



国际检察局讯问记录

Numerical Case Files Relating to
Particular Incidents and Suspected War Criminals,
International Prosecution Section (1945-1947)

国家图书馆 上海交通大学 编

61

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INTERVIEW WITH

Masuo Kato

Date and Time: 6, 7, 8 February, 1946,

Place : Meiji Building, Room 730

Present : Masuo Kato
Mr. Ray L. Morgan, Interrogator
Mr. Worth McKinney, Interrogator
Mr. Harold Nathan, Interrogator
Miss Mildred Rich, Stenographer (6 and 7 February)
Miss Hannah Kato, Stenographer (8 February)

Questions by : Mr. Morgan
Mr. McKinney
Mr. Nathan

INTERROGATION OF

Masuo Kato

Date and Time: 6 February 1946, 1430-1630 hours

Place : Heiji Building, Room 730

Present : Masuo Kato
Mr. Ray L. Morgan, Interrogator
Miss Mildred Rich, Stenographer

Questions by : Mr. Morgan

Q. As I understand it, prior to the Manchurian Incident of September 18, 1931, the army, or militaristic group, had undoubtedly planned to go into Manchuria for the purpose of controlling both the political and economic situation in Manchuria.

A. Yes.

Q. Could you tell me what knowledge you had of the Manchurian Incident prior to the event.

A. Yes. I heard, that is it was generally believed, that there was a five-year plan worked out for Manchuria. I think this plan was organized by General ITAGAKI, Seishiro and Lt. Col. ISHIMURA, Kanji. There were a few other persons, whose names I do not remember, involved.

Q. As I understand it, these two had a prominent role in the formulation of this plan, which was done prior to the Manchurian Incident.

A. Yes.

Q. Did you ever have a chance to talk to these two.

A. Yes, I talked to ISHIMURA. I attended the Geneva League of Nations Conference of 1932, at which time I talked to him. He was also attending.

Q. What did he say to you about the five-year plan.

A. I don't know if I heard it from him directly or from some other person.

Q. What did you talk to him about.

A. We discussed what I heard about the plan.

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- Q. What was the plan.
- A. To place all of Manchuria under Japanese control. I don't remember the details. Of course, they had a military plan on how to execute the control of Manchuria, i.e., to take over the Mukden Arsenal, etc.
- Q. The first actual overt act in the completion of that plan was the Manchurian Incident on September 18, 1931.
- A. Yes, I would say so. Also, if I remember correctly, I think General KIMOTO (?) was also very active at that time. I am not sure if he is alive or retired.
- Q. The Manchurian Incident involved the explosion on the South Manchuria Railway, and it was the first step in the completion of the plan.
- A. Yes.
- Q. The army had moved in a considerable number of troops, etc. in preparation for this incident.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Otherwise they could not have gained control so quickly and sustained continuous war for the period of three months required to gain control. Is that right.
- A. Yes, I think so. Anyway, they had a long range plan.
- Q. Do you know of any individual who is now living who had any conversations with ITAGAKI, ISHIMURA and KIMOTO concerning this five-year plan.
- A. Civilians?
- Q. Civilians or military.
- A. I think there must be a great many.
- Q. Could you give me the names of some.
- A. I wonder who knows. You know, the plan was made entirely by the army and the government knew nothing about it.
- Q. In fact, the plan became common gossip among the Japanese leaders.

Haseo Kato

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- A. Yes, afterwards. The army did not deny it. In fact, they admitted it and were proud of it. I think there is a man named TAKEUCHI who knew about this. He is now an old man. He is connected with the Japanese Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai. I think I can find a few others who know of this.
- Q. Do you know any of the army group.
- A. Yes, there are a great many. ISHINARA and General IKEDA, Sumishara. I think he (IKEDA) must be in Tokyo or some place near here. His first name might be Junya. bisa 7
- Q. As I understand it, the above named individuals are persons who can give us details of the five-year plan.
- A. Yes.
- Q. After the Manchurian Incident on September 18, 1931, what information do you have as to the actions of the army in taking over Manchuria.
- A. They were quite busy in planning how to build up Manchuria after the Manchurian Incident. The government accepted what the army had done. It was accepted by the government and the people as a whole and approved.
- Q. What individuals in the cabinet at that time did you consider responsible for the fostering of the development of Manchuria as well as its control by the army and Japan.
- A. I think the whole cabinet. This Manchurian Incident, I might say, gave the army its first control of the government, which the army held up until the end of the present war.
- Q. This Japanese army in Manchuria was known as the Kwangtung Army.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Who was the leader of this army.
- A. ITAGAKI.
- Q. What part did TOJO play in this particular army.
- A. I think he went there much later. He went there as chief of the military police. A few years after the Manchurian Incident he became quite active among the army group.

