

INTERR OF TOGO, SHIGENORI
11 MAR. 46 (1330 - 1630)

DOC 4116

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON



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

INTERROGATION OF
Shigenori TOGO

Date and Time: 11 March 1946, 1330-1630 hours

Place : Togo Residence, Tokyo

Present : Shigenori TOGO
Toshiro Shimanouchi, Japanese national, Interpreter
Fumihiko Togo, son of Shigenori TOGO
Mr. Roy L. Morgan, Interrogator
Mildred Rich, stenographer

Questions by Mr. Morgan

- Q. You wished to say something more about the delivery of the note to the United States.
- A. Regarding the delivery of the final notification to the United States and the fact that the Japanese operations against the United States, that is the delivery of the note took place after the operations against the United States had begun, I spoke of the matter to TOJO that broadcasts to that effect were being made by the United States and that the United States was making an issue of it shortly after such information came to me. At that time I recall TOJO as having said, "I wonder how such a delay took place, or could it be that the United States on its part had hampered the delivery of the note." To that point I said, "I do not think so, but that at least, since no communication could be had with NOMURA, we had better wait until NOMURA returned to Japan." To this opinion of mine TOJO expressed concurrence. That is about all that I can recall.
- Q. Did the Swiss Legation notify you concerning when the note was delivered with regard to the time that hostilities began.
- A. I do not recall anything from the Swiss Legation.
- Q. TOJO, when questioned, said the time and the details for the delivery of the note were referred to you, as the Foreign Minister, and that it was not decided at the time of the liaison conferences.
- A. If it were an ordinary note the Foreign Minister could handle it all on his own responsibility, but as the note in question involved the commencement of hostilities, it was too grave a problem to be handled by the Foreign Minister alone and, naturally, must be a matter with which the liaison conference should have a part in. As a matter of fact, all questions relative to the Japanese-American relations and the question of war were all discussed and decided at the liaison conferences; and, therefore, as I have explained before, the steps were taken when the matter was first brought up at the liaison conference, and I made my contention, and the navy its, and the matter was undecided. ITO called on

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me frequently on the former matter, and it was finally agreed upon between myself and the two vice chiefs of staff; it was then reported to the liaison conference, where it was approved without objection. That TOJO should say that this was entirely a matter concerning the Foreign Minister and that he should not know about it is something that cannot ever be dreamed of.

Q. In other words, TOJO knew the details and the time as well as the Foreign Minister.

A. Of course.

Q. Did TOJO inform you and the two chiefs of staff of the Emperor's anxiety regarding the note.

A. I think that TOJO spoke of it, but I cannot recall when or where it was. But, as I said before, the principal stress on the question was placed on the point that we must await Ambassador NOMURA's return.

Q. Prior to the delivery of the note did TOJO inform either you or the two chiefs of staff that the Emperor was anxious that the note be delivered in time.

A. I do not recall anything as to that. I do not recall TOJO telling me that. I do not have any special recollection of any special remark of TOJO to that effect, as it was generally considered only natural that the note should be delivered as arranged.

Q. Did TOJO tell you that it was his order, as Prime Minister, that the final note was to be delivered prior to the attack.

A. There were no special orders to that effect from TOJO, as the procedure in giving notification to the United States before the commencement of hostilities was brought up and discussed at the liaison conference and was later agreed upon and decided in the manner I have already described. It was as a matter of course that this procedure should be taken, and it was at my initiative and insistence that this procedure was taken; and, therefore, from the point of view of common sense any orders to that effect would not be necessary.

