

INTERP OF T860, SHIGENORI

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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: 8 March 1946, 0915-1330 hours

Place : Togo Residence, Tokyo

Present : Shigenori TOGO
Toshiro Shimanouchi, Interpreter (Japanese national)
Fumihiko Togo, son of Shigenori TOGO
Mr. Roy L. Morgan, Interrogator
Pfc. Francis Suzukwa, Interpreter
Mildred Rich, Stenographer

Questions by Mr. Morgan

Interpretation by Shimanouchi

- Q. I would like to know who was directly responsible for the creation of the Ministry of Greater East Asia.
- A. The responsibility for the establishment of the ministry rests chiefly with TOJO, but as I mentioned previously, SUZUKI and other members of the group also have a great deal of responsibility for its establishment. The idea of the Ministry of Greater East Asia Affairs was concerned with matters within the area outside of China but chiefly arose from the China Affair. As a matter of fact, concerning China, there was this organ called the China Affairs Bureau, in which SUZUKI and his clique were very influential. I strongly opposed the China Affairs Board, and as the result of that opposition SUZUKI and his group even more I opposed the methods and administration in the China Affairs Board, but SUZUKI and his clique had the idea to apply that same method and application to a large sphere extending to other areas of East Asia, therefore I was naturally opposed. That may be considered the chief contributing cause for the creation of the Greater East Asia Ministry.
- Q. Who were included in SUZUKI's clique.
- A. Those other than SUZUKI were HOSHINO and the President of the China Affairs Board, Lt. General OIKAWA, whose first name I do not recall, who were of the same idea as SUZUKI.
- Q. SUZUKI worked hand in hand with TOJO and carried out the desires of TOJO in regard to the Greater East Asia Ministry.
- A. That is so, but TOJO on his part has also been greatly influenced by SUZUKI.
- Q. What was the prime functions of the China Affairs Bureau prior to its absorption by the Greater East Asia Ministry.

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- A. The principal function of the China Affairs Board was the conduct of all matters relating to China with the exception of diplomacy, diplomacy in the very narrowest sense of the term. The China Affairs Board was created at the time General UGAKI was Foreign Minister. He opposed the idea of its creation and the opposition was so great that it led to his resignation. His opposition was against diplomacy in the very narrow sense of the term. The creation of the China Affairs Board may be regarded as the beginning of a new and major stage concerning the China problem, thus making the settlement of the China problem all the more complicated and difficult.
- Q. This China Affairs Bureau took away from the Foreign Office its jurisdiction as far as diplomacy was concerned.
- A. The diplomatic functions which remained with the Foreign Office were extremely circumscribed. The Chinese government in Nanking had intercourse with the Japanese government, and the Japanese Ambassador accredited to that government was a Foreign Office man representing the Foreign Office. However, as far as matters were concerned relating to economics, finances, transportation, the actual handling of such matters was done by officials of the China Affairs Board, even in China.
- Q. Could you give in somewhat detail the functions of the China Affairs Bureau in China.
- A. The two centers of activity of the China Affairs Board were Peiping and Shanghai, where a very large number of officials were sent, as well as other areas of China, where a considerable number were stationed. They handled industries, transportation and economic problems and business, as well as transactions between Japan and China, such as the purchasing of various materials outside of business handled directly by the army and navy. As a matter of fact, these officials of the China Affairs Board handled virtually all matters relative to China, with the exception of matters relating to the army and navy.
- Q. With reference to its industrial functions, do I understand that the China Affairs Board organized industry in China to the extent that industry in China was such that the manufacture of goods and possibly war materials was fostered by Japan through this Bureau.
- A. As you understand, "war materials" the way war is conducted today has a very broad meaning and covers many articles. Insofar as war materials as such directly useful to war, probably the army and navy handled it, but insofar as the general industries were concerned, some of which may produce materials directly useful to war, they were handled by the China Affairs Board. The actual operation of the enterprises concerned with them were in charge of special Japanese companies, companies jointly operated by Chinese and Japanese, and by Chinese companies; and their enterprises related to a rather broad field, including cotton production, spinning, mining, etc.