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Q. What part did MATSUOKA take,

A. He later became the president of the South Manchuria Railway.

Q. In this position he became an influential member of the military group.

A. He became acquainted with members of the military group. TERAUCHI and MATSUOKA became better acquainted. They come from the same province. MATSUOKA even before he went to Manchuria became acquainted with many military leaders.

Q. Did he ever talk to TERAUCHI.

A. Not to TERAUCHI, but I know MATSUOKA very well.

Q. Did you ever talk to MATSUOKA about the five-year plan.

A. No, not at all.

Q. Did the Japanese know about the five-year plan prior to the Manchurian Incident.

A. No, they did not know about the plan.

Q. But it was obvious to you and to others that the Manchurian Incident was planned by the Japanese army prior to its occurrence.

A. Yes.

Q. With reference to this Manchurian Incident. Did you know of the facts of how the Japanese Army caused the Manchurian Incident.

A. Yes. There was a series of incidents, or violences.

Q. Was this series of violences true.

A. I do not know.

Q. But the incidents were minor.

A. Yes.

Q. Continuing further, between January 18 and March 3 of 1932 there was an "incident" in Shanghai. On this occasion there was an alleged attack upon five Japanese by the Chinese in Shanghai. The Japanese army landed troops immediately on the pretext of giving protection to the Japanese civilians. There was furious fighting, which ended March 3, 1932, by an armistice.

A. Yes

Manuo Kato

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Q. This was a further opportunity for the Japanese army to expand under its plan.

A. It might be so. I am not so certain.

Q. The Japanese army was there and waiting for the opportunity to move in.

A. I am not so certain about that. It might be so.

Q. Could you tell me who would be in the best position, and is alive today, to give us some information on this Shanghai Incident.

A. Yes, two newspaper men: YOSHIOKA, of the Mainichi, and TANAKA, of the Yomiuri.

Q. Would ITAGAKI or ISHIMURA know something about this.

A. I think they might. The army commander might know. Ambassador NOMURA might know. SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru might know; he was then foreign minister. TANI, Masayuki might also know.

Q. You were not in Shanghai.

A. No.

Q. Did you tell me the name of the general at Shanghai.

A. No. I must look that up. Yes, General MATSUI, Iwano would know everything about it.

Q. You will recall that the recognition of Manchukuo took place on September 13, 1932.

A. Yes.

Q. Do you remember anything concerning the events leading up to the recognition of Manchukuo.

A. Very little.

Q. Do you know the individual or individuals in the Japanese government who were responsible and who handled the negotiations.

A. I think such men as TANI, Masayuki, chief of the Asiatic Bureau, Foreign Office, might know a great deal about these matters.

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Kasuo Kato

6-2-1946

Q. Do you have any other knowledge concerning the recognition of Manchukuo.

A. I do not know a great deal about it. There is a man, HATANO, Kenji, who has written a book. He can tell you about the Manchurian and China incidents. He was a newspaper man, but he became a writer. He was also a temporary employee of the Foreign Office and Greater Far Eastern Ministry until the end of the war.

Q. During 1931-1932 there was a boycott of goods by the Chinese people, and I understand that it aroused a great deal of indignation on the part of the Japanese people, particularly the militaristic group. Do you recall any of the details. Anything of the Japanese Government's attitude.

