

INTERROGATION OF Colonel Kingoro HASHIMOTO

14 Feb. 46

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



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

4103

INTERROGATION OF  
Colonel Kingoro HASHIMOTO

DATE: 14 February 1946

INTERROGATOR:

Mr. Hugh B. Helm

CASE NO. 343

343-8

INTERROGATION OF

Colonel Kingoro HASHIMOTO

Date and Time: 14 February 1946, 1030-1200 hours

Place : Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan

Present : Colonel Kingoro HASHIMOTO  
Mr. Hugh B. Helm, Interrogator  
Lt Commander Frank B. Huggins, Interpreter  
Miss Edna Hickam, Stenographer

Oath of Interpreter: Administered by Mr. Helm:

Mr. Helm: 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.

Questions by: Mr. Hugh B. Helm.

Q. Would you mind explaining what all that means (indicating design of broken egg shell on cover of book)?

A. The publisher put it on and I do not know what it means.

Q. Now at the time this book was published, were you an official in the IRAA?

A. I believe so.

Q. Now will you state just what position you held in the IRAA at this time?

A. Sōma. (Interpreter's Note: Which I believe translates General Affairs Secretary.)

Q. You were also a permanent director, were you not?

A. Yes.

Q. And Prince Kenoye had asked you to be on the preparatory committee, had he not?

A. Yes.

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- Q. Quoting from the Japan Year Book for 1941-42, in the article on page 175, entitled "National Movement for Assisting the Throne," the following appears: "The move is highly political in nature." Isn't that so?
- A. Prince Konoze originally thought of it as being a political movement, but because of the clamor in the Diet, all political action was stripped from it.
- Q. The party aimed at "superseding the old party politics characterized by sectional interests and predicated upon liberalism?"
- A. That was the original idea.
- Q. It was "essentially national, all embracing and public spirited in character, was it not?"
- A. That is substantially so.
- Q. And it aimed at "the concentration and unification of all the forces and resources of the nation"? Its activity extended to the whole life of the nation, did it not?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Now quoting further from the Year Book, "the President controls the Association and directs the movement; the Prime Minister is President ex officio." Is that true?
- A. That is a question of terminology as the Prime Minister is actually the President and under him the man who controls the Association and directs the movement thereof is known as the Vice President.
- Q. Now, Colonel, if a new man became Prime Minister he also became President of this Association, didn't he?
- A. That is correct.
- Q. Colonel, as to the membership of the Association, the Japan Year Book 1941-1942 states "The Association for assisting the Throne being a movement that concerns the entire nation, every individual of the Japanese Race is by birthright qualified for membership in it in the widest sense of the term." Is that not a true statement?
- A. Yes.
- Q. As a matter of fact, the effect of this Association was to create a single party in the Diet replacing all the other political parties, was it not?
- A. That was the aim; but the result was that the Diet members fought the scheme and ultimately succeeded in keeping the IRAA out of politics.

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- Q. Did nearly everybody in Japan belong to this society?  
A. One hundred million.
- Q. Would you say that this association largely resembled a Fascist Party?  
(Comment by Interrogator to Interpreter: Explain to him that we understand that under the Japanese constitution there couldn't be a one-party system, but ask him if actually this was not the beginning of the institution of somewhat of a Fascist Party in Japan.)  
A. Outside the realm of politics it worked to unite the people as one and to follow the road behind the Emperor.
- Q. Colonel, wouldn't you say that this association had accomplished the same thing in Japan in the way of a national mobilization of efforts and resources that the Nazi party did in Germany, or the Fascist party did in Italy?  
A. The only difference is that we had nothing to do with politics.
- Q. However, I will direct your attention back to one of your first answers this morning, in which you verified the statement in the Japan Year Book that the "movement was highly political in nature."  
A. It was originally political, but was eventually prohibited from having any part in political action.
- Q. Didn't you say the main purpose was to unify the nation back of the military for defense of the nation and its principles?  
A. No. Konoye was not thinking along those lines. The political parties had disbanded and therefore Konoye thought, I believe, that this movement would make it possible to have a new and strong single party.
- Q. And you agreed with him?  
A. Yes I agreed with him and worked towards it. That was the reason I became a member of the Preparatory Committee.
- Q. Now I hand you a document marked "Evidentiary Document 490," and ask you to look at it. I show you your picture in the front of the book. The name of this book is "How to Rebuild the World," and I ask you, did you write this book?  
A. Yes.
- Q. When?  
A. Around 1941 I believe.