Q. In other words, you do not recall TOJO ever making such an order.

A. I do not recall TOJO specifically issuing such an order.

Q. Were you satisfied prior to the return of NOMURA and KURUSU that the note was late in its delivery.

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- A. From the very outset I have been dissatisfied over the delay in the delivery of the note, especially in view of the fact that specific instructions had been sent to Washington to be sure that the note be delivered on the time specified without mistake. I was, furthermore, much dissatisfied, especially in view of the fact that the note was of such grave importance, that whoever the plenipotentiary and his staff representing our country should not see to it - - - should be so careless as not to carry out the instructions as given.
- Q. I think you misunderstood my question, but since you have stated that, I would like to ask if there were any reasons that NOMURA and KURUSU could have interpreted the note other than a declaration of war, as you have so interpreted it.
- A. Both Ambassadors NOMURA and KURUSU would have known from that that it would mean war inasmuch as after the receipt of the HULL memorandum of November 26 these two Ambassadors sent a telegram recommending that if Japan were going to take freedom of action, which, in other words, means war, that notification of the cessation of negotiations be made both in Tokyo and in Washington. Such being the case, both NOMURA and KURUSU naturally should have known that the last note meant war. As a matter of fact, it was general knowledge and opinion, not only in Japan, but even in the United States, that cessation of negotiations would directly lead to war. As a matter of fact, in the telegram addressed by NOMURA and KURUSU to Japan following the HULL note, that is on November 27, which you pointed out last time, I recall the Ambassadors saying that cessation of negotiations would mean war and that it was because of that that they were proposing the suggestions which were made in that telegram. And so, whether in Tokyo or in Washington, that cessation of negotiations meant war was the prevailing understanding.
- Q. In other words, when you say, "in Washington," you mean NOMURA AND KURUSU.
- A. By "Washington", I mean not only NOMURA and KURUSU, but also the White House and the State Department.
- Q. Was KURUSU informed by you prior to his departure to the United States that if negotiations were not successful Japan would find it necessary to go to war against the United States.
- A. Before KURUSU left for the United States I explained and emphasized the acuteness of the situation and that if the negotiations did not reach a successful conclusion war might be unavoidable. And, in that light, my instructions to KURUSU was to explain that acute situation clearly to NOMURA and to cooperate with NOMURA in Washington in order to persuade the United States in their negotiations in order to avoid war. Those were my instructions and that was the mission which sent KURUSU to Washington.

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- Q. Did KURUSU or NOMURA or both have any knowledge prior to the attack on December 7, Washington time, that Japan would attack the United States around that period, on that date, or near that time, if negotiations were not successful.
- A. They were not specifically so informed.
- Q. How were they informed, if not specifically informed.
- A. They were informed at various times that if the situation should reach the last stage any move thereafter would mean that war would be unavoidable, and going back even to the NOMURA-KURUSU telegram of November 27, they were already expecting under the situation that if a final note were sent, it would mean war.
- Q. What information do you have of your own knowledge that they would expect war with such a final note.
- A. It should be clear by the NOMURA-KURUSU telegram recommending that before Japan take freedom of action to make final notification of the cessation of negotiations both in Tokyo and Washington. And, therefore, by the mere sending of the final notification they could not have but known that Japan would be taking freedom of action, or, in other words, commencement of hostilities.
- Q. On what date was that telegram received, do you recall.
- A. As I recall, very soon after the HULL note. In my recollection that telegram was dispatched from Washington on the same day, November 26.
- Q. Between the time of the receipt of the telegram regarding the proposal concerning President Roosevelt on November 27 and the message concerning the delivery of the note, were there any communications between you and NOMURA and KURUSU by telephone or by any other method of communication.
- A. There were exchanges of telegrams, but as far as telephone communication is concerned, I have never had them myself.
- Q. Did any one else to your knowledge have any communication with NOMURA and KURUSU during this time.
- A. You mean outside the Foreign Office.
- Q. Yes.
- A. I do not know anything at all.
- Q. When NOMURA and KURUSU returned from Washington you had conversations with them, I presume.

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- A. I met both Ambassadors on their return to Japan on the 20th of August, 1942, and the next time at a dinner at the Prime Minister's official residence on August 31. But as the serious question of the creation of the GEA Ministry then existed and the following day I resigned, I did not have the opportunity, nor the occasion, to inquire into the matter in detail. Having before that issued instructions to my subordinate officials, especially the Chief of the Cable Section, investigation of the matter was made. It was after I had resigned as Foreign Minister that I learned that the investigation had been made. It was my understanding that the investigation made by the Chief of the Cable Section was concerning those who handled both the dispatch and the receipt of the telegrams.
- Q. What did the investigation reveal.
- A. As I recall, I was informed that this very long telegram, sent out in fourteen installments, reached the Embassy in Washington at not a very late time on the 6th, Washington time, except the last portion, which, as I was told, arrived about five o'clock on the morning of the 7th, Washington time. And, therefore, if the decoding and preparatory work had been begun instantly without delay, and even if the last portion had arrived at five o'clock AM of the 7th, the Cable Chief considered that there was sufficient time to complete the decoding and the general preparation of the note to be delivered to the United States government not later than the appointed time.
- Q. What was NOMURA's explanation regarding the delay in Washington.
- A. Having resigned as Foreign Minister, and having hardly any opportunity to meet NOMURA, I have not heard NOMURA's explanation.
- Q. Realizing from the American broadcasts and other sources of information that the note had been delivered late, was it not natural for you to ask NOMURA about this on his return to Japan, at which time you were still Foreign Minister.
- A. Naturally, it was my intention to inquire, but when NOMURA returned on the 20th of August, 1942, I had not then considered resignation, and, therefore, there was no hurry in inquiring into the matter, but shortly thereafter the GEA Ministry issue became extremely acute, leading to my resignation on September 1, that my time was entirely occupied on the matter and that I had no time for anything else. I think that further explanation would be in order to have you obtain a fuller picture of the situation, and that is that even at that time I had even some doubts that NOMURA himself was fully acquainted with all the details because it has been a practice in the Foreign Office for subordinate officials to send telegrams out in the name of the Foreign Minister (without the knowledge of the Foreign Minister), but this does not mean that I was not acquainted with all the important communications