- Q. As I understand, this China Affairs Bureau had control of all industries, which would include railroads and other methods of transportation, as well as manufacturing concerns in China which were not directly under the control of the army, regardless of whether they were owned by Japanese nationals or jointly owned by Japanese and Chinese, or whether they were owned by Chinese individuals.
- A. The China Affairs Board did not directly manage these enterprises, but it might be said they controlled or supervised their operation.
- Q. No doubt that was one of the greatest objections that General UGAKI had when he was Foreign Minister, and also one of the greatest objections that you had when the Greater East Asia Ministry was created, since this ministry was created along the same lines and with the same functions as the China Affairs Bureau.
- A. I have had from UGAKI a few years ago his reasons for opposing the China Affairs Board. His reason was that diplomacy was interpreted in the very narrow sense of the term, and that all other matters were to be transferred to the hands of the militarists or to organizations and persons directly associated with the militarists, and that almost all items outside of diplomacy in the very narrow sense of the term would include economic problems as well. This, in UGAKI's view, would render extremely difficult the settlement of the China problem. My opposition to the establishment of the Ministry of Greater East Asia Affairs was along the same line as UGAKI's, but in addition to that, I opposed its creation because it further or even more circumscribed diplomatic functions and was contradictory to the principle of unified diplomacy. Also, to treat the countries in Greater East Asia on a special basis would not only offend the peoples of these countries, but would not be a good way in fostering the spirit of the good neighbor and also fostering cooperation between these countries and Japan. These may be considered as some of the major reasons why I opposed the creation of this ministry.
- Q. Both the China Affairs Bureau and the Ministry of Greater East Asia were military or army organizations.
- A. I do not think it proper to consider either the China Affairs Board or the Ministry of Greater East Asia Affairs as organizations of the military. As regards the China Affairs Board, all matters relating to the military were excluded. The Board was not to interfere in military activities. The same was the case for the Ministry of Greater East Asia Affairs. There, too, all military matters were excluded from the functions of the ministry. In areas where military administration had been established, they were entirely outside the jurisdiction of the Greater East Asia Affairs Ministry, and the ministry was not to interfere in the activities of the military. This much could be said, that insofar as the idea of these organizations is concerned, it might be said that there is a connection, but it would not be proper to call them the organizations of the militarists.

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- Q. I understand then that these organizations, the China Affairs Bureau and the Ministry of Greater East Asia, were dominated and controlled by the military.
- A. It is difficult to say in all cases, but it might be said generally speaking.
- Q. In other words, if the China Affairs Bureau or the Greater East Asia Ministry should interfere in any way with the military group, the military group would have power to supervise their activities.
- A. It was clear that both the China Affairs Board and the Ministry of Greater East Asia Affairs were not to interfere in any way with the administrative functions and activities of the army and navy.
- Q. Now, if the army or navy were desirous of the China Affairs Bureau or the Ministry of Greater East Asia to do certain things in connection with the administration of these countries, both the China Affairs Bureau and the Ministry of Greater East Asia would be compelled to follow the wishes of the military group.
- A. In accordance with the regulations covering the organization of these two organizations, both the China Affairs Board or the Ministry of Greater East Asia Affairs may perform their functions as regulated without any instructions or orders from the army or navy. I think there have been cases in which certain desires expressed by the army and navy have been rejected, presumably they were rejected, but if the army and navy insisted that such and such be done, then whether it was the China Affairs Board or the Ministry of Greater East Asia Affairs it would not resist.
- Q. From my information, the China Affairs Bureau and the Ministry of Greater East Asia, which later absorbed the China Affairs Bureau along with other countries, were sponsored and created by the military group in Japan.
- A. It would be all right to say they were sponsored by the military and their associates, such as SUZUKI and HOSHINO and TOJO in connection with - - - So far as the China Affairs Board is concerned, I cannot recall any special names as sponsors, as I was not in Tokyo then, but as far as the Greater East Asia Affairs Ministry is concerned, the sponsors were men like TOJO, SUZUKI, HOSHINO and their associates.
- Q. As I understand from that, the military group and their associates sponsored these two organizations.
- A. You may consider it as such.
- Q. Is it not true that the reason the military group and its civilian associates sponsored and promoted these two bureaus was because the military in themselves were not adapted to the handling of such developments as railroads and manufacturing concerns, etc.

