that there was a conference held in Berlin on March 29, 1941 between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka. Were you present at that conference?

A. No.

Q. I hand you Document #1877-PS which purports to be a record of that conference, consisting of three pages. I would like you to read it and make such comments on it as you may desire.

A. (Witness reads document) About the discussions with Russia. This matter had been brought up by Matsuoka in my presence in a farewell lunch in the house of the Foreign Minister, I think it was the 7th of

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April, in a very talking way, just asking the Foreign Minister, just mentioning that he intends to have some negotiations with Moscow about improving the relations and the Foreign Minister answered that he thinks he may not oblige Japan too much in this way. I considered it later on as the moment when Matsuoka announced to a little bigger circle his intention of the neutrality pact. That he had before much more concrete discussions was not obvious at that time. If the Foreign Minister promised to him that Germany would attack immediately in case of Russian attack against Japan, I think he gave a promise impossible too for us, because in this time of March, I think the preparations of Germany for an attack against Russia were just beginning. The attack has been started eventually on the 22nd of June. He says on another place that the German army is ready with the main part on the Eastern Frontier. Looking back on the situation at that time, I think it was a promise not in harmony with the realities.

- Q. On that point, General Ott, didn't you state in a former examination that on your way to Germany you observed troop movements on the Eastern Front which indicated to you that operations against Russia were being considered, or words to that effect?
- A. I stated this?
- Q. I received that impression.
- A. No, I don't think so, no.
- Q. I may be mistaken but I thought you made a statement indicating that from your own estimate of the situation you felt that there was some contemplated action on the part of Germany toward Russia.
- A. I got this impression by the talks in that time with Ambassador Von Schulenberg, later on with Stahmer and Matzky when I arrived in Berlin; but my own experience didn't indicate that. The remarks about that Russia would be, in case of conflict, finished in two or three months, I think has been made because I heard in this conversations, I don't know was it Stahmer or Matzky, that they

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were very afraid that this time table is the idea of Hitler. And it had been used immediately after the beginning of the war by the foreign press too; I think by the American press too.

Q. And, I believe, you were directed from Germany to advise Japan's military circles that Germany would succeed in a very short period in its conquest of Russia, had you not?

A. This I don't recall. But I recall definitely that the day when Germany started the war I summoned the staff people of the Embassy and told them that I prohibit every mentioning of the time of two or three months of this war; that I am of the opinion that this is a war of death and life. So because this was the official direction I gave to the Embassy Staff, I may not have had this order or didn't execute it.

The remark of the Foreign Minister that Japan may feel certain against Russia is in a remarkable contrast to the very great mistrust the German government showed when Matsuoka had made his neutrality pact. When Germany as I heard from sources close to the government, the government was very angry and I got the telegram where the surprise of the government was very strongly expressed. So this is not in line with these remarks of Ribbentrop.

Q. Nevertheless, in the statement of Germany's attitude toward Russia, it is further said that Japan need not refrain from attack on Singapore because of any fear of Russia. That is practically the closing sentence in the first paragraph of this record, is it not?

A. May I see it please? (Witness reads sentence) Yes. But so I think if Matsuoka excluded the fears of Russia by a neutrality pact he acted in this line and so I wonder that the German government had made this statement; was so angry and mistrustful against him--what he meant with the neutrality pact.

It seems that this fear of submarines which I mentioned too, had been brought up in the talks between Matsuoka and Ribbentrop--fear of the Japanese navy of the American submarines. This had been told to me by Kondo, and I think it had been the common idea of the Japanese

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Navy surely expressed by Admiral Nomura to Raedar when they spoke about this question.

It seems to me that in this talk there had been no introduction given to Japan to attack the Philippines because it was always said that from the side of the Philippines there could be such a danger and if America would be involved in the war she might reckon with the loss of the Philippines. So it seems to me that in that time the German government tried to exclude an attack against American territory and let the consequences be taken by America.