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- Q. Were you still officially connected with the Imperial Rule Assistance Association?
- A. Not at this time.
- Q. At this time were you in the IRAPS?
- A. No, the IRAPS had not been set up yet.
- Q. Why had you gotten out of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association at this time?
- A. We resigned along with ARIMA, who had been the General Affairs Chairman. I was in only for six months and resigned along with ARIMA.
- Q. Why did you resign?
- A. KONOYE got rid of ARIMA with whom we had been working, and so we all resigned at the same time.
- Q. Why did he get rid of ARIMA?
- A. I am not sure, but I believe that ARIMA and KONOYE were unfriendly.
- Q. Were you dissatisfied with the way the IRAA was being run at this time?
- A. No.
- Q. Why did you get out?
- A. There was actually no particular reason.
- Q. How long before you joined the IRAPS?
- A. I believe I resigned from the IRAA in February of 1941 and the IRAPS was not set up until April of 1942.
- Q. I will ask you, Colonel, if your book "How to Rebuild the World" was not published 30 January 1941?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Then it was published while you were still a member of the IRAA, wasn't it?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Then your other answer was a mistake, was it not?
- A. I believe I said I was still a member.
- Q. To clear it up anyway, Colonel, you were still officially connected with IRAA when this book was given to the nation?
- A. Yes.

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- Q. Now, Colonel, we are not trying to trick you. Any time that through a fault of memory or something you make an error in an answer and you want to go back and change it, please feel free to do so. All we are after is the truth.
- Q. Now, directing your attention to page 10, do you not urge there that the "new order of Japan should be won by shedding blood"?
- A. That expression is not used. In essence this is what I mean: That a new national structure can not be built simply on orders from above, but must rise out of the turmoil and strife of the people.
- Q. Directing your attention to page 72, do you not urge that the only political party which should be established is the one with the Emperor as its leader?
- A. What I mean is that instead of having political parties which strive through elections to win something for their individual or collective profit, we should have a single party which, unified behind the Emperor, will lead the way.
- Q. Directing your attention to page 83 of this same book, do you not urge a "reformation of Japan is an urgent necessity. Liberalism should be taken away from every sphere."?
- A. Yes, more or less. Liberalism must be done away with because this is a form under which different individuals strive to make money for themselves or gain power for themselves, and do not heed the overall wishes of the nation.
- Q. Colonel, this cover design seems to be a large eplotch of blood. Will you explain the significance of that?
- A. Although the book publisher had the cover made, I believe it is supposed to be a sun.
- Q. Well it looks like it might have been made by a finger dipped in blood, doesn't it?
- A. It isn't so. (Answered with a smile.)
- Q. It looks like it, though, doesn't it?
- A. I think it is a rising sun or a sun with its rays.
- Q. Now, Colonel, in July 1937, were you not a leader in the Young Men's Political Party in Japan?
- A. There was no political organization.



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Q. You were the leader of a Young Men's Organization at this time?

A. Yes.

Q. What was your position in this organization -- President?

A. I was the President.

Q. I hand you a book marked for identification "Evidentiary Document 487," and ask you to look at this book.

A. This is my book.

Q. Is not the title of this book "Speeches to Young Men"?

A. Yes.

Q. I point to your picture in the front of the book, that is the Japanese front, and ask -- did you write this book?

A. Yes. If you go into detail on this book, some of the academic subjects in it are things that I heard from others so that it might be a little difficult for me to explain fully. However, I wrote it.

Q. That's all right, Colonel. Directing your attention to page 12, is Chapter II not headed "Destruction of World Liberalism"?

A. That is correct.

Q. In this chapter, do you not attack liberalism, majority rule, imperialism, and white rule?

Q. And in this chapter you advocate substituting a controlled economy for free economy, do you not?

A. Yes.

Q. And on page 23, don't you say "The existing world order has come to such a pass that it must either settle accounts or undergo a second world war"?

A. Yes.

Q. Still, from your book, "Speeches to Young Men," on page 24, Chapter III, headed "Material Civilization and Spiritual Culture," don't you say that "The white man has conquered four-fifths of the globe and Japan alone is standing against him. Unless strengthened by Japanese influences, Asiatic peoples fall prey to the white man." You then present historical arguments to the effect that Asiatic arms were often and Asiatic culture was always superior to European. You then view history as a struggle between the Europeans and

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Asiatics and say "for three thousand years the Asiatics were superior, but in the past three hundred years the white man turned the tables because of his material progress." Then you further say "Does this mean that Asiatic spiritualism will always bow to materialism? No! Not the true Asiatic Spirit, but a degenerated form of it was defeated. Japan will lead a revival of the old Asiatic culture." Are these not accurate quotations and statements from this chapter?

- A. Yes, in substance these are my remarks. What I have said in essence is that European material civilization has defeated our Asiatic spiritual civilization, but that this state of affairs does not necessarily have to continue, and that we must rise.
- Q. I will direct your attention to Chapter 7 of this same book published in 1937, headed "Japan of the World, the World of Japan," and will ask if you don't say there -- "Japan for Japan's sake; Japan for the world's sake; the world for Japan's sake. Building a better Japan was our chief aim. At the time of the Meiji restoration Japan was on the first stage. A better Japan thus built, however, must be a power of the world since after the Sino-Japanese war, which was quite an epoch making war for Japan, Japan's power has been recognized and become one of the three most powerful nations in the world. But this is never the end of all. We must build the world for Japan's sake. Heaven ordered Japan to achieve its great mission. The Manchurian incident has thus occurred." Is that not a correct quotation?
- A. That is substantially a correct translation.
- Q. Do you not argue in this same chapter that Japan is literally forced to expand by the white man, that because of emigration and national industrialism being blocked and boycotted by the whites, the only course left is for Japan to enlarge her territory.
- A. That is correct.
- Q. Then don't you say in that chapter that "there are four countries we must watch today -- China, Soviet Russia, America, and the English Empire.
- A. Yes.
- Q. In Chapter VIII of this same book entitled "Speeches to Young Men," don't you say on page 201, "Our Army and Navy are personally controlled by the Emperor and are the means to show the dignity of this country of the Gods."
- A. Yes that is correct.

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- Q. And then back to pages 219 through 221, don't you say that "the Dai Nippon Seinento (Young Men's Party of Greater Japan) has been organized to fulfill a great mission. This party is fair and disinterested in spirit, pious towards the Emperor; it will lead the nation in striving for one party rule for the country."
- A. Yes, that is correct.
- Q. Colonel, I will ask you if the speeches contained in this book depicted fairly the manner in which you exerted your leadership on the young men of Japan?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Colonel, I would like to ask you if you feel that you have been treated fairly by Colonel Woolworth, Captain Robinson and myself in these questionings?  
(Comment by Interpreter: It is very difficult to put that word across -- I asked him if he felt the questionings had been carried out properly.)
- A. Yes, I believe so. However, the IRAA seems to be something which it is very difficult for the Americans to understand.
- Q. I want to assure you again that it is our desire to treat you personally with every courtesy and to deal with you fairly at all times. And if your testimony in these hearings is used against you in case you are tried before the International Tribunal, will you be satisfied?
- A. Yes.
- Q. We will see you tomorrow morning.

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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 eight pages, numbered 1 to 8 inclusive, is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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Subscribed and sworn to before me this 15th day of February 1946.

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(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.

I, Hugh B. Helm, certify that on the 14th day of February 1946 personally appeared before me Kingoro HASHIMOTO, and according to Lt Commander Frank B. Huggins, interpreter, gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth herein.

Tokyo, Japan

15 February 1946

The original transcript of this interrogation will be found in our EXHIBIT FILE as EXHIBIT # 282. The original shorthand notes of Miss C. Hickman on this interrogation will be found in our EXHIBIT FILE as EXHIBIT # 283.

FILE NO. 343  
SERIAL NO. 8