

Interv. Tojo (21 March 46)

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE**  
**WASHINGTON**



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

CONTINUED INTERROGATION OF

General Hideki TOJO

Date and Time: 20 March 1946, 0935-1130 hours.

Place : Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan.

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

Questions by : Mr. Fihelly

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Q You stated yesterday that you became aware of the problems arising from the independence of the Supreme Command when you became Premier. Were you not aware of them before this as War Minister?

A Yes, of course, I was aware of them, but when I became Premier, for the first time I was faced with political problems since I had the whole broad picture to work with. Properly, I am a soldier and I did not know so much about politics.

Q After 1940, the China Incident and its settlement took on an international aspect, did it not?

A Yes, of course. That was an ordeal /kurō/ for Japan.

Q In what respects was it an ordeal for Japan?

A I have explained that before. From the Japanese point of view, this was not aggression, but the cause of the unsettled conditions in the Far East was aggression by the great Powers of Europe. This I firmly believe. They had stretched a net of force and rights over the Far East. We had to stabilize the Far East - we had to live, but the question was "how". The Orientals could not ignore this situation and had to take steps to adjust these rights.

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Q Did not the war which was then going on in Europe and the sympathy, particularly of certain elements in Japan, for the Axis in that war also help to have the China Incident and its settlement considered on an international scale?

A As I have said before, the government wished to prevent the influence of the European War from spreading to the Far East. I have forgotten which cabinet it was, but one of the cabinets made a statement to the effect that they did not want the European War to penetrate to Japan. Japan was involved in the fighting with China and this was a great burden already, therefore they didn't want the European War to come here. I was not the responsible officer at that time, but that is what I think.

Q Did the cabinet, in which you were War Minister, feel that by signing the Three-Power Pact, they were preventing the European War from coming to Asia?

A Yes, of course, it did.

Q And the cabinet also felt, did it not, that by joining the Three-Power Pact, Japan would receive assistance in settling the China Incident?

A Yes, they thought that it would be useful also for the settlement of the Incident.

Q Did not that cabinet, in which you were War Minister, realize that Germany and Italy had principles and aims which might cause the European War to become a World War?

A No, it was just the opposite. Japan felt that if Germany and Italy tried to realize their principles and aims in Europe, Japan would not be affected. Japan did not want the disturbances to come to the Far East. I don't think there is any country in the world that likes war. Certainly not Japan, but wars of themselves have causes.

Q Is it not true that the only two great countries not at war in 1940 were America and Japan?

A No, I don't think so. The countries of South America were not, Turkey, Persia and the Soviet Union were not in at first.

Q Were there not strong possibilities in 1940, during the second KONOYE Cabinet, that the United States might very likely be drawn into the war against the Axis?

A We feared it. If America were drawn in, the war would become a world war and would extend to the Pacific. This is a matter of grand national policy and, at the time of the second KONOYE Cabinet, you must remember, I was the War Minister. I don't like to answer for such questions on grand policy when the Foreign Minister is here.

Q The Foreign Minister also is being questioned on these matters.

A Yes, but that questioning is the important one for these matters.

Q Was it not true that, in 1940, nations with Nazi-Fascist ideas were fighting nations with opposite views?

A Yes, I think so. Nations don't fight unless they have opposite views.

Q A few months prior to the signing of the Three-Power Pact, the KONOYE Cabinet, in which you were War Minister, stated that it was going to get rid of the old political structure of the government immediately, did it not?

A I don't know whether that was stated or not, but it was the policy of that KONOYE Cabinet to adopt a new political structure.

Q Prince KONOYE, in a speech inaugurating the Imperial Rule Assistance Association on or about 12 October 1940, stated, did he not, "At home we must establish the New Order as well as establish a New Order in East Asia and the world"?

A I don't remember.

Q Well, does it sound appropriate?

A Yes, from the tone of it I think that perhaps he did say it at that time.

Q He is also quoted as saying at that time that the "government is exerting itself for the completion of a high state of national defense". Did he not so state?

A I think he probably said it.

Q He is quoted further as saying, "To do this, we must throw away former ideas about politics, economics, and culture, and establish in every government organization the most efficient system". Did he not so state?

A I think he said it probably. If you ask me why I think so, it is because on 1 August 1940, the basic national policy was decided by the cabinet. These statements were probably based on that.

Q Did not the cabinet approve of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association advocated by KONOYE and also approve of the statements that he made in connection therewith during this period?

A Yes, of course. The government did not approve of it - the government created it.

Q And Premier Prince KONOYE was the leader of that movement, was he not?

A Prince KONOYE was president of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association and also Premier, but they were different functions.

Q But as Premier also, KONOYE carried out the principles and provisions of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, did he not?

A Yes, of course he did.

Q Were all the members of the second KONOYE Cabinet also members of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association?

- A Yes. That is most of them were. I am not too sure about the Education Minister, the Justice Minister, and the Welfare Minister. However, I am sure that most of the cabinet members were officials or counsellors of it.
- Q Does that include yourself?
- A Yes, of course.
- Q Did not the oath of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association Party include language, in part, as follows: "The great march of the Japanese people has begun. Dawn over Asia is approaching. The throbbing life power of the Japanese people has begun its historic march under the great ideal of the birth of the nation"?
- A I don't know. I dare say it did. However, there is one mistake here. This was not a party /tō/ - it was an association /kai/.
- Q Did KONOYE not state on or about 14 December 1940 that the Imperial Rule Assistance Association advocated, among other things, cooperation toward the establishment of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere?
- A I don't remember.
- Q So that it was true, was it not, that at this time the government was not only in favor of establishing a New Order in East Asia, but also in favor of establishing a New Order at home?
- A They were in favor of establishing a new political structure /shintai sei/ at home.
- Q Why was this new political structure at home necessary?
- A I was War Minister, you know. I can't make a responsible reply about a political matter of this sort.
- Q So that, as a Minister of State during the KONOYE Cabinet, you have absolutely no idea why this new political order was necessary in Japan?

A No, I wouldn't say that.

Q May we have your views as to why it was necessary?

A The basis of it was that the old political structure was not suited to the political conditions within and without the country at that time.

Q What was there about the old political structure that was not suited?

A One reason was that in the field of education, self-interest rather than service to the state was emphasized. Particularly in the political field this was also the case. The same was true in the economic field where the Zaibatsu were interested in their own ends rather than the interests of the state. The national government was uncoordinated and this was an effort to coordinate it. The economic basis was to include Japan, Manchuria, and China, since it was not a good idea to think only what was good for Japan. Those were the main points, although as War Minister, I am not very familiar with these details. However, as a Minister of State, as you called me, I think these were the main things.

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Certificate of Interpreter

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

being sworn on oath, state that I truly translated the questions and answers given from English to Japanese and from Japanese to English respectively, and that the above transcription of such questions and answers, consisting of 6 pages, is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Yale Maxon  
Yale Maxon, Cmdr., USNR

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

John W. Fihelly  
John W. Fihelly

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

Certificate of Stenographer

I, Myrtle B. Mills, hereby certify that I acted as stenographer at the interrogation set out above, and that I transcribed the foregoing questions and answers, and that the transcription is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Myrtle B. Mills  
Myrtle B. Mills

Certificate of Interrogator

I, John W. Fihelly, certify that on 20<sup>th</sup>  
day of March, 1946, personally appeared before me TOJO  
Hideki, and according to Commander Yale Maxon, USNR,

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

John W. Fihelly  
John W. Fihelly

TOKYO  
(Place)

12 August 46  
(Date)

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20 March 1946  
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