

INTERROGATION OF
General Jiro MINAMI

DATE: 5 February 1946

INTERROGATORS:
Col Gilbert S Woolworth
Mr. Hugh B. Helm

INTERROGATION OF
General Jiro MINAMI

Date and Time: 5 February 1946, 1000-1145 hours

Place : Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan

Present : General Jiro MINAMI
Colonel Gilbert S. Woolworth, Interrogator
Mr. Hugh B. Helm, Interrogator
Lt Commander Frank B. Huggins, Interpreter
Miss Edna Hickam, Stenographer

Questions by: Col Gilbert S. Woolworth
Mr. Hugh B. Helm

Oath of Interpreter: Administered by Col Woolworth:

COL WOOLWORTH: Do you solemnly swear, by Almighty God, that you will truly and accurately interpret and translate from English into Japanese and from Japanese into English, as may be required of you, in this proceeding?

Lt Commander Huggins: I do.

Interrogation by Col Woolworth:

- Q. General, on August 4, 1931 when you were War Minister you delivered an address to the heads of Army Divisions, did you not?
- A. Yes at the War Minister's official residence.
- Q. And in the course of that address you attacked the whole idea of disarmament, did you not?
- A. I did not oppose making the Army smaller, but I did encourage the fostering of a more concrete structure within the Army along scientific lines.
- Q. And you recommended the mechanization of the Army, did you not, at that time?
- A. Yes. I advocated cutting down cavalry regiments and mechanizing them.

Jiro MINAMI

5 Feb 1946

- Q. At the same time you attacked the whole idea of disarmament which was then the subject of world-wide discussion, did you not?
- A. At my time there was no such problem presenting itself. In other words I did not favor or oppose disarmament.
- Q. Didn't you state in the course of that address that people who advocated disarmament in Japan were indulging in propaganda against the interests not only of the Army, but of the nation as well?
- A. I have no recollection of saying anything of the sort.
- Q. Will you say that you did not say any such thing?
- A. Yes. When the War Minister takes his office he gets together all the division commanders. This is a regular ceremony and takes place once a year.
- Q. Was this address of yours of August 4, 1931 immediately after you took office as War Minister?
- A. Three and one-half months after.
- Q. Was that the first meeting you had with your Division Commanders?
- A. Yes.
- Q. That meeting occurred about six weeks before the Mukden incident, did it not?
- A. Yes.
- Q. After the outbreak of the incident you issued an order, did you not, calling for reinforcements to be sent from Kwantung leased territory into Manchuria?
- A. The government issued the order. The War Minister can not directly issue an order which deals with sending soldiers to a foreign country.
- Q. Who was the Chief of Staff of the Army at that time?
- A. General KANAYA, Hanzo.
- Q. What position did General HAYASHI, Senjuro occupy at that time?
- A. I am not absolutely sure, but I believe he was Commander in Chief of the Army in Korea — yes that is right.
- Q. Didn't the Cabinet actually object to your ordering reinforcements sent into Manchuria?
- A. No they felt that it could not be avoided as the incident had already occurred. This matter was told to the Emperor and then the order was issued by the government.

Jiro MINAMI

5 Feb 1946

Q. WAKATSUKI was Premier at that time, was he not?

A. Yes.

Q. And SHIDEHARA was Foreign Minister?

A. Yes.

Q. And ^{IN}MOUE was Finance Minister?

A. Yes.

Q. You were aware at that time of the existence of the Nine-Power Treaty, were you not?

A. Yes I was aware of that.

Q. You were aware that under that Nine-Power Pact Japan had pledged herself to respect the sovereignty, independence, and territorial and administrative integrity of China, were you not?

A. Yes I was aware of that.

Q. And you were aware also that Japan had signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1928 pledging not to resort to war as an instrument of national policy?

A. Yes I knew of this pact.

Q. When did you go out of office as Minister of War?

A. 14 December 1931.

Q. Who became Premier in the next Cabinet?

A. INUKAI.

Q. And who became Minister of War?

A. ARAKI.

Q. And do you recall who became Chief of Staff?

A. Prince KANIN.

Q. Prince KANIN was an elderly man at the time he was made Chief of Staff, was he not?

A. Yes I believe he was 68 or 70, somewhere around there when he took the post.

Q. While Prince KANIN was Chief of Staff, General MAZAKI, his Vice Chief of Staff, actually made most of the decisions, did he not?