A. The people were worried, and the government was very much worried about it.

Q. Who in the government stated that there would be reprisals for such a boycott.

A. It is hard to say offhand because it is so many years ago. Again, SHIGEMITSU, Mamoru can tell you a great deal.

Q. With reference to the Assassinations between 1930 and 1932, such as the assassinations of Premier HAMAGUCHI, Premier INOUE, Baron DAN, and Premier INUKAI, it is generally understood that the militaristic group of the government was responsible.

A. Right.

Q. Do you know off-hand the names of the individuals in this military group who had control at that time and who could be considered responsible for these assassinations.

A. Mostly the younger officers, but I think there must be also included such men as General ARAKI and HAZAKI. A magazine article on this incident appears in the new Chuo Koro January-February issue by TATSUO, Iwabuchi. He can be located at the magazine. This man was a writer and did a great deal of research. He was close to Prince KONOTE.

Q. As I understand it, there was general gossip in Japan that the military group was committing these assassinations in order to maintain complete control of the government and to use the threat of assassination on any future government member if they did not carry out the desires of the military group.

A. Very true. HASHIMOTO, Kingoro was connected with this, he was one of the leaders in the assassination groups. I think he was connected with every incident of this period. He was a militarist. He is now in prison (Sugamo).

Kasuo Kato

6-2-1946

Q. Do you recall the events from 1932 to February 26, 1936, by the militarists and their ideas of expansion by means of war in the Far East.

A. I don't remember.

Q. Did you have any relations or contacts with any of the responsible individuals, or did you have an opportunity to converse with them.

A. I was in Japan only part of the time. I was in Geneva from 1932-1933. In 1935 I went to Nagoya. I was mostly doing desk work inside the office.

Q. You recall that on February 26, 1936, a group of young army officers led a group of approximately 1400 men in an incident which resulted in the assassination of three members of the cabinet. I presume that this was one of the incidents which was leading up to overwhelming power by the military group.

A. No doubt about it.

Q. Was the reason for this incident the desire for the expansion of Japan in the Far East on the part of the military group.

A. Yes. They were interested not only in expansion but in creating what they called "the defense state" or "a high degree of defense state." They were trying to make Japan a complete military state. Also with the idea of state national socialism. National socialism as in Nazi Germany.

Q. Do you know the individuals in this period who were responsible for this development of events.

A. The whole military group. General SUGIYAMA (deceased) was responsible for the whole war effort.

Q. Who is in a position to tell us at the present time all the intrigues involved in these assassinations.

A. ~~Tateoka, Imabuchi~~ The most responsible individuals during this time were those in the ranks above captain and below general. Among these were those who held responsible positions on the military general staff and in the War Department in connection with strategy and policy. Most responsible were those in the military section of the Military Affairs Bureau of the army. They were primarily engaged in internal politics for the expansion of Japan by the means of war. I think for a long time the military people were satisfied with (the conquest of) Manchuria and China until the situation in Europe became in such a condition.

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Masum Kato

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- A. (cont'd) They were busy enough handling the affairs in Manchuria and China. They did not then think of going to the south. Particularly responsible at that time were the pre-German group.
- Q. Who were some of the individuals in the army who were pre-German. Naturally, Tojo was.
- A. Yes, TOJO was. And OSHIMA too.
- Q. Did OSHIMA have anything to do with the Manchurian Incident.
- A. I don't know.
- Q. Or any of the other events up until the assassinations.
- A. I don't know.
- Q. I understand from what you have said that OSHIMA was very pre-German and that he influenced other members of the military group to the Nazi ideology. Also, I understand that he was instrumental in the further expansion of Japan by means of war.
- A. There is no doubt that he influenced the military group to Nazi ideas.
- Q. Naturally, the Nazi idea was expansion by means of war.
- A. Yes, you may say that.
- Q. It was in 1936 after the assassinations that the law was changed regarding the appointment of the ministers of war and navy. Under the new law it was required that the ministers of war and navy be commissioned and in active service.
- A. Yes. That is a very important point, incidentally. If, for instance, the army did not give consent to name a war minister in a cabinet, then the cabinet could not be formed; and if the army say that it would not take part in it, such cabinet is not satisfactory to us, then the cabinet could not be formed, and the cabinet could not do anything. It was the law.
- Q. In other words, no cabinet could be formed unless the military group approved it.
- A. Further than that, the army could dictate what kind of cabinet could be formed. It could go further than that.