About the German assistance--I think this is a real typical case where the Foreign Minister spoke about details he couldn't understand. Because giving Hitler as the main expert in military questions and asking Oshima to have maps of Singapore in order that Hitler could give to the Japanese general staff his advice of the attack against Singapore, this, I may say, is ridiculous. The Japanese army and navy were so reluctant to take advice for their practical work from outside and especially from a man whom they have to consider as completely far from tropical and Far Eastern experiences. But it shows in the same time that there seems to have not been to this moment a real serious operative discussion with the Japanese army and navy present in Berlin. Otherwise I do not think that the Fuehrer would have asked for maps of Singapore to give his personal advice. This kind of discussions with the Japanese army and navy is never mentioned and this is my feeling in the whole visit of Matsuoka, which I now realize had been much more detailed than we had ever assumed. It had been much more political talk instead of having real effective preliminary cooperation and consideration with the Japanese experts.

About the dive bombers. This I assume had been talked over by Ribbentrop. It had been talked over by Goering too, and it has been a kind of cry from the Japanese side to use the experience of the German dive bombers because the world generally considered the German dive bombers as the main reason for the so-called Blitzkreig in Poland and France--the so-called Stukka, this is the name of the dive bombers. And so, I suppose, that Matsuoka too had brought to the knowledge of Ribbentrop this desire of the Japanese side. This is for the moment all I could say to it.

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Q. The report of this interview devotes the first two paragraphs to the discussion of the possibility of war between Germany and Russia and the main point that seems to have been made by Ribbentrop in this respect is that Japan need not hesitate to attack Singapore because of any fear from Russia, that is true?

A. That is true.

Q. Now, all the rest of this reported conversation consisting of two pages deals with specific discussions regarding Singapore, does it not?

A. Yes.

Q. Have you not been struck by the fact that this conference had for its main topic of discussion the question of Singapore?

A. I have been struck with it.

Q. Do you consider that the statements made by Matsuoka in this conference constitutes a clear purpose and intention on his part to enter the war at some period against England by way of attack upon Singapore?

A. Yes, it is a correct copy.

Q. In considering this conference we must not overlook the fact that this is an interview between the foreign ministers of two governments which have just entered into a military alliance a few months previous thereto.

A. Yes.

Q. I want to make it clear what the subjects of this conversation were relating to Singapore. For instance, the question of the location of the British navy in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic were discussed, is that correct?

A. That is correct.

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Q. The condition of the submarines of the United States government was discussed?

A. Yes.

Q. The estimate that Japan put upon the strength of the British and American navies was discussed?

A. Yes.

Q. The inability of the United States government to do anything about the capture of Singapore was discussed?

A. This also.

Q. The fact that the United States would necessarily lose control of the Philippines in the event Japan would attack Singapore was also discussed?

A. (Witness asks to re-read paragraph of document relating to this point) I think this had been discussed as the consequence of the decision of Roosevelt on an active measure.

Q. Deceptive means used by Japan in an effort to deceive the British regarding their plans towards Singapore were discussed?

A. Yes.

Q. The advantage to Japan of striking a sudden blow from the standpoint of uniting the nation in the war effort was discussed?

A. Yes.

Q. The need of Japan to be shaken up by a sudden blow was discussed?

A. (Witness re-reads sentence in document) Yes.

Q. The matter of a written promise of assistance from Germany in the event of attack on Singapore was discussed?

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A. Yes. Was asked for I think.

Q. The production of a map by the Japanese for examination by Hitler was discussed?

A. Yes.

Q. The experience of German experts on aerial warfare based on European experiences; the use of dive bombers from airfields in the vicinity of the British fleet at Singapore were discussed?

A. Yes.

Q. The development of new methods used by the Germans in attack upon strongly fortified positions was discussed?

A. Yes.

Q. The period of time, namely, three months in which it would take the Japanese naval forces to capture Singapore was mentioned?

A. Yes.

Q. The desirability of leaving untouched the Netherlands East Indies for fear of a scorched earth policy was discussed?

A. Yes.

Q. In fact, Matsuoka states in one place that he had been endeavoring to re-assure the British and to fool the pro-British and pro-American elements until one day he would suddenly open the attack on Singapore?