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relative to the Japanese-American negotiations. So in the light of such a practice, it could have been the case in Washington that Ambassador NOMURA was not aware of all the details as to what time the telegrams had arrived or why the delay was caused. And, therefore, it was my idea that any thorough investigation should be directed at the staff, or the officials, in charge of such matters and after inquiring of them to ask NOMURA later. I think that if you are interested in going more accurately into the details, you might inquire of the Chief of the Cable Section. His name is KAMEYAMA, Ichiji.

Q. Did you ever receive information from KURUSU and NOMURA, or from any other source, to indicate that NOMURA and KURUSU had heard of the attack on Pearl Harbor prior to the delivery of the note, which was delivered subsequent to the attack.

A. I did not know at the time whether NOMURA or KURUSU knew, but later on, about 1944, when I had the opportunity to read the book, "How War Came," by Davis and Lindley, which described the circumstances of that time in detail, and having attracted my interest, I asked KURUSU about it, and he told me that he had not known that such an attack had been made until he was informed by Secretary HULL at the time the note was delivered.

Q. I understand that TOJO said that an attack on Pearl Harbor was mentioned at one of the liaison conferences. Is that true.

A. I do not recall any reference whatsoever to Pearl Harbor. The explanation from the high command which I recall was especially relative to operations in the Southwest Pacific and as to the period of time which would be required to occupy such points as the Philippines, Malaya and the Netherlands Indies. I do not recall any reference made to Pearl Harbor.

Q. Did NOMURA or KURUSU or both of them know that if an attack was made that Pearl Harbor would be the first point of attack.

A. I did not know and neither did they know, at least my own source of information had nothing of that kind.

Q. If TOJO said that you did not keep him notified as to negotiations and that he got a copy of HULL's note from some one else, what would you say.

A. That TOJO should receive a copy of the HULL note or to be informed of the HULL note from any other source but the Foreign Office would be impossible, inasmuch as the note came to the Foreign Office. As a matter of fact, the existing set up was such that all telegrams bearing on the matter were automatically sent by the Foreign Office bureau in charge to the army and navy offices, as well as to the general staffs, and the Director of the Military Affairs Bureau, and the Director of the Navy Affairs Bureau, and their heads were in close and constant touch

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with the foreign office and to such an extent that it was absolutely unnecessary for me to inform TOJO or others concerned of each item; so TOJO would naturally be informed of such an important note without my having to tell him. I recall that before the Cabinet meeting on or about November 28, I consulted with him regarding the HULL note; and also the telegram sent by NOMURA and KURUSU followed that note; so I should think that TOJO was already familiar with the HULL memorandum without my having to tell him.]
- Q. I understand from what you have said before, and I also understand from what TOJO says, that at the final liaison conference all persons attending, which included you, expressed the unanimous agreement in favor of attacking the United States, Great Britain and the Dutch East Indies. Is that correct.
- A. The decision for war was made at the Imperial Conference on December 1. At the liaison conference immediately before that it was unanimously agreed that war be made on the United States, Great Britain and the Netherlands.
- Q. I understand from what you have said that you also agreed along with the other members to wage war with the United States, Great Britain, and the Netherlands.
- A. Yes. As to the reason why, I think I have sufficiently explained why it was unavoidable to express agreement.
- Q. On December 8 after hostilities had begun you had occasion to talk with GREW around 7:00 AM. On this occasion what did you state to GREW.
- A. I had seen GREW earlier that morning, that is after midnight, regarding the message from the President to the Emperor. But following that, due to telephonic difficulties, GREW did not come to my office until 7:00 AM. At that time I told him about the Emperor's decision regarding that telegraphic message and the final notification of the Japanese government, and for his reference I gave him a copy of the final Japanese note. At that time, although the radio was already broadcasting the attack on Pearl Harbor, Ambassador GREW strangely showed an attitude which was not quite in conformity with the situation, in other words, he did not show the seriousness which would be more in conformity with that situation. That was all insofar as that interview was concerned.
- Q. You had a Cabinet meeting after your interview with GREW on the morning of December 8, Tokyo time.
- A. There was a Cabinet meeting after my meeting with GREW on the morning of the 8th.