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- A. Broadly speaking, it is as you say; but the principal purposes in creating the China Affairs Board and later the Ministry of Greater East Asia was to take away from the Foreign Office various functions which normally belongs to the Foreign Office. As it is, the Foreign Office maintained a very liberal view and attitude toward Japan's relations with various countries; but the military and its associates viewed the matter otherwise. Of course, where military administration had been established, the military can conduct various activities as it pleases; but in other areas they preferred to have an organization handle activities in a way more amenable to the military, or, in short, by an organization which would more readily listen to the desires and requests and orders of the military.
- Q. With reference to SUZUKI and HOSHINO. Did you ever have any conversations with them concerning the creation of the Ministry of Greater East Asia, and, if so, what did they express.
- A. Before directly replying to that question, I should like to say as a preface that, as I said before, I had opposed the China Affairs Board, and when former Ambassador Tanekichi Ota returned from a trip to China sometime in June of 1942 and recommended the immediate withdrawal of Japanese troops from China and to conclude a truce with China, that is with Chungking, as a means to settle the China problem, this matter I communicated to TOJO and asked for an immediate reconsideration of the China problem on this basis. This further increased the opposition of TOJO and his associates, SUZUKI and HOSHINO, against me, and this made even more acute the question of extending the China Affairs Board into the Greater East Asia Ministry. At that time I advised TOJO that it was inadvisable and improper to create such a ministry. Then in the latter part of August, around the 27th, HOSHINO, Chief Secretary of the Cabinet, came to see me and brought a plan for the establishment of the Ministry of Greater East Asia Affairs with instructions from TOJO to be submitted to the next meeting of the Cabinet, which was to come in two or three days. At that time when I asked for explanations, HOSHINO spoke of transferring from the Foreign Office to the new ministry all functions with the exception of what was termed "purely diplomatic matters." That term, "purely diplomatic matters," being very strange and peculiar, I asked for further explanation, and HOSHINO said that it meant the receiving of foreign ambassadors and ministers by the Foreign Office, as well as the signing of treaties by the Foreign Office, but regarding the negotiations of which was outside of the functions of the Foreign Office. The negotiations were to be handled by the new ministry and the Foreign Office was merely to sign the treaties. Such functions being entirely meaningless, the Foreign Minister from every point of view could not take responsibility over them, I told HOSHINO that I could not approve of the plan as one of the principal reasons for my objection. As the matter was very important, I told HOSHINO that there was no reason to hasten or to hurry the settlement of the matter, and that it should be decided upon after thorough and careful consideration and study; and I told him to communicate my views to TOJO. Regarding my comments HOSHINO had

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no sufficient explanations to make. Later, on August 31, I had an opportunity to meet TOJO, and at that time I urged serious reconsideration of the question; but in spite of my advice the matter was brought up at the Cabinet meeting on September 1. Very heated arguments were expressed at that meeting. That night I resigned as Foreign Minister.

