

Interv. T.J. (26 Feb. 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: 26 February 1946, 1345-1650 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.: Yesterday I think there was something which you wished to add to your answer to the last question. The last question, as I remember, was: How early in 1941 did Japan begin investigations as to her readiness for war with the United States?

A.: What I had in mind yesterday were two other matters which I wished to talk about. In regard to this question, as I explained yesterday, the war was decided upon at the Imperial Conference of December 1st. Before that, Japan was not prepared and I gave you the facts about that yesterday. It was considered that, although Japan was not prepared, she had been challenged and had to fight, no matter what the state of her preparedness was.

Q.: You mention that you had two other matters on which you wished to speak. Would you like to talk about those now?

A.: The first matter is this; that Japan was exercising the right of justifiable self-defense in the face of challenge. I would like to give some facts about that. In the first place, before the outbreak of the war with America, Japan had been fighting with China for more than four years and her strength was not sufficient to warrant taking on powerful new enemies.

Again, Japan's peaceful commerce with North and South America and the South seas was being restricted as the result of the European war.

CASE FILE NO. 20

Evid Rec 4169

Continued

Interrogation of Hideki Tojo - 26 February 1946

- 2 -

Moreover, commerce with the continent and the South Seas, if interrupted even for a month, would have an effect on Japan's existence. This is explained very well in an article by General /phon/ KURŪZŌ in the "Japan Advertiser" for August 1921. This was just before the Washington Conference. I would like to give you the main points of that article, which are as follows; /The witness produced a written document, the substantial points of which were translated on the spot as follows;/

Japan is absolutely dependent on the continent for food-stuffs and raw materials. Japan's dependence on the continent is definite and she cannot permit even temporary interference with it. In peace time, Japan sells her products, and especially manufactured goods, to the continent and gets necessary goods therefrom in return. If this peaceful trade is maintained, no problems will arise. The continued flow of products from the continent is a requisite for the economic life of Japan. She cannot permit even its temporary suspension. If suspended for a month, it would lead to great suffering and calamity. Hence, the demands on the neighboring countries of Asia which will enable Japan to maintain her economic life are certainly not unreasonable, nor are they contrary to international relations. In this respect, they are not unlike relations between the United States and Mexico. That is to say, they are important, but with this difference - that they are a matter of life or death to Japan.

This article reveals very well Japan's feelings in regard to the continent of China. This article was written in 1921. Today it is many times more necessary. That is the end of the first matter, that is to say, the condition in Japan prior to the war.

Now I would like to speak upon the second matter - the economic threat from England and America and the aid to China.

The first point is this; In 1939, America denounced the Japanese-American Treaty of Commerce. Even before that, Japanese-American trade had become very difficult. Japan's economy was, to a large extent, dependent upon America. As I just said, trade became more difficult and things like oil

Continued

Interrogation of Hideki Tojo - 26 February 1946

- 3 -

and scrap iron had ceased to come in. After the denunciation of the Treaty of Commerce, this became much more severe. Japan had two possibilities, one to buy from Central and South America; the other, to get raw materials from the South Seas, including the Netherlands East Indies.

The second point; Japan had to trade with the Netherlands East Indies and with this intent, she negotiated for many months during 1941. However, the negotiations were broken off on June 17, 1941, the Netherlands East Indies having shown an hostile attitude.

Point three; On 25 July 1941, England and America froze Japanese assets. This was the spearhead of an economic blockade. Hence, because of the reasons I have quoted a moment ago - reasons of her existence - Japan was in extreme danger. Japan was not in a state of war with America and England, yet this economic blockade was an hostile action not comparing unfavorably with war itself. The Japanese regarded this being driven into a tight corner as an unjust action.

Point four; On October 24, 1941, on U. S. Navy Day, President ROOSEVELT made a broadcast in which he predicted the continuance of American aid to CHINA and said that the power of America, Britain, China and the Dutch was continuing to increase. On 3 October, according to the newspapers, a conference of British and American leaders was held in Manila. At this conference, an exchange of expert views took place on various Pacific problems of world importance. Also, the strategic situation was scrutinized. The following subjects were investigated;

- a. The problem of joint Anglo-American aid via the Burma Road.
- b. Plans for joint operations between the English forces, which were being increased in the Burma area, and the Chungking forces in Southwest China.
- c. The increase of joint Anglo-American operations in the Pacific, especially joint air force operations.

Continued

Interrogation of Hideki Tojo - 26 February 1946

- 4 -

Point five; Moreover, Brigadier General /phon/ GURŪTĀ, who had been a member of the American Military Mission at Hongkong, said on October 9 just before leaving Hongkong for Chungking: "Our purpose in coming to China was to aid Chungking to continue fighting. From now on we will visit various places in order to bring this about, using Chungking as our headquarters. Needless to say, we will visit Rangoon also and apply every effort to increasing the transport capacity of the Burma Road for handling armaments and military supplies".

I should like to make some concluding remarks on these last points relative to aid to China. The first point is the fact that arms and military supplies were being furnished to China by England and America. The second point is that continued Chinese resistance was being encouraged. The third point is that England and China were engaged in military cooperation. The fourth point is that American and British troops on active duty were going to China and participating in help to that country.

The first matter then, summarizing all the things I have said today, is that Japan was being strangled economically. I would like to continue my explanation tomorrow, especially with regard to the military menace. These things are terribly important and, particularly from the point of view of responsibility, I feel that you must hear them.

- Q-1: Your answers to questions which we have asked you have assisted and will assist us in our investigation. We are only too glad to let you make such explanations as you desire. As you realize, not only will these assist us in our investigation but, should you be tried in connection with these matters, the answers made to these questions could be used against you, so we wish and have wished to give you the opportunity to make full answers in this investigation. We are sure that you have realized from the beginning this situation.
- A-1: Yes. I am very thankful for the way this investigation has been conducted and I am thankful for the efforts you have made to interpret just what I have said. I realize that this trial will, of course, be a trial of me as an individual, but it is not only such - it is also a trial through me of the actions taken by the Empire. It is also a trial of the righteousness or unrighteousness of those actions. In this

Continued

Interrogation of Hlueki Tojo - 26 February 1946

- 5 -

connection, my responsibility is very great since I had important relations with these matters. I also hope that the feelings and thoughts and outcries of the Asiatics will be heard at the trial for this will have an important relationship to the maintenance of peace in the future. I feel that these matters are important and not just an excuse. That is the way I feel.

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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 5 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 26th
day of Feb., 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)