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- Q. May I ask what transpired at that Cabinet meeting.
- A. The Cabinet meeting was held rather early, and because I was preoccupied with my meeting with GREW and CRAGIE, I was unable to attend the Cabinet session, as I recall, but attended the meeting of the Privy Council, which immediately followed the meeting of the Cabinet, and the question at that time was the Emperor's proclamation of war.
- Q. At what time was the Emperor's declaration of war.
- A. I don't recall the exact time, but it seemed to be somewhere shortly after 11:00 the morning of December 8.
- Q. In what manner was the Netherlands notified.
- A. I think they were informed by written notification.
- Q. Who would deliver that.
- A. Ordinarily notes were delivered by messenger, but important messages would be handled by a secretary in the Foreign Office. But I don't know who carried the notification as the execution of such matters was left to subordinate officials.
- Q. TOJO in his statement placed complete responsibility for delivery of the note on you and also indicated that he had been asked repeatedly by the Emperor as to proper delivery of the note, which he transmitted to you.
- A. The conduct of the Japanese-American relations was carried on by the liaison conference through the Foreign Office as the means of communication, but after the matter had gone beyond the stage of negotiations to the question of war, then it became a question of vast importance to the high command, as the army and navy itself, because complete war naturally involved them. And, therefore, it was not a question that could be handled by the Foreign Minister on his own. As to the question of delivery of the note, it was I, myself, who initiated and successfully contended that a procedure be taken to notify the United States in advance and accordingly sent instructions. That it was hardly necessary for me to get orders to such effect from others - - As to the conversations between TOJO and the Emperor, I consider that they are very probable inasmuch as since the KONOYE Cabinet it was the custom that any decision of the liaison conference were as far as the government concerned reported by the Prime Minister to the Emperor in order to avoid any possible complications. That the matter of the delivery of the note was entirely the responsibility of the Foreign Minister, and that he did not know about it seems to contradict with his conversation with the Emperor, in which, as I understand your notes, he was frequently told to be sure that the notification be made without delay. I think that the situation is very clear, inasmuch as the necessary instructions had been sent to NOMURA and that NOMURA had acknowledge the receipt of those instructions and that whatever delay there was was caused by difficulties in Washington.

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- Q. During the liaison conferences when NAGANO and ITO advocated that no notification be given to the United States and that a surprise attack was necessary, did SUZUKI, HOSHINO and TOJO support them in their views regarding no notification before attack.
- A. As I recall, NAGANO stressed the importance and the need of a surprise attack in order to win. This struck me as disappointing in view of the fact that the fighting services had previously expressed confidence that they would not lose the war. As for TOJO, being presiding officer at all liaison conferences, I do not recall his making any statements on the matter. However, I recall SUZUKI as supporting the view expressed by NAGANO. As I recall, nobody supported my views, which were in favor of notification, and the general atmosphere and attitude of the conference was in favor of a surprise attack. That is about the only conclusion that I could draw.
- Q. With reference to the question I asked you previously concerning the fact that you considered that Japan was bound by international law and treaties, do I understand that you reviewed the Hague Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand Pact prior to the composition of the final note.
- A. Regarding the Hague Treaty or the Kellogg-Briand Pact, I have not for a moment forgotten their existence.
- Q. In other words, you did consider that Japan, as a party to both of those treaties, would be bound to their provisions.
- A. As a signatory of the Hague Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand Pact, Japan, of course, was bound by the stipulations therein; but whether the Japanese actions were in conformance with those stipulations, the actual facts regarding them is to be explained more fully and properly in written form. So if you would kindly wait until my written note is prepared it would be preferable.
- Q. Do you know SHIRATORI.
- A. I know SHIRATORI well, as both of us entered the Foreign Service about the same time.
- Q. Did you ever have any conversations with SHIRATORI concerning Japanese expansion into the Far East.
- A. No, not on that question.
- Q. Did you have any conversations with SHIRATORI concerning the Tripartite agreement.
- A. When I was recalled from Moscow, the Tripartite Pact had already been concluded and SHIRATORI was at that time adviser to the Foreign Office. SHIRATORI was at that time stressing the advantages of the Tripartite Pact. Before that, when I was ambassador to Moscow, OSHIMA called a conference of ambassadors and ministers - - - I attended a meeting in