A. Yes.

Q. Is this not as strong a language between heads of states involving operational plans as could be expected?

A. Yes. Is it not to be considered in this connection--I remember some weeks ago that under course of the Pearl Harbor investigation in Washington it was stated that after records captured from the

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Japanese side, the Cabinet decision had been reached in the middle of January 1941 to prepare a military attack as later had been made against America and Great Britain. I was very much surprised to find this statement because it gives much light to the developments. So it may be that Matsuoka's very strong language and detailed discussions had been based upon considerations which lead to this Cabinet decision in the middle of January 1941 already. I do not know if you remember this.

Q. I have heard of it. General Ott, there was another conference on April 4, 1941 between Hitler and Matsuoka at which conference Meinhssner was present. Were you present during that conference?

A. No.

Q. Do you have any knowledge of what occurred at that conference?

A. No. It was a conference after the return of Matsuoka from Italy. I suppose that his experiences about Italian discussions had been involved in the conference--this I assume. Otherwise, I have no knowledge.

Q. What is your information regarding the purpose of the trip of Matsuoka to Italy?

A. As I remember that when he had been invited by the German government to come to Berlin, he gave his intention to make this trip to visit through more countries in order to have complete knowledge of the prevailing situation in Europe. So he suggested, I think, being invited to Rome and to Vichy in that time, too.

Q. Did he also make the trip to Vichy?

A. No, he didn't. I think by the Japanese ambassador in Berlin there may have been an exchange of ideas with the German government and probably have been given to him the advice not to go to Vichy. In the same way he asked to extend his wishes to Moscow and he had been asked by the German government to make this visit to Moscow on his return coming first officially to Berlin. So it was the impression of his intentions that he likes to have with all the main leading statesmen not involved in the war against Germany in that time, a conversation.

Q. You have already told us of the conference you had with Ribbentrop

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on March 30 at Potsdam when Matsuoka was in the group but not present at the time of your talk with Ribbentrop. Did you have any other conference with Ribbentrop between March 29 and April 4?

- A. Ribbentrop once called me in connection with the Jugoslavian situation and asked me if Japan would be able to take some measures against Jugoslavia's representative here--maybe to break off relations or something like that. I told him that there is no representative of Jugoslavia in Tokyo and that he better should handle this question with the Japanese ambassador because he may be better informed about former relations between Jugoslavia and Japan. This is all.
- Q. During this period between March 29 and April 4, did you have a conference with either Matsuoka or Oshima, other than your talk with Oshima at Potsdam?
- A. I was invited to a big reception party in Oshima's house but there was no special talk with him. It was a party for the whole government people.
- Q. Returning to the conference that took place on April 4, 1941; I hand you Document #1881-PS and I ask you to read it with a view of making such comment as you may desire. It is three pages in length.
- A. (Witness reads document) He is speaking first of endeavors for peace. Matsuoka first mentioned that he was induced to make these endeavors for peace particularly in view of the personality of Cardinal Caspary. There must have been some discussion about peace endeavors, quite contrary to the former discussions. Matsuoka was inclined to be influenced to a certain extent by religious regards. So he may have had in his conversation with the Holy See certain strong impressions. The remarks of Matsuoka for giving of German experiences about modern warfare to the military experts of Japan is the usual way how the Japanese always asked Germany to give many informations. This is probably due to the pressure placed upon him during his stay in Berlin from the side of the heads of the two missions I mentioned before, Gen. Yamashita and Admiral Nomura. I think he reckoned that time that he might have difficulties in executing the obligations entered into with Ribbentrop and that the

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German liberality in giving a great picture of their experiences of war may facilitate his task because he repeated it several times. The declarations mentioned here by Matsuoka that he has always declared in his country that sooner or later a war with United States would be unavoidable is very surprising. He, as far as I remember, exactly avoided to speak about the danger of a war with America.

Q. There were many men in Japan, however, at that time who openly declared that war with the white races was inevitable?

A. Yes, there were.

Q. And organizations were established in Japan which had for their sole purpose the expulsion of the white races out of China and the Far East?