Masao Kato

6-2-1946

Q. So, beginning in 1936, the army gained complete control of the government and from that time on up until the time of the war, the government was controlled entirely by the army.

A. Yes.

Q. This created in the eyes of those individuals who knew the completion of the military group's rise to power.

A. Quite true. By the way, in that connection the army had a very cowardly attitude. The army did not want to form a cabinet, but it let others form a cabinet and then dictated behind the screen. The suggestion was made that the army take the responsibility for forming the cabinet. Prince KONOUE suggested this. But the army did not want to form a cabinet; they wanted to direct it. The army would not take the responsibility for what the others did, although they were actually responsible in selecting the members of the cabinets indirectly.

Q. You may remember the China Incident on July 7, 1937.

A. Yes.

Q. Can you tell me what you know, as a correspondent, of the facts involved in this China Incident which started at the Marco Polo Bridge.

A. I was in the United States then.

Q. Did you ever talk to any responsible official about the Marco Polo Bridge Incident.

A. I think the government had the idea not to see the spread of the incident. They tried to minimize it as much as possible, but that could not be done successfully at all. In that connection, often the question was asked, "How far is the army going to go?" and then the army would say that they would stop at a certain point, but they never did.

Q. Who was the war minister.

A. Either TERAUCHI, or, possibly, the chief of staff, whose name I do not know (asked the question). The Emperor himself summoned the advisors and asked a similar question.

Q. What was the answer by the advisors.

Name Kate

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- A. They said they would stop at a certain point, but they never did. By the way, often they say that China is the muddy swamp, once you get in it is hard to get out. I think the invasion to the south was one of the results because they could not do in China what they planned. In order to settle the Manchurian question, they had to go to China; and in order to settle the China incident, they had to go to the south. Such is the sequence. When they saw that the China Incident did not go smoothly, they had to go to the south to make up for what they did not do in China.
- Q. Who were the responsible individuals in the south.
- A. Army as a whole. The whole army.
- Q. The leaders of the army.
- A. When you say "leaders" that is a hard question even for us Japanese to answer, because always they do everything in the name of the army. I would shift the responsibility of answering that question to IWABUCHI.
- Q. This incident at the Marco Polo Bridge was such that it was apparent that the army had planned the incident for an excuse to carry the expansion south.
- A. It might be so. But in that connection I might say the whole history of China in connection with foreign countries is a repetition. They have made always some excuse for the wars.
- Q. Did any one make any statements to you on this war.
- A. As I stated, I was in America.
- Q. Now, you will recall that in November of 1937 the Nine-Power Conference took place in Belgium. Were you present.
- A. No, I was in America.
- Q. You know that the conference was called to take up the question of Japan's violation of the Nine-Power Treaty, which she signed in 1932.
- A. Yes.
- Q. I think ARITA was Foreign Minister and KONOYE was Prime Minister. Do you know the reason that Japan failed to attend that conference.
- A. Japan was not invited, was she.

Masumoto Kato

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- Q. She was invited twice and declined.
- A. Is that right. I think ARITA can tell you about it. Japan did not wish to attend the conference as a defendant. Such was the attitude at the time.
- Q. Was it ARITA and KONOYE who of their own volition made this decision.
- A. I don't think so. They had to consult with the army.
- Q. Then the military made the decision.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you know who in the army made such a decision.
- A. You have to understand the system in Japan. Conferences are held among majors, lieutenant colonels and colonels and their decision is taken up to the minister, and seldom does he change it. Then who is responsible. Often it is a question of who has the strongest opinion.
- Q. Did not KONOYE or ARITA have any say in the matter. Could not they make a decision in their cabinet as Premier and Foreign Minister.
- A. In such a matter, no.
- Q. Both ARITA and KONOYE were afraid to contend with the army in this manner.
- A. All prime ministers and ministers are afraid of the army.
- Q. Because of assassinations.
- A. Not necessarily.
- Q. Then ARITA and KONOYE were responsible, along with the army.
- A. Not necessarily.
- Q. Did you ever talk to ARITA about this.
- A. No.
- Q. Did you ever talk to anybody about the Nine-Power Treaty.
- A. No. I was in the United States.

