

OKA

The particulars with regard to OKA are to be found on page 333 of the Summary, and the exhibits which directly affect him are: Exhibits Nos. 102; 120; 1103; 588; 650; 1128; 1169; 1107; 1241; 1266; 1275; 1979-A; 2022; 2023; 2025-A; 2026; Record Pages 15025; 15028; 15019; 19980-1; 15154 (Exhibit 2092); 15109-126; 15148-50; 15185 (Exhibit 2105).

This naval officer, after serving in the grade as a member of the Naval General Staff from 1933 to 1936, became Chief of the No. 1 Section of the Bureau of Naval Affairs, where he served from January, 1938 to October, 1940, and at the same time was Secretary of the Bureau of Manchurian Affairs from January, 1938 to October 1939. He was decorated for his services in the Manchuria and China "Incidents." He became Chief of the Bureau of Naval Affairs and attached to the Navy Minister in Imperial Headquarters 15 October 1940. He occupied this position until 18 July 1944, when he became Vice Minister of the Navy. On 23 January, 1941, he was appointed Japanese member of the joint Japan-German-Italian Commission. The importance of his position as Chief of the Bureau of Naval Affairs is shown by the fact that he attended twenty-four liaison conferences between the crucial period from 13 January, 1941 to 30 June, 1941, among which conferences was the one of the 25th June, 1941 at which it was decided to station troops in Indo-China and Thailand and acquire naval and air bases by diplomacy, if possible, or, that failing, by resorting to arms. (Record Page 11057).

This Bureau held the corresponding position in the Navy Ministry to the Bureau of Military Affairs in the War Ministry. It was the political bureau, and among its many important functions was to maintain relations with other ministries and the public, and especially with the War Ministry. Indeed it was sometimes known as the Bureau of Military Affairs. In fact, OKA, throughout his long period in the office was the opposite number first of Muto and then of Sato in the War Ministry, and seems to have kept in close touch with them.

For instance, in Kido's diary for 15 July, 1941 (Exh. 1115) Muto and Oka are shown to have direct influence on the formula to be used in the Japan-United States negotiations since Kido states that if the Foreign Minister has no objection to the formula prepared by them it will be pushed through, and later when the deadlock between Konoye, Tojo and Oikawa occurred in October, it was by negotiation between Muto and OKA that an attempt was made to settle the matter (Exh. 1148).

We submit that OKA was just as important a figure in the navy as Muto in the army. Like Muto and afterwards Sato, he occupied a great variety of positions connected with other departments such as the secretaryship of the general mobilization and many other posts, listed in Exhibit 120.

When Oikawa resigned with the Third Konoye Cabinet and Shimada succeeded him, being as we submit obviously chosen as the man in the navy prepared to do Tojo's bidding, OKA retained his position while the navy was putting into operation its long-prepared plans of attack.

When the holding of and attendance at Liaison Conferences ceased to be published in July we submit the obvious inference is that he continued to attend as before. He attended the four decisive Imperial Conferences in 1941 of 2 July, 6 September, 5 November and 1 December.

He attended the Privy Council meeting on 28 July, 1941, where protocol between France and Japan was discussed regarding military cooperation. It was decided that clarification would be made to show that occupation of French Indo-China was in agreement with France and not by force, so that the United States would understand. Of course, this had in fact been brought about by pressure on the Vichy Government through German aid. The second meeting was held and agreement with France approved for military cooperation, air fields and naval bases, quartering of troops in French Indo-China and freedom of movement. (Record page 7079, Exhibit 650)

On 14 October 1941, after a Cabinet Meeting which produced a deadlock, Muto offered to give 'way if the Navy would come out definitely against war. OKA for the Navy refused to do this and left it to Konoye, but Tojo and Muto would not accept. (Record Page 10258-63) (Exhibit 1148). If he had declared opposition it seems the war would not have broken out.

At 7:30 a.m. on 8 December 1941 he attended investigation committee of Privy Council where Shinada reported on the starting of war against the U.S. At this meeting, Tojo said that "since the first of December negotiations were continued merely for the sake of strategy." (Record 10690, Exhibit 1241).

On 10 December 1941 he attended a meeting of the Investigation Committee of the Privy Council where agreement with Germany as to no separate peace was discussed (Record Page 11304, Exhibit 1266).

On October 20, 1942 he attended a meeting of the Privy Council where the formation of the Greater East Asia Ministry was discussed, and another meeting on the 21st of October 1942 (Page 12070, Exhibit 687).