Q. What part did HOSHINO take in the heated arguments.

A. HOSHINO, being the Chief Secretary of the Cabinet, made explanation of the plan but was not in the position to participate in the arguments. SUZUKI, however, supported TOJO's view and expressed the necessity of creating such a ministry. I called the China Affairs Board a failure. SUZUKI claimed that it was not a failure and thus the arguments flew from about 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The cabinet was to resume its session again, but it did not and instead the Director of the Military Affairs Bureau, Major General Kenryo SATO, and the Director of the Navy Affairs Bureau, OKA, came to see me to urge me to revise my stand; but I flatly refused. It was my thought at the time that the ideas and policies of the TOJO Cabinet on all matters in connection with the conduct of war were not in conformity with the will to win the war, and, therefore, I thought of leading the Cabinet to a downfall. Then SHIMADA, the Navy Minister, came to see me and said that it was the wish within the Imperial Palace to seek a conciliatory solution to the matter and avoid a cabinet change. I thereupon proposed to SHIMADA a compromise, which he transmitted to TOJO. TOJO rejected it, and since a cabinet change was considered inadvisable, there was no alternative but for me personally to resign from the Cabinet.

Q. The China Affairs Bureau being an important cog in the expansion of Japan, why did you consider it a failure.

A. As you understand, when the China Affairs Board was created, I was abroad. But after viewing and studying the methods and activities of the Board following my return to Japan, I found that they were not conducive to drawing the masses of the people of China in a manner friendly toward Japan, but that they were working against the interests of the Chinese people. At that time the situation was such, that is at the time I entered the TOJO Cabinet, that the immediate problem was not concerned with expansion but the acquisition and purchase of various materials. The desire of the army and navy, as well as the China Affairs Board, especially representatives on the spot, was to obtain these materials as cheaply as possible, and this gave rise to various difficulties. I further heard rumours to the effect that there was corruption in the administration of the Board; and thus I considered the methods and activities of the Board as a failure. Because of the desire and effort to obtain materials cheaply it produced undesirable and unhappy effects upon the Chinese people, including enterprises. Therefore, I felt apprehensive that it would not only render even more difficult the settlement of the China Incident, but also have very undesirable effects on the future of Japanese-Chinese relations. That being the case, I regarded the Board as a failure.

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- Q. Considering the Greater East Asia Ministry functions as similar to those of the China Affairs Bureau, and taking into consideration the entire picture, did you not realize that other countries would not recognize the Philippines, Burma, Dutch East Indies, China Manchuria, French Indo-China and Thailand as independent countries.
- A. When I was first Foreign Minister in the TOJO Cabinet, neither the Philippines nor Burma were independent states. That they became independent was a development which occurred after my resignation from the TOJO Cabinet. The principal independent countries in my time as Foreign Minister were Manchukuo, China and Thailand. As far as Manchukuo was concerned, I was very well aware that the United States completely denied its independence, but in so far as Britain was concerned, its attitude was not as clear. Insofar as Russia was concerned, it had entered into treaty relations with Manchukuo, and, therefore, did not deny Manchukuo's independence. Regarding China, although it was split into Chungking and Nanking the nations of the world recognized China as a whole as an independent country. And Thailand, of course, was an independent country.
- Q. I think you must have misunderstood my question. I mean, with the setup which the Ministry of Greater East Asia created do you think that any country outside the sphere of Greater East Asia would consider the countries I mentioned as independent.
- A. Yes, the idea of the Ministry was to make a distinction in Japan's treatment toward nations within the sphere and nations outside, and to accord special treatment to countries within the sphere. Declaring that making such a distinction would arouse suspicion in western countries in Europe and America that the countries in the sphere are not completely independent countries, I contended that the creation of such a ministry was highly improper, and that was one of the reasons why I opposed the establishment of the ministry.
- Q. Since HOSHINO took such a prominent part in the establishing of the Ministry of Greater East Asia, I would like to ask you something about HOSHINO. With reference to him, as I understand it, he might be considered a civilian who strongly supported and influenced greatly the military group in its drive for complete control of the Japanese government and the domination of the countries under the Ministry of Greater East Asia.
- A. HOSHINO was very intimate with TOJO from the time of their association in Manchuria. I would think that it would be more proper to say that HOSHINO moved and acted in accordance with the ideas of the militarists, but it can be said that he desired the domination of the Japanese government by the militarists. HOSHINO is not a thinking person, but it can be said that he moved and acted in accordance with the ideas of the militarists and contributed a great deal toward carrying out those ideas.