A. Yes on the whole I would say that is so.

Jiro MINAMI

5 Feb 1946

- Q. Was General MAZAKI responsible for your being sent to command the Kwantung Army?
- A. At the time that I was named Commander in Chief of the Kwantung Army, MAZAKI was no longer Vice Chief of the General Staff and had taken the post of Inspector General of Military Education. The decisions regarding important posts are generally made in a meeting of the Ministers of War, the Chief of Staff, and the Inspector General of Military Education.
- Q. General MAZAKI was Inspector General of Military Education when you were appointed Commanding General of the Kwantung Army, was he not?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And who was Chief of Staff at the time you were sent to command the Kwantung Army?
- A. Still Prince KANIN.
- Q. And who was Vice Chief of Staff at that time?
- A. General UEDA, Kenkichi.
- Q. And who was Minister of War at that time?
- A. General HAYASHI.
- Q. You were in sympathy with their policy, were you not, when you took over command of the Kwantung Army?
- A. In a sense, yes, my ideas corresponded with theirs.
- Q. Sometime around the second or third week in September 1931 were you called to an audience before the Emperor?
- A. Yes I believe so.
- Q. Were you admonished by the Emperor at that time in connection with the Manchurian incident?
- A. No.
- Q. What was the purpose of the audience?
- A. To inform his Majesty about the Manchurian incident.
- Q. You later became Governor General of Korea, did you not?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What did you tell his Majesty about the Manchurian incident?
- A. Simply the story of how the incident occurred: how in guarding the South Manchurian Railway tracks near Mukden and in the performance of their duties, etc.

Jiro MINAMI

5 Feb 1946

Q. From whom did you get your information about the Manchurian incident?

A. From General HONJO, Commander in Chief of the Kwantung Army.

Q. Had you made any investigation yourself, or had one made as to that happening?

A. Yes.

Q. What investigation had you made or caused to be made?

A. We sent one man from General Staff Headquarters to carry out an investigation. I do not recall who it was.

Q. When did you send him?

A. Although I am not certain of dates, I believe it was around 10 September 1931 that I sent Major General TATEKAWA to Manchuria to investigate the incident.

Q. When did you get your report from him?

A. Around the 24th or 25th of September. The relations between the Japanese Army and the Manchurian force were repeatedly becoming dangerous at the time, and this was the reason that we dispatched General TATEKAWA.

Q. You made your report to the Emperor before you got a report from General TATEKAWA?

A. I spoke to him about the report I had received from General HONJO.

Q. Did you ever speak to him about the report you had from General TATEKAWA?

A. No. Had there been any such report it would have been made by the Chief of Staff.

Q. Did General TATEKAWA take command in Manchuria?

A. No. He was Section Chief of the General Staff.

Q. As soon as he arrived in Manchuria the incident expanded a considerable degree, did it not?

A. It is not a problem of the incident becoming more intense. The Manchurian incident occurred while he was in Manchuria.

Q. You stated previously that you sent General TATEKAWA up to Manchuria to investigate the Manchurian incident?

A. He was first dispatched to Manchuria to look into the matter of relations between the Japanese and Chinese forces there, which as I stated were becoming precarious. That was the first reason. Secondly, while he was there the incident occurred, so he was appointed to investigate.

Jiro MINAMI

5 Feb 1946

- Q. What was the date the incident occurred?
A. Around 2300 on the 18th of September 1931.
- Q. Had reinforcements already been dispatched from the Kwantung Army and Korea?
A. No. I believe it was the 22nd or 23rd that reinforcements went from Korea.
- Q. How long had General TATEKAWA been in Manchuria before this incident occurred?
A. About ten days beforehand I believe.
- Q. Did you dispatch or cause to be sent to Manchuria at that time DOIHARA?
A. No. DOIHARA was already in Manchuria as Chief of the Special Services Division of the Kwantung Army (Tokumu Kikan).
- Q. You are aware, are you not, General, that the Lytton Commission made an investigation of the Manchurian incident?
A. Yes. That was after I had resigned my post as Minister of War.
- Q. And you are aware also, are you not, that their finding was that the Manchurian incident was instigated by members of the Japanese force rather than the Chinese?
A. Yes. I know of that.
- Q. While you were Governor General of Korea, you sent a telegram to Prince KONOYE who was the Premier and in Tokyo, during the month of July 1937, in which you advocated to him the enlargement and extension of activities against Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek's government, did you not?
A. No. Absolutely not.
- Q. If you were shown a copy of such a telegram, would you say that it was a forgery?
A. Yes I believe so.
- Q. Have you any present recollection of corresponding by telegram with Prince KONOYE while he was Premier in 1937?
A. I have no such recollection. I had no dealings with the Central Government.
- Q. With whom did you deal?
A. On overall matters I kept in contact with the Cabinet and the War Ministry.