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- Berlin at which OSHIMA and SHIRATORI were present. The Tripartite Alliance was discussed and argued there. Both OSHIMA and SHIRATORI, being rather steeped in totalitarianism, spoke in favor of it as beneficial toward the settlement of the China Incident, but I opposed their contentions strongly; and we separated without any agreement of views. That is about the only time I recall discussing the subject with SHIRATORI.
- Q. Am I correct in stating that SHIRATORI was a civilian with strong pro-militaristic leanings.
- A. I do not think you are mistaken in your estimate.
- Q. Wasn't that one of the principal reasons that they sent him to Italy - in order to induce Mussolini to enter into a military alliance with Germany and Japan.
- A. I don't know whether he was sent to Rome with such instructions, but after he got there and was there he became an admirer of Mussolini and was very enthusiastic about forming this three-power alliance.
- Q. At the conference in Berlin which you just mentioned, what did SHIRATORI say regarding why Japan should enter into an alliance with Germany and Italy.
- A. As I recall, the general line of SHIRATORI's argument was that Germany and Italy were then the rising powers of Europe and that if Japan aligned itself with them it would add great strength to Japan's position and enable Japan to settle the issue in China.
- Q. Did he go into any further detail concerning how it would aid Japan's position in the Pacific and the settlement of the China problem.
- A. SHIRATORI is not a man who talks in concrete terms, and his arguments were, therefore, of a very general nature and did not touch at all on questions as to the relationship of materials, productive power and matters of that kind. His statements were of a general nature to the effect that if Japan aligned herself with the European Axis her position in the Far East would be improved.
- Q. In order to clarify my question and to refresh your memory, did SHIRATORI explain to you his sentiments in favor of the Tripartite agreement in somewhat the following terms: For example, if Japan entered into a military alliance with Germany and Italy, such an alliance would give Japan strength, inasmuch as both Germany and Italy were very successful in Europe. In gaining this strength, Japan could move southward as well as settle the Chinese question favorably to Japan. In doing so, the United States would be in a position that if it in any way attempted to interfere with Japan's policy and efforts in establishing the new order in East Asia, the United States would be deterred for fear of Germany and Italy waging war against it.

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- A. That may be the general line of SHIRATORI's argument. Since my views were diametrically opposed from the outset, it was impossible to continue any arguments, as I, from the very first, had never estimated German-Italian strength to be as much as claimed and consistently opposed entering into a military alliance with those powers.
- Q. Do you recall that that was the general line of SHIRATORI and OSHIMA's argument in favor of the military alliance.
- A. As I recall, SHIRATORI and OSHIMA's general arguments, as I said before, was that Germany and Italy were rising powers in Europe and to align with them would enable Japan to improve her position in the Far East and help out in the settlement of the China issue. Those who enthusiastically favored the Tripartite military alliance were of that line of argument, especially such men as OSHIMA, who was so steeped in the matter that he had always said that Germany would win the war. SHIRATORI and MATSUOKA also.
- Q. And these individuals expressed their views in this manner to you on various occasions during that time.
- A. As I said before, I had occasion to discuss this matter on only two occasions - SHIRATORI and OSHIMA in Berlin and SHIRATORI later in Japan when he was adviser to the Foreign Office; but other than that my general understanding is to that effect.
- Q. What about MATSUOKA - - -
- A. I do not recall hearing directly from MATSUOKA on that question of the Tripartite Alliance, inasmuch as the Pact had already been concluded when I returned from Moscow.

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Certificate of Stenographer:

I, Mildred Rich, hereby certify that I acted as stenographer at the interrogation set out herewith, 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.

Mildred Rich

Certificate of Interrogator:

I, Roy L. Morgan, certify that on 11 March 1946 Shigenori TOGO personally gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth herein.

Roy L. Morgan

INTERNATIONAL PROSECUTION SECTION

REQUEST FORM

2 August

1946

INCIDENT - ACCUSED

JUDGE ALBERT WILLIAMS

The undersigned requests the consideration of Document # 4116
(Describe):

Excerpts from interrogation of Shigenori TOGO dated 11 March 1946
1330-1630 hours, as follows:

All of page 1, beginning "You wished to say..." and ending with
the second answer on page 2, "Of course".

for introduction in evidence (specify purpose)

In proving the preparations and responsibility for war against
the United States.

ROY L. MORGAN

Staff Attorney

1946

TO THE DOCUMENT OFFICER:

The above document has been approved for processing by you with
changes as follows:

Judge Albert Williams
Document Control Attorney

By

Secretary