A. But I have no remembrance that Matsuoka sided in an open way with some of these people. He had always declared in his country--this must have been meant by him that he always declared openly. This is not a secret influence. I think the final expressions of his cautious idea that he is obliged to take in coming back to Japan is a remarkable weakening of the attitude he has taken in the conferences before. And if he says in the beginning of April he didn't know how soon he could report, he didn't know in this moment how soon he could succeed in getting a decision. I think by these declarations any time table of cooperation had been placed in a doubtful position. It may be one of the reasons why, after he had made the neutrality pact, this mistrust of the German government awoke so suddenly; because this was a kind of attitude which was especially able to make the German leaders very much angry because they didn't know obstacles of that kind in their own conduct of politics. Seen in the light of this last conference with Hitler, I once more would like to stress that this so-called conference of the commission of the Three Powers pact in Berlin and in Tokyo couldn't have as an object a real definite discussion of Singapore because Matsuoka himself had arrived in the end of April, and I am sure that in that time he just acted upon his last words that he didn't inform the main authorities of Japan about his discussions of Singapore.

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Q. I want to ask you a few questions regarding your comment on the conversation. It appears that Matsuoka in his conference with the Pope endeavored to place the blame for the continuance of the war both in Europe and in China upon the United States?

A. Yes.

Q. Then we find that Matsuoka makes a request of Hitler that he direct the proper German authorities to be as broad minded as possible in complying with the wishes of the Japanese military commission which was then in Germany?

A. Yes.

Q. Having indicated in a very definite way in the conference with Ribbentrop of his willingness and desire to bring Japan into conflict with England, he now on page one of this report, attempts to take at least one step in that direction by having Hitler order that necessary military information be given to the Japanese military commission?

A. Yes.

Q. Matsuoka emphasized this point, did he not, by requesting that Hitler immediately direct that such information be given?

A. Yes.

Q. Hitler, in this conference, also expresses the definite view that although he desired to keep the United States out of the war, he had made allowances for such a contingency?

A. Yes.

Q. What allowances had he made, as far as you know, or what plans had been made by Germany in the event of participation by the United States in the war?

A. Considering the special military situation of the United States--

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may I say first I don't know details about that--but considering the military situation of the United States I believe he had in mind a special submarine warfare against the United States. I think it was in that time the only way because the air forces of Germany had not been developed for making attacks on a far distance across the Atlantic. So I think the only weapon he could use against the United States as an aggressive weapon could be submarines.

Q. To what extent had the occupation of islands in the Atlantic Ocean been a part of such a plan?

A. I didn't hear about plans for that. The main islands regarding this would have been the Portuguese Islands. I never heard about a plan to take over those islands. I think it should have needed to supply and to maintain those bases a very strong fleet and this would have been impossible already in that time, because the German fleet was rather small and the Italian fleet had already proved that they were not of an aggressive mind. This is only my opinion. As I remember in the American propaganda there had been a kind of propaganda that Mexico could be in danger of a German invasion and to create air-fields to attack the United States. But I personally considered this propaganda always as fiction because such an invasion of Mexico would have needed the domination of the Atlantic which was quite out of the fact.

Q. Hitler also points out in this conference that the strength of the Tri Partite Powers lies in their joint action and that their weakness would be to let themselves be beaten individually. This showed from Hitler's viewpoint the advisability of joint action based upon the Three Powers Pact?

A. Yes.

Q. Matsuoka also points out that if Japan drifts along as it is at present, war with the United States would be unavoidable and he in turn makes a strong argument for united action, does he not?

A. Yes, he does.

(OTT, Eugene, 19 March Cont'd)

- Q. Matsuoka also expresses his view that if Japan continued to walk along her present path, one day she would have to fight anyway and that this would then be under less favorable circumstances than at present?
- A. I think if I am right, the embargo of oil had in that time already been placed upon Japan, if I am right, and he had to reckon with the consequence of this embargo that the very small resources of oil of Japan would be finished and the navy would be unable to move and the air forces too. If I am correct that the embargo already had been placed upon Japan. The fear of the Japanese navy in the oil question was a very serious matter of concern.
- Q. Matsuoka is quoted as having stated on the last page of the report that he would have to study exactly and carefully in the first place the development in Japan so as to make his decision at a favorable moment to make a clear breast of his plans towards Prince Konoye and the Emperor and then the decision would have to be made within a few days because the plans would otherwise be spoiled by talk. It was a known fact to you, and I believe you have previously stated it, that there were certain pro-British and pro-American influences in Japan among court circles?
- A. Yes.
- Q. In order for a plan of a secret attack upon Singapore to be successful, it was necessary that the negotiations be conducted with great secrecy, was it not?
- A. It was.
- Q. In fact, the conclusion of the Three Powers Pact itself was the result of negotiations of an extremely secret character?
- A. Yes, it was.
- Q. This was more of a precautionary matter than it was an indication of weakness of decision on the part of Matsuoka, do you not agree?
- A. Yes, I agree, but I am surprised that Matsuoka is talking here about a decision which would have to be put into action in a few days because it required a considerable amount of preparation.

(OTT, Eugene, 19 March Cont'd)

- Q. But in practice and as a matter of fact, looking back upon history in connection with the attack upon Pearl Harbor, were not the plans developed by the army and navy and to a certain measure put into effect long before it was actually decided on the part of the government to initiate the attack?
- A. Yes, that is true. To a certain extent it is contradictory to this declaration of Matsuoka because in that time already, I think, the preparations must have been started. You know now, by the Japanese documents, that the attack against Pearl Harbor had been trained for months in Kyushu and I remember the fact that our air attache asked for a visit to Kyushu maybe in February or March of this year, 1941, and he was refused to have any visit to Kyushu with reasons which were not very convincing. So in that time, probably, this training in Kyushu had already been started.
- Q. What was the name of your air attache?
- A. Gen. Von Gronau.
- Q. He is in Japan now?
- A. He is in Japan.
- Q. Where does he live?
- A. He is living in Sengku Hara. This fact was recalled to me the day before yesterday by the military attache.
- Q. It is very significant that Matsuoka speaks only of advising the Emperor and Prince Konoye a few days ahead of the time that a decision had to be made. You will note from this conversation that it must have been contemplated that all preparations for war necessarily would be made prior to the time that final authority was obtained from the Emperor to declare war or to initiate a state of war.
- A. Yes, that is right, but Matsuoka mentions that he couldn't speak other than a theoretical way with the army and navy about this question, if I remember correctly.

(OTT, Eugene, 19 March Cont'd)

Q. When you refer to army and navy you are referring to the minister of the navy and army as stated in the text of the conversation?

A. Yes.

Q. This does not necessarily exclude the possibility of conferring with the Chiefs of Staff and others who set the policy of the army and the navy?

A. It doesn't exclude the possibility of conferring, but it excludes in the reality of that time nearly completely that the naval minister and army minister would have not been informed if the discussions concerned actual preparations.

Q. Matsuoka in this very conversation had requested that military information be given his military mission to Germany and the military mission was present while these negotiations were taking place?

A. Yes.

Q. It would seem, therefore, that there should have been no reluctance on his part to discuss plans of war with those of the army and navy who were actually in accord with his ideas, such as, Gen. Oshima who at that time was ambassador but who was strictly a military man?

A. Yes. But the object of these military missions coming to Germany was exactly to get as many as possible informations about the modern warfare; and these missions had been sent to Germany in a time where it is doubtful if Matsuoka's idea had been developed already to such an extent, so it was just fulfilling the general object of those commissions if they get as many information as possible about the modern warfare. It isn't theoretically speaking not absolutely conclusive that these informations have to be given to those people with the clear object of an attack against Singapore. To give an example: The question of dive bombers was a question of utmost interest to every military expert in that time. It wasn't necessary to give the informations about a German dive bomber with the express information, "This is given for your attack on Singapore."

(INTERROGATION ADJOURNED)