Jiro MINAMI

5 Feb 1946

- Q. What members of the Cabinet other than the War Minister did you deal with?
- A. Outside of Korean affairs I had no dealings whatsoever with members of the Cabinet.
- Q. What dealings did you have with the War Minister while you were Governor General?
- A. Simply on military matters concerning the Army in Korea.
- Q. How much of an Army was there in Korea at that time?
- A. Two divisions.
- Q. Who was in command of the Chosen Army at that time?
- A. In the beginning, General KOISO. Then after that General ITAGAKI. When I was Governor General of Korea the command of the Army was changed three times -- the above named two and finally General NAKAMURA.
- Q. What operations did the Army conduct while you were Governor General?
- A. The defense of Korea or the preservation of internal peace and security.
- Q. Against whom was the Army defending Korea?
- A. Defense against the USSR or China in case something should occur.
- Q. Were any troops from Korea sent to Manchuria during the period you were Governor General?
- A. No.
- Q. You are aware, are you not, that during the period you were Governor General of Korea the occupation of Manchuria was greatly extended?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And that prior to December 7, 1941 Japanese troops went beyond the Great Wall of China?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Why was it necessary to protect Korea against China during that period?
- A. I mean that every Army has a plan of defense against an expected or potential enemy, and this plan is made up at General Staff Headquarters. I might explain here that as Governor General I had no direct concern with the Army and that they are directly under the General Staff in Tokyo and possess the supreme military prerogative. I had no command over the activities of the Army as Governor General.

Jiro MINAMI

5 Feb 1946

Interrogation by Mr. Helm:

Q. The Army in Korea was in the nature of a holding force against any Russian intervention?

A. Yes.

Q. General DOIHARA states that he investigated the Mukden incident for the General Staff. Is that true?

A. Yes I believe so.

Q. Was he the one man you were referring to a while ago that was sent out?

A. Possibly, although I did not dispatch him, so I am not sure who it was.

Q. Did you ever see the report he made when he came back to Tokyo about this incident?

A. I do not recall reading any such report, although it seems to me I heard something about it.

Q. DOIHARA was a Colonel at this time, was he not?

A. I believe so.

Q. Colonel DOIHARA disagreed with the Lytton report, did he not?

A. Yes I think so.

Q. And General TATEKAWA disagreed with the Lytton report?

A. Yes.

Q. Isn't it a fact that these two gentlemen were long time members of the Cherry Blossom Society?

A. That I do not know.

Q. How well did you know General TATEKAWA?

A. I knew him very well.

Q. How long had you known him?

A. He was a fellow cavalry officer and I had known him from 14 or 15 years before.

Q. What dealings did you have with him around 1931?

A. Our duties were entirely different.

Q. Who sent him out to Manchuria?

A. The Chief of Staff.

Jiro MINAMI

5 Feb 1946

Q. You knew about it didn't you?

A. Yes.

Q. Now isn't it a fact that TATEKAWA was very firmly mixed up in the Sakura Kai?

A. I heard about it later after the October incident had occurred.

Q. And he was hand in glove with HASHIMOTO in plotting the September incident?

A. Yes I believe so.

Q. And wasn't ITAGAKI mixed up in this too?

A. He might have been, but I am not certain.

Q. Are these two gentlemen still alive?

A. ITAGAKI is still alive, although TATEKAWA passed away a month or two ago.

Q. How about NINOMIYA?

A. He died last year.

Q. Wasn't he mixed up with this crowd also?

A. Yes I have heard that.

Q. And General ARAKI?

A. No I do not believe ARAKI was one of them.

Q. But ARAKI was head of what was known as the ARAKI Party in the military clique, wasn't he?

A. Yes, the younger officers greatly admired him.

Q. Now as a matter of fact this Sakura Kai largely revolved around the Russian and China sections of the Kwantung Army?

A. I imagine so, although I am not definitely certain.

Q. And Colonel HASHIMOTO was one of the ring leaders in these plottings to gain control of the Government for the Army -- right?

A. Yes, although I do not believe he was the only one. In this connection I had HASHIMOTO arrested in late October following the incident and incarcerated by the Kempei Tai.

Q. As a matter of fact, General, while you were War Minister this Sakura Kai society gave you a great deal of trouble, didn't it?

A. Yes, they were a nuisance. I heard the October incident was going to take place and had them pulled in by the MP's.

Jiro MINAMI

5 Feb 1946

- Q. Then you knew about the October incident before it took place?
A. I did not know anything about the fact that it would occur until the day before when I heard about it and stopped it.
- Q. Did you ever discuss this incident with the Emperor?
A. No, but I did speak to the Cabinet.
- Q. Did you ever discuss this at the Cabinet meetings? In other words, what I am driving at is this -- the Cabinet knew about the existence of this Sakura Kai Society and knew about these obstreperous officers who were dissatisfied with the Government and they discussed the threat of this organization to the existing Government of Japan.
A. Yes. I spoke to the Home Minister about this.
- Q. But the society was never suppressed and this talk never resolved itself into any action against them, did it?
A. No. No action against them was taken.
- Q. Why was that? Were they too powerful?
A. I figured that as they were all arrested it would naturally dissolve itself.
- Q. But it didn't, did it?
A. That I do not know, although I believed that it had been dissolved.
- Q. You believed that at the time? But you know now that it continued in existence and was very active?
A. Yes today I can say that I believe their activities might have continued.
- Q. Now, General, when you reported to the Emperor on the Manchurian incident, did you explain to his Majesty the potentialities for war and trouble in this Manchurian problem?
A. I recall stating to him that I believed the incident should not spread any further than the environs of the South Manchuria Railway and that this was the feeling of the Cabinet and of myself.
- Q. And did he agree to this?
A. The Emperor does not voice his opinions generally when spoken to, but simply nods and says "Yes," "Yes," so that unless he raises some objection it is taken for granted that he agrees.

Jiro MINAMI

5 Feb 1946

- Q. He didn't raise any objection at this time.
A. He did not.
- Q. General, did you know that you are credited by certain responsible Japanese leaders as starting the influx of troops into Manchuria?
A. Possibly because I was War Minister when the Manchurian incident occurred. However, after my resignation as such I had no connection whatsoever with the incidents following.
- Q. You admit then that while still War Minister you started strengthening the military forces in Manchuria?
A. I sent one brigade from Korea and over and above that had no connections with the movement of troops later.
- Q. Do you know General KURODA?
A. Yes I know him. The man who was in Malay?
- Q. Yes he was in Malay and was in England and was in India for the War Department. What were your relations with him?
A. None at all.
- Q. But you knew him?
A. Yes. I know most of the people in higher positions in the military.
- Q. You had given General HONJO blank authority to take any action he saw fit in Manchuria just prior to the Mukden incident?
A. No. The Commander in Chief of the Kwantung Army has this privilege and has had it for over twenty-five years.
- Q. Then he could take any war like steps he wanted over there under the prerogative of supreme command?
A. Within the jurisdiction of his own area he can do practically anything he wishes.
- Q. And did you approve of the action he took?
A. Yes.

Jiro MINAMI

I, Frank B. Huggins, 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 eleven pages, numbered 1 to 11 inclusive, is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Frank B. Huggins

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 7th day of February 1946.

G. S. Woolworth

(Name and Rank)

Duly Detailed Investigating Officer
International Prosecution Section, GHQ, SCAP

I, Edna M. Hickam, 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.

Edna M. Hickam

We, Gilbert S. Woolworth, Colonel, and Hugh B. Helm, certify that on the 5th day of February 1946 personally appeared before us Jiro MINAMI, and according to Lt Commander Frank B. Huggins, interpreter, gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth herein.

Tokyo, Japan

7 February 1946

G. S. Woolworth
Hugh B. Helm