Haguro Kato

6-2-1946

- Q. On December 12, 1937, the United States gunboat "Panay" was bombed and sunk by Japanese planes. Do you know anything about this incident.
- A. Again, HASHIMOTO knows. He ordered it, they say. That was reported in the United States.
- Q. Did you ever talk to anyone of the officials, including HASHIMOTO, about the Panay sinking.
- A. No, not on that particular subject. I did talk to some navy man, who he was I do not remember. I understand that due to some misunderstanding of the order that was done, although it was by no means necessary to do that. It was so ambiguous, and my memory is also very ambiguous too.
- Q. But you recall that it was a deliberate effort to sink it.
- A. The navy man said that it was a misunderstanding.
- Q. You were not in a position to know anything about this incident.
- A. No.
- Q. On July 12, 1938, there was an incident known as the Changkufeng Incident. A number of Soviet soldiers who had occupied Changkufeng were fired upon by Japanese troops, and they engaged in battle. I understand that the Japanese had quite an army there ready, didn't they. Can you tell me something about this.
- A. Again, I was in the United States, and I do not know the individuals who were responsible.
- Q. You never talked to anyone about it.
- A. No.
- Q. The Japanese-German Trade Agreement was entered into on July 29, 1939. Did you have any knowledge of this trade agreement.
- A. Yes. A man called HIRANUMA, Kichiro was prime minister. As I recall, they had seventy conferences about this. It was first suggested by the Germans. HIRANUMA did not wish to have such a pact and had seventy conferences. You might call it a filibustering technique. But all of a sudden Germany, before she went to war, had the non-aggression pact with Russia. HIRANUMA had been very much afraid that it (the trade agreement) might offend the Soviet Russia. Then Germany had no non-aggression pact

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A. (cont'd) with Russia. Then Germany had the non-aggression pact and HIRANUMA had to resign. So ABE's cabinet started the talks again, and, finally, KONOYE's cabinet signed the pact. MATSUOKA had a series of talks with STANMER, who represented RIBBENTROP. Japan had the idea, however, that such a pact should be extended to Soviet Russia so that it might give as much pressure to China that the China Incident might be settled. Germany was primarily interested in preventing America from taking part in the war. Japan's primary interest was to settle the China Incident. Even MATSUOKA thought it ought to include Russia. They thought that by making a contract they could prevent war with the United States. Japan thought Germany would win in the European theatre, particularly if the United States did not take part in the war. MATSUOKA later visited Europe and he came back to Japan with the definite conclusion that Germany would win.

Q. Did you ever talk to MATSUOKA about this.

A. Yes. One day in December, 1940, I saw MATSUOKA alone. He was then foreign minister. MATSUOKA, when he talks in a group, makes so many poses he never tells the truth. He talks and talks and never lets anyone else talk. MATSUOKA said that many people say that the relations between the United States and Japan have become worse because of the Tri-Partite Pact. He can not understand this. Of course, that is the cause, I said. The relations were bad enough, but as the result of the pact the relations became worse. I cannot understand why, he said, because my intention was to use that as diplomacy to settle the matters with the United States.

Q. In other words, he told you that these pacts with Germany were such that it would give Japan strength and give Japan a kind of tool to use pressure on the United States to let Japan go ahead and settle the China Incident and expand in the Pacific. MATSUOKA was very much disappointed.

A. Yes.

Q. Did he say anything else.

A. That one point I remember. I saw him again before I left Japan for the United States in March, 1941. I came back in August, 1940, and left in March, 1941. Shortly before I left here I had a talk with MATSUOKA. I said that there was much talk of war with the United States. I asked, don't you mind war with the United States. He said that he did not wish war with the United States. What MATSUOKA had in mind, well, he is a believer in Machiavellism. He said that by using the Tri-Partite Pact he can do good bargaining with the United States. He thought he knew