On 18 August 1943 he attended a meeting of the Investigation Committee of the Privy Council in connection with the Japanese-Thailand Treaty where the annexation of the Shan States by Thailand was discussed. At this meeting Tojo stated that Japan would recognize International Law as long as the enemy did so but would interpret it from the viewpoint of the war according to her own opinions (Record Page 11,364, Exhibit 1275).

Even if the truth is that he had no vote at any of these meetings this is of little importance because the proceedings were always unanimous. The important point is that they fix him with full knowledge of the policy to be pursued, which we submit his position gave him great power of shaping, and he retained that position.

When the Tojo cabinet was tottering in July 1944 it was OKA and Sato who tried to save it, by inducing Yonai and others to join and bolster it up (Exhib. 1277-8).

Record page 14,980-1 and Exhibit 2036-B show that the Military (or Naval) Affairs Bureau of the Navy Ministry was responsible for matters concerning POW and its functions were parallel to those of the Military Affairs Bureau of the War Ministry.

The testimony of SUZUKI, Todakatsu, (Record, Pages 15,506-533, and Exhibits 2170, 2173 and 2174, show that copies of protests from the protecting Power regarding treatment of POW were customarily sent to the Navy Ministry and sometimes addressed to the Vice Minister of the Navy, sometimes to the Minister of the Navy and sometimes to the Chief of the Naval Affairs Bureau.

Exhibits No. 2022, 2023, 2025-A and 2026, are protests from the protecting Power regarding mistreatment of POW.

On 7 October 1943, Rear Admiral Sakaibara ordered the execution of 96 American POW on Wake Island (Exhibit 3036-A, Record Page 15,046). In October, 1943, Vice Admiral Abe received a report from Admiral Sakaibara of the death of the 96 POW at Wake Island (Page 15,025).

Captain Obara testified that Vice Admiral Abe on October 10, 1942, gave him the following direction: "In accordance with a directive received from Central Headquarters, it has been decided to execute the Makin prisoners here and not send them back to Japan. You will take charge of carrying out this /execution/." (Record Page 15,019).

Vice Admiral Abe testified that he ordered the execution of 9 American POW from Makin at Kwajelein in October 1942 as a result of a visit from Lt. Commander Okada of the General Staff in Tokyo, "who told me not to ship POW back to Japan, but dispose of them on the spot, which I judged to be the Navy's policy" (Record page 15,028).

Vice Admiral Abe further stated as to the 9 American POW, "a directive was issued to me from the highest Navy Central HQ to dispose of them on my island." (Record Page 15,030).

During 1943-1944, the crews of the British ships "Daisy Moller," "British Chivalry", "Sutley," "Ascot," and "Nancy Moller," were destroyed (Page 15, 154, Exhibit 2092).

On 2 July 1944 the crew of the Jean Nicolet was destroyed. (Pages 15109, 15126).

On 29 October 1944 the crew of the John A. Johnson was destroyed. (Record Page 15,148, 15,150).

Record Page 15,186 shows Oshima's talk with Ribbentrop re submarine warfare, Germany sent two submarines to Japanese and Ribbentrop talked about failing to rescue survivors of torpedoed merchant ships and German U-Boat Order of September, 1942 that they would not rescue survivors. Oshima reported this to Japanese Naval Attache'.

The following is a translation of an extract from a Japanese document captured at Kwajelein atoll: "Flagship Hainan Maru at Truk, 20 March 1943, Military, Ultra-Secret (Gunki) Copy 24 of 70 -- 1st Submarine Force Secret Opord #2-43" - "***do not stop with sinking of enemy ships and cargo; at the same time that you carry out the complete destruction of the crews of the enemy's ships, if possible, seize part of the crew and endeavor to secure information about the enemy." (Record Page 15,185, Exhibit 2105).

The responsibility of OKA for Government action from the time he became Chief of the Naval Affairs Bureau, is inescapable. He took part in practically every important liaison conference during 1941, attended Privy Council meetings, and Imperial conferences continuously up to the outbreak of the war and thereafter. At the Cabinet meeting of 14 October when he had the opportunity to act for the Navy against war, he declined to act. The Imperial conferences and liaison meetings and cabinet and privy council meetings which he attended, all decided on aggression.

He was the officer of the Navy Ministry responsible for POW and received protests by the protecting Power against mistreatment of POW, but did nothing about it.

The record of wanton slaying of POW not only on land but at sea, taken in connection with the order of the 1st Submarine Squadron, shows that it must have been the Navy policy to wantonly put to death such helpless prisoners.