

Two Remorse Episodes Behind the Bar at Sugamo, Tokyo

Tsunezo Wachi

**Translated By
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Daughter of the Author**

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In Commemoration of the 77th Birthday, in June in the 52nd year of Showa,
1977.

(In Japan one's 77th birthday is celebrated very specially written in a Chinese character which signifies rapture.)

Biography

Born in Yamaguchi Prefecture, Japan on July 24, 1900

•Permanent address

5507 Ota, Mitocho
Mine County, Yamaguchi Prefecture

•Present address

2-24-23 Higashicho
Kichijoji, Musashinoshi, Tokyo 180 (this is out dated)

- 1919,8,26 Entered Imperial Japanese Navy Accademy in Etajima,
Hiroshima
- 1922,6,1 Appointed crew on the Izumi of the training squad as a
midshipman by the Imperial Navy Dept.
- 1922,6,22 Appointed crew on the Nagara of the Second Fleet by I.N.D.
- 1923,2,18 Left Kure Naval Base for the South Pacific to guard
- 1923,6,30 Appointed crew on the Asama, the first reserved ship by the
I.N.D.
- 1923,8,19 Left Jinsen, Korea along the coast of North China to guard
- 1923,9,20 Assigned ensign by the government.
Assigned a trainee on board the Asama of the training squad by
the I.N.D.
- 1923,12,10 Awarded the 8th Degree of Sho Honor by the Imperial
Department

1924,4,10 Assigned to the Fuso, battleship by the I.N.D.
 1924,7,4 Sent to the Naval Gunnery School by the I.N.D.
 1924,9,19 Assigned to the 18th destroyer of the flotilla by the I.N.D.
 1924,12,10 Sent to the Naval Torpedo School by the I.N.D.
 1925,4,20 Assigned to the Tama, cruiser and sailed to the U.S.A. with a special mission by the I.N.D.
 1925,12,1 Promoted to sub-lieutenant by the government
 1926,1,15 Awarded the 7th degree of the Ju Honor by the Imperial Department
 1926,4,1 Sent to the Naval War College to specialize in Spanish by the I.N.D.
 1926,7,7 Married
 1928,4,1 Assigned division officer on the Sata, tanker by the I.N.D.
 1928,11,15 Assigned division officer on the Mutsu, battleship by the I.N.D.
 1928,12,10 Assigned first lieutenant by the government
 1929,3,15 Awarded the Sho 7th degree by the Imperial department
 1929,4,1 Assigned to the Yunagi, destroyer as division officer by the I.N.D.
 1930,11,1 Assigned to the Atami, gunboat and sent to the Yangtze River by the I.N.D.
 1931,11,2 Assigned to Yokosuka Navy base by the I.N.D.
 1931,12,1 Sent to Naval Communication School by the I.N.D.
 1932,2,6 Assigned to work at the Naval Staff Bureau
 1932,4,11 Assigned to the Odomari, icebreaker as navigator and division officer by the I.N.D.
 1932,9,12 Assigned assistant judge of a Naval maneuver by the I.N.D.
 1932,12,1 Sent to the Naval Communication School by the I.N.D.
 1933,1,19 Awarded the 6th degree of Sho Honor and a medal by the decoration bureau
 1933,5,25 Assigned to the Naka, cruiser as communication officer by the I.N.D.
 1934,4,29 Awarded the 5th degree Zuiho medal by the decoration bureau
 1934,5,1 Awarded the Ju 6th degree honor by the Imperial Department
 1934,11,15 Assigned to the third Fleet and stationed at Shanghai by the Naval Staff Bureau
 1936,12,1 Appointed lieutenant commander by the government
 1937,3,20 Assigned to the Tokyo Naval Communication Unit as Commanding officer by the I.N.D.
 1937,6,1 Assigned to the Tokyo Naval Communication Squad at the Naval Staff Bureau as commander by the I.N.D.

- 1937,11,20 Assigned to the Naval Communication Unit at the Naval Headquarters by the I.N.D.
- 1938,2,5 Assigned to the Training Squad as staff officer by the I.N.D.
- 1938,5,9 Awarded the 4th degree Zuiho Medal by the Decoration Bureau
- 1939,3,6 Assigned to the naval Staff Bureau by the I.N.D.
- 1939,3,10 Assigned to the Communication Unit of the Naval Headquarters by the I.N.D.
- 1939,6,1 Awarded the 6th degree of Sho order by the Imperial Department
- 1940,5,31 Sent to China by the I.N.D.
- 1940,11,1 Assigned to the Japanese Legation in Mexico City, Mexico as an assistant naval attaché by the I.N.D.
- 1941,7,19 Assigned an additional responsibility as an assistant naval attaché to the Japanese Legation in Bogota Republic of Clumbia by the I.N.D.
- 1941,10,15 Promoted to Commander by the government
- 1942,8,26 Assigned to the Naval Staff Bureau by the I.N.D.
- 1942,10,15 Assigned to the Communication Unit of the Naval Headquarters by the I.N.D.
- 1942,11,4 Sent to the South Eastern Asian Islands (The Phillipines and Singapore) by the I.N.D.
- 1943,3,4 Assigned as a member of the committee of the Communication Defence Unit
- 1943,5,11 Sent to Manchuria by the I.N.D.
- 1943,6,15 Assigned to the Naval War College as an instructor by the I.N.D.
- 1943,11,7 Sent to China by the I.N.D.
- 1943,12,1 Assigned to work in a Communication Squad with specified mission by the Naval Headquarters
- 1944,3,16 Assigned to Iwo Jima as commanding officer by the I.N.D.
- 1944,7,1 Awarded the order of Ju 5th degree by the Imperial Department
- 1944,9,12 Awarded the 3rd degree Zuiho Medal by the Decoration Bureau
- 1944,10,15 Promoted to Captain by the Government
- 1944,12,28 Assigned to the Yokosuka Naval Base by the I.N.D.
- 1945,1,10 Assigned to the Japanese Embassy in Manila in the Phillipines as a naval attaché by the I.N.D.
- 1945,2,15 Assigned to the naval Torpedo School as an instructor by the I.N.D.
- 1945,3,1 Assigned to the 32nd Charge Battalion as a commanding officer by the I.N.D.
- 1945,4,15 Assigned to the 5th Kamikaze Battalion as a commanding officer by the I.N.D.

- 1945,8,15 The World War ended
1946,6,15 The termination of naval career was legally announced by the
No. 322 article of the Imperial Edict
1953,6,27 Established the Association of Iwo Jima and became president

Preface

When the first Shanghai Incident took place, I was a student at the Navy Communication Training School. I was sent to the military headquarters and coped with decoding the U.S. codes with some members of the special squad.

The leader of the squad was Captain Nakasugi, an older brother of one of my classmates in the Naval Academy. Since our assignment was strictly confidential, none of us ever disclosed anything to anybody.

When the incident was settled I went back to the Communication Training School and completed the course the following year. In May 1933 I was assigned as a communication officer on the flag ship Naka of the Torpedo Fleet. In September I was sent to Shanghai to work for the headquarters of the Third Fleet.

Ever since then I had devoted my life as a Navy Officer in communication, dispatching codes and decoding them with my colleagues and against our counterparts.

We had handled a great amount of information, but the following two pieces of information were so outstanding as to have influenced the fate of the countries involved, which I found out afterwards.

I am going to disclose what I claimed as a witness at the Far East Court Martial before the prosecutors of the Allied Forces while I was imprisoned as a war criminal “C” class at

Sugamo Prison in Tokyo after the war ended in 1945.

I was to testify what I had perceived within my knowledge the facts of the outbreak of the Pacific War.

I am hereby going to disclose the two episodes commemorating my 77th birthday on July 24, the 53rd year of Showa (1978).

Outline

The First Episode

In July 1937 at Marco Polo Bridge, China, the China Incident took place when the Chinese and Japanese Army conflicted. After an agreement composed was resumed for a while. However, we decoded the cryptography that China would violate the temporal agreement and would attack Japanese army.

If Japan had made the most of the information we offered and head handled the situation more adequately, the China Incident would not have broken out as it did. That is, the plot of the history of Japan should have been different.

The Second Episode

I was in Mexico City, Mexico when the World War II broke out, on December 8, 1946, J.S.T. Two weeks later, around Christmas time we were able to ferret out through a certain high rank officer the actual damage the U.S. Forces suffered from San Francisco to Pearl Harbor and their immediate strategies. We lost no time to send the information to Tokyo via our special secret communication route.

* J.S.T. Japan Standard Time

In spite of our prompt communication, no one in Japan had lent his ear to us. Everyone was simply ecstatic with the initial victory Japan won at Pearl Harbor. Our information had been least accounted for. If those who were in influential position in the War had studied such rare factual information more intelligently, and intensively the prospect of the War might have led the different destiny.

During the War F.B.I. found out the part of our confidential communication route and discovered some of the things we had been doing. When the Allied Forces occupied Japan the F.B.I. hunt me out and imprisoned me in the Sugamo Prison in Tokyo and began investigating.

The followings are the two episodes told in detail.

The First Episode

We decoded the emergency code cable dispatched to the commanding officer of the U.S. Strategy Unit by the U.S. naval Attaché to the American Legation in Beijing, which read China was to violate the agreement and would attack Japan.

After two and a half years' service for the Special Communication Unit in Shanghai, I was assigned to the newly founded Tokyo Communication Unit in Saitama Prefecture as commanding officer in March 1937. Shortly after I commenced my office, we decoded the scheme and the process of the operation of the special maneuver of the U.S. Navy Fleet in the Hawaii Islands area. When Prince Takamatsu, then navy Lt. Commander visited our Unit, I was greatly honored as to be commented on our act.

On July 7, 1937, an unexpected incident broke out at Marco Polo Bridge, China, when both armies began shooting, we were ordered by the Navy Headquarters to decode any doubtful cables we received. We were exceptionally alert to any communication concerning the U.S., the Great Britain U.S.S.R. and China. As a matter of fact we did not even have a second to sleep, receiving and decoding the cables and then sending them right away to the headquarters.

That had lasted for several days until a temporary agreement was made and the neutral area was established and the both armies stood on guard to each other with the area in between. When the seemingly peace was resumed, we received a call from the

headquarters to release the tight guard.

I personally, however, thought the situation very risky judging from my two and a half years' experience at the Special Communication Unit that china, the communist Army in particular, had been very cunning at Seian Incident. So we decided to keep 24 hours' watch in shift.

It happened to be a Saturday afternoon. I went home for a rest and was taking a bath, when a petty officer rushed to our house and banged the bathroom window from outside, panting, "Commander, I've received P.P. on FIVE PARTY LINES from WIFE to OPNAV." "Send it to the Headquarters immediately!" I shouted back. "There's no one there."

*P.P. Emergency Cable
* WIFE A Naval Attaché stationed in Beijin
* OPNAV A Navy maneuvering Commander

It was not unusual that nobody was at the office on a Saturday afternoon, but it was not the case to leave it till the next Monday. We had to decode it at the earliest time possible. "Put it on my desk, I will handle it." I jumped out of the bathtub, losing no time in drying myself, put on my Yukata (cotton bathrobe) and ran to the commander's office.

I had a look at the cable. It was AC, which was simple cipher the U.S. Navy was using. They used to rearrange their cipher every ten days. We were, however, professional enough to decode it and read it as we would read ordinary letters.

They typed codes on rubber capped keys and they typed otherwise to decode them.

When the U.S. navy was in a hurry or things were not too highly confidential, they were adopting that method.

It was not responsibility of Commanding officer to decode such a cable, but I thought that particular one was quite fishy. So I took out the cipher table from the safe and started to decode and found out that my guess was right.

It began, "According to reliable information, radicals under so Tetsu Gen were not satisfied with the temporal negotiation and they will begin firing at Japanese Army at 19:00." "My gosh!" It was 14:00. Unless we notify the Army there as soon as possible, they might lose if they were to be attacked unexpectedly.

It took no instant before I decided to report the information thru the Adjutant of the I.N.D. Adjutant. Commander Yanagawa and I had been to the U.S. together with a certain special mission before and we had known each other well. Besides he was a specialist in communication and English and he had appreciated what we had been doing.

When I sent him the information as it was in English "Is that true, Wachi?" was his first inquiry. I echoed, "If you are asking if the action will truly happen by 'Is that true?' I can't assure you because I am neither a prophet nor a fortune teller. As for the decoding of the U.S. Naval Attaché's English cipher, however, I'll take full responsibility, Sir. I don't think it is for us to discuss such a thing now. Don't you think we should report it to the Army and Senior officers of the Navy Headquarters at the earliest instant possible?"

Since we were close, I yelled my observation into the receiver what I honestly believed at the impending crisis exceeding my authority.

Brilliant Commander Yanagawa was prompt enough to inform and summon all the head officers of every unit in the I.N.D. They all waited for any orders from the Headquarters ready to respond. However, they had waited there only to find the two armies collide again just as had been ciphered, which later developed into the china Incident.

I learned later from Commander Yanagawa that he immediately informed the Adjutant of the Imperial Army Department of the impending danger when he received my call. The Army officer answered. "They have just made a temporal agreement there, so it is unlikely such an action should be taken. It must be false." He simply turned dearer to the navy and they did nothing for the Army stationed at the Marco Polo Bridge.

When I was imprisoned, I had a chance to get acquainted with ex-Army General Shozo Kawabe. He was the Brigade Commander of the Imperial Army stationed in China when the incident broke out. As I told him what we navy had done and how Army reacted to the information, he signed ruefully, "If only had I known it!"

I will disclose in detail why and how I had to be imprisoned later in the second episode. I was, anyway, put into a private cell No. 7, on the second floor in the second building in Sugamo Prison in Tokyo in July, 1946. Next to my cell was Brigade Commander

Kawabe. I had a chance to meet and talk to him when we were allowed to take a walk.

On the previous day I happened to read in a newspaper the testimony of Chinese General Tai Toku Jun's at Tokyo Court Martial. He testified in the process of proving Japan's invasive act that it was Japan that began firing at Marco Polo Bridge breaking the temporal agreement.

I brought up the topic to the Brigade Commander while we were taking a walk in one afternoon, "As far as I can honestly declare, what Tai Toku Jun testified is not true. It was China that first broke the agreement and started to fire from the neutral area." He was all excited and said emphatically, "That is absolutely correct. I was responsible at that time there as Brigade Commander, and we never initiated firing. I can sincerely affirm that." I knew for the first time then that he was the commander there and was surprised with the coincidence. He was more surprised and asked me, "Why are you interested in the case? Weren't you a navy officer?" So I told him when and how we caught the cryptogram and how it had been handled by both Navy and Army then.

"I had never heard of that. If only had I been forwarded the information before the actual firing began, I could have sent a delegate to the 29th Headquarters of Chinese Army and we must have prevented the unfortunate outcome. Had it been so, the history of Japan might have been quite otherwise. I wonder why I was not informed of the message that Army Adjutant General had received." Was his great regret.

He added, “We have to bring about that specific information to the Tokyo Court Martial and make the situation clear to the world. To tell you the truth, the prosecutor has been visiting me to claim that I was responsible for the rise of the Sino-Japanese Incident because I was the Commander there at that time. He has been asking many questions to trap me. General Tai Toku Jun’s testimony must be a step to prove my crime.”

He looked quite upset. I tried to ease him and promised that I would devise the way to bring up our decoding of the U.S. cipher to the court. Later when I stood at the Court Martial to testify the special information as witness for the defendant, I made the evidence public. While I was devising the way to carry out what I had promised the General, I felt strongly the need of getting in touch with the people concerned with the incident, but they were all in liberty outside the prison. I finally hit upon an idea and Admiral Shimada came up to my mind.

Admiral Shimada had been my oldest brother, late navy Lt. Ohno’s classmate at the navy Academy and I had known him closely since I was little. When I was dismissed my duty as communication officer at Shanghai and transferred to the Tokyo Communication Station as commander, I visited the Naval Staff Bureau to see him. He was assistant commander of the Bureau then. I remembered his having welcomed me and commented on my service in Shanghai saying, “I hear you did an excellent job in Shanghai.” To which I humbly answered, “Thank you for your comment, but I’m not worthy of your high appraisal” as if I had been a Zen monk. I thought Admiral Shimada was sure to remember the detail as of 1937. I decided to bring up the case before the court thru Admiral. So when my wife came to visit me at the prison I asked her to get in touch with

Admiral's attorney and ask him to visit me.

I began preparing for meeting the attorney. I had been suspecting if our conversation at the visitor's room being poached. I had previously asked my wife to slip a sewing needle in a cigarette when she brought me some present so that I could mend my clothes myself. That cigarette pack had never been handed to me. It must have been pre-comprehended and taken away.

If the Marco Pole information should be poached when I would be disclosing to the attorney, it would be strategically unprofitable before the court on our part. So I brushed the particulars on a sheet of paper in calligraphy to show him in silence thru the net separating the prisoner's meeting booth and the visitor's. So that he would be able to read the writing and copy the fact.

When the day came, I carried out the plan as prepared. I put up the paper and while he was copying I kept talking about things that was irrelevant to the notice and that might not be of particular interest to the poacher. Fortunately the guards were not peeping into each private booth unless you had good reason to be suspected. So the visitor could coy what was shown thru the net.

I was let free in October. Some time afterwards I was called by the chief attorney of Japanese defendants at Tokyo Court Martial. He asked me to testify myself as witness as for the special information of Marco Polo Bridge. He also said that Admiral Shimada

was of the opinion that my own testimony would lead the defenders more favorably. So I accepted to be the witness and began preparations.

After that I visited the defendant attorney several times at Tokyo Court Martial at Ichigaya and discussed the way we would defend. We agreed on the strategy that General Kawabe, Admiral Shimada and I would separately testify the evidence concerning China's open-fire at Marco Polo Bridge which started the Sino-Japanese Incident.

General Sakurai was military consultant to the Chinese 29th Forces when the incident occurred. He would testify that both China and Japan had insisted that their enemy opened shooting across the neutral area. Then I would stand in the witness box and reveal the decoded cipher and make a definite proof that it was China that started firing. That was minor radicals of the 29th Forces that attacked Japan in the curfew. Japan attacked back in defense.

The 29th Forces was not quite aware of the circumstances and figured out in dismay that Japan broke the temporal agreement and started to fire. That was how it developed into a serious collision that eventually led to the beginning of the Sino-Japanese Incident.

I also visited Captain Stone at the U.S. Headquarters located then on the 5th floor of Tokyo Bank in Nihonbashi, Tokyo. I had met him in the previous year in Sugamo Prison when he visited me. He had come to make inquires about our communication activities

before and during the World War II. He particularly focused his questions on our activities while I was in Mexico.

During the investigation he was generous enough to offer me a piece of Lucky Strike, which was unthought-of of luxury for Japanese at that time because Japan was under occupation, whole Tokyo was almost flat in debris and everything was rationed and scanty. People were all suffering from shortage in everything. How appreciated I was smoking! He was more kind as to inform me, "You'll soon be released. You're welcome to visit our H.Q. after you are out." He told me that in his beautiful Japanese. When I commented on his efficiency in the language, he told me that he was a language officer having completed Japanese language course.

Such had been my acquaintance with Captain Stone that I directly asked him to find out the name of the American Naval attaché in Pekin who dispatched the cipher in prior to the China's re-firing at Marco Polo Bridge. I explained that I was going to testify the facts and circumstances of our decoding the U.S. cipher at the Court Martial.

They did not, however, have the list of officers working in China as of 1938. So he was not able to give me the name of the spot but he looked puzzled and asked, "Who are you going to defend making that testimony?" I said, "My testimony will be absolutely profitable for General Kawabe, who was the commander of the Japanese Forces stationed in China then and who is being prosecuted as responsible for the rise of the Sino-Japanese Incident, I am also going to tell the world Japan was fair as far as observing the

temporal agreement until the firing arose from our counterpart. I believe my testimony will be that effective.”

Capt. Stone understood my intention. So I further continued, “As a matter of fact, it had been a taboo to publicize what we had been doing in our communication unit. Much more to reveal how we decoded the U.S. Navy’s cipher like that. I am very much afraid that the prosecutors might claim my perjury because they are naïve in the line. So I would appreciate it very much if you could get in touch with the operation department and make sure that such a cipher did actually exist and was dispatched and report your findings to the court in advance?” He generously accepted to take the trouble for me, the former foe.

In April 1947 before the Court, it was our turn to testify since the procedure was moving up to the pleadings of the defense counsel on the Sini-Japanese Incident. For three days we waited in the waiting room ready for the hearing at any moment. General Kawabe and General Sakurai were with me. We discussed a great deal waiting there. When it came to our confidential information that had never come to light, both generals regretted redundantly how they wished if they would have been reported so that they could have avoided the unfortunate collision.

General Kawabe was still imprisoned then. He was being convoyed to and from the court by a prison van with A-class suspects of war. He disclosed that he rather enjoyed getting out of his imprisonment once in a while meeting other people and also looking at the

reviving city thru the van window.

After lunch I was able to meet many ex-high rank officers including A class suspects. I met Admiral Shimada during such a recess. He encouraged me and said, "You're testifying the decoding of the U.S. Navy's cipher before the court under the occupation is going to be quite an extrordinal case. So when you claim the truth, do it with confidence and dignity as Japanese military man.

When the day of my testimony came, I clad myself in a black suit and around my neck hung a stole of the Buddhism, which was given me when I was ordained a Buddhist priest after the war. I sat in the witness box with a string of beads in my hand. After making an oath, I heard my own testimony which I had previously deposed to the defendant counsel thru ear-phones. Everyone in the court listened to the recorded tape translated into several languages. There was no need for me to utter even a word.

When the testimony was over, the prosecutor stood up and looked at me with sort of resentment and declared that they had no intention of cross examination. I was sure that my having got in touch with Capt. Stone for collecting necessary material for the hearing had been effective. My attorney disclosed afterward that Chief Judge Webb was favorable neither for my testimony nor the way I dressed and behaved. He accused my wearing the Buddhist stole saying, "His wearing the stole might establish a contempt of court."

To which the attorney explained and convinced him of my non-ill intention saying, “That never is the case with him. He was Captain in the Imperial Navy. He was Commander of Iwo Jima Island before it was defeated. He became Buddhist priest to mourn and consoles the departed souls of the men who honorably died on the island. He is now devoting his life to helping widows and the bereaved families of the war dead on the island. He is on the process of asking the General Head Quarters for the permission to visit there for the religious purpose. His attire was that of a Buddhist priest. He had rather showed his respect to court wearing his formal Buddhist habit than contempt. Therefore, his testimony is to be totally trustworthy as Buddhist priest’s words.”

As for the look on my face, encouraged by Admiral Shimada, I stared at Judge Webb in the eye all thru the testimony from the witness box. He must have been offended by the way I was not afraid. On the other hand, A-class suspect attending on one side of the court in a row, were very pleased and satisfied to hear my reasonable and straight forward testimony for the first time in many days. By the way, the Asahi article of the Tokyo Court Martial commented on this case as, “It was one of the most distinctly extraordinary testimonies.”

* Asahi - One of the major daily newspapers in Japan

The Second Episode

Set up "L" system in Mexico

I was assigned an assistant attaché to the Japanese Legation in Mexico City, Mexico. On Nov. 1, 1940 I left Yokohama Harbor on the hiemaru. My confidential real mission was to set up an intelligence communication station, so-called "L" system in Mexico to spy on the operation of the U.S. Fleet on the Atlantic. The system was so named selecting one letter in alphabetical order ahead of M, the initial letter of Mexico.

In "L" system I was provided with very outstanding petty officers specifically trained for the purpose. Though they were expert in interception and decoding, they just visited me and stayed with me under disguise. Shortly before the World War II broke out, the circumstances were very touchy and important. But for those young assistants' cooperation our success in collecting much influential information had never been possible. That is, however, not relevant to my episode as of now, so I will not go in detail.

We picked up the emergency dispatch in Mexico while Pearl Harbor was being air raided. It was sent from the U.S. Navy in the Hawaii Islands area. So we were informed of the outbreak of the war right on the spot. I can never forget the wording that we intercepted. It read; "Air raid on Pearl. This is not a drill."

When we first picked it, we thought it quite odd as an emergency dispatch sent under the

surprise attack. After the war, we learned that a mine squadron was in action out of the harbor. They saw Pearl Harbor attacked by the Japanese Navy aircrafts and the commander Rear Admiral W.R. Furlong urgently dispatched the cable. They just stood by figuring it out as a drill at first. I thought that explained everything.

Mr. "S" Secret Agent

I remember it was in early summer shortly before the war broke out that army attaché Col. Nishi visited me. He told me that he was acquainted with an American gentleman introduced by the