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A. (con'd)

The idea was that of the Greater East Asia common prosperity sphere under Japan's leadership. The idea was not initiated by HOSHINO but by the military and its militaristic associates, and it may be said that HOSHINO fully subscribed to the idea and contributed to the promotion and execution of this idea. After the Manchurian Incident HOSHINO was active in Manchuria, but he had no direct connections with the home government. Being abroad at the time, I do not know exactly when HOSHINO returned to Japan, when he became President of the Planning Board, and since worked under various cabinets, his principal activity being in the field of mobilization of materials and planned economy, that is, planned economy in preparation for war in the very broad sense of the term; and so it might be said that such activities was a contributory cause to war.

- Q. Your conclusions regarding HOSHINO are based greatly on the functions of the Planning Board, as well as the trend of events and conversations with HOSHINO - - -
- A. As I knew HOSHINO when he was in Manchuria, but after that I did not see him for a long time because I was largely abroad. It was, therefore, after many years that I met him when we were in the same cabinet, he as Chief Secretary of the Cabinet, and I as Foreign Minister. My ideas of him are based principally on his activities in the Planning Board. Of course, our other contacts were during the liaison conferences.
- Q. This Planning Board was sponsored and promoted by the military group, as I understand, for the purpose of preparing for war on a broad basis.
- A. If it is preparation for war in the very broad sense of the term, that may be so; but the purpose of the Planning Board was to consider and deal with plans covering various aspects of Japanese economy, such as industry and food production, and such ideas were stimulated by such things as the five-year plan initiated in Russia. So it would not be proper to say that the Planning Board was created for the immediate purpose of war.
- Q. It is true that the Planning Board was sponsored and promoted through the efforts of the military group.
- A. Generally speaking, it was believed that Japan, by some people it was believed, that eventually sometime a war would be unavoidable, although there was no specific idea as to when or with what country. And it was believed necessary, in order to prepare for such exigencies, to perfect the internal conditions of Japan. The militarists welcomed such an idea. The point which I should like to have you bear in mind is that since the Manchurian Incident, Japan has been in a state of war with China without any formal war declaration, and for that reason it was considered necessary that economic planning be carried on to execute the war in China.

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- A. (con'd)
Such being the case, it is clear that the militarists having a very close relationship with the matter it is such a situation that made the Planning Board a necessity.
- Q. In addition, I presume that this Planning Board was created not only for the situation of war which prevailed in China, but in case of the necessity of becoming involved in war with other countries.
- A. It might be said that the Planning Board was created also because of the eventuality, or probability, of war with other countries.
- Q. You mentioned a few moments ago that you had considerable contact with HOSHINO during the liaison conferences while you were Foreign Minister in TOJO's Cabinet. I would like you to relate the conversations concerning HOSHINO's actions in regard to the situation prior to the attack at Pearl Harbor.
- A. I did not have any private conversations with HOSHINO which I recall at the time of the liaison conferences before the outbreak of war which I recall of any importance. At the liaison conferences HOSHINO, together with MUTO and OKA, served as secretary and explained the various plans and proposals submitted there. He participated in the debates in the conferences and, generally speaking, I can say that HOSHINO took a strong stand; but I have not had any occasion to talk with him privately at these conferences. At least at the present moment I cannot recall of any conversations I might have had with him.
- Q. May I ask what you mean by "strong stand."
- A. He did not desire the relaxation of the Japanese conditions regarding the talks with the United States. He did not approve of Japan's taking a mild attitude toward the China problem.
- Q. Was he not strong in his attitude and statements regarding Japan waging war against the United States after the HULL note of November 26.
- A. As I said before in a previous conversation with you, the HULL note of November 26 was regarded generally in Japan as having driven Japan into a corner with the alternative only of war or suicide and that it involved the existence and honor of Japan. There are ample evidences, even in the United States, that Japan regarded that note as an ultimatum. Since practically all attending the liaison conferences had that view, which was also generally believed by other people, HOSHINO may be considered to have been of the same view that war cannot be avoided; but I do not recall anything specifically as to what HOSHINO said on the subject.
- Q. In his debates prior to November 26 did HOSHINO indicate that negotiations and relations with the United States should be terminated.
- A. I recall his saying that the Japanese-American talks will not reach a successful culmination.

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- Q. From what I understand, he exerted considerable influence in his statements at these liaison conferences.
- A. Of course, at the liaison conferences HOSHINO, as secretary, along with MUTO and OKA, made various explanations and even participated in the deliberations. It is very difficult to make any distinctions among these three secretaries as regards their status at the conferences or their influence over the conferences. However, being a Chief Secretary of the Cabinet, he was in very intimate contact with TOJO, and, therefore, had a very good understanding of what TOJO thought and what his ideas were. So it can be said that HOSHINO in making statements expressed TOJO's views on occasion, and, I presume, that there were times when HOSHINO influenced TOJO.]
- Q. With reference to KIDO, the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. What were his functions and responsibilities.
- A. Regarding the office of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, its purpose, as defined in the official government regulations regarding the organization of the office, is as "jojo-hoshitsu," which may be rendered as "assist and/or advise at all times." When the system of the "Genro," or "elder statesmen" was still in existence, the office of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal was not of great importance, but after the Genro went out of existence, that is with the death of Prince SAIONJI, the last Genro, about 1938 or 1939, the office of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal became increasingly important and the term "assisting or advising the Throne at all times" also acquired more importance. One of the important functions of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal came at the time of cabinet changes. Following the death of Prince SAIONJI, the Lord Keeper in recommending the new Prime Minister got together the views of ex-premiers. The Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal took the leadership in getting together the views of the ex-premiers regarding who to recommend as the new Prime Minister. Such being his role, it was an important function. The office also became important following the death of the last Genro as an influential advisor to the Throne, as well as in responding to various inquiries made by the Throne.
- Q. With reference to KIDO, did he have any influence with the Emperor in his position as Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal.
- A. I have various experiences at the time of the termination of the war, regarding which I personally advised the Throne, as well as discussing it on a number of occasions with KIDO. At least at that time I can say from my own experience that KIDO had considerable influence over the Throne. However, before the war the negotiations with the United States in themselves were handled by the Foreign Office, but problems outside and over and above that, that is the question of war, it was a matter of the government and the high command. On this question it was TOJO who occupied the principal role and directly reported to the Throne. Except

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A. (con'd)

for my consultation with KIDO regarding the NOMURA-KURUSU telegram and the message from the President, outside of them, I had very few opportunities to discuss matters with KIDO, and I cannot say to what extent, if any, KIDO exercised influence over the Throne.

Q. Was not KIDO close to TOJO. The reason I ask that is, I understand that KIDO expressed a desire to the Emperor that TOJO be made Prime Minister after the fall of the Third KONOYE Cabinet.

A. Not being personally associated with the matter, I am not familiar with the whole circumstances, but from what I have heard since, the selection of the Prime Minister was taken up by the senior statesmen, that is, ex-premiers, and General ABE initiated recommending TOJO to that post, but ultimately it was KIDO who recommended TOJO to the Throne. After the outbreak of war, it is my understanding that KIDO supported TOJO up to a certain time.

Q. On what basis do you understand that KIDO supported TOJO, from what source did you learn this.

A. After my resignation I had talks with a number of people in the position of elder statesmen, such as KONOYE, HIROTA, OKADA, that the TOJO Cabinet must be replaced by another cabinet. On one of those occasions, in one of my talks with KONOYE in Karuizawa in the fall of 1943, KONOYE told me that KIDO had at that time no idea about bringing about the resignation of the TOJO Cabinet.

Q. What weight did KIDO's advice have with the Emperor.

A. It would be quite proper to say that as Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal he had quite a weight in advising the Emperor.

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0915-1330 hours

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 8 March 1946 Shigenori TOGO personally gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth herein.

Roy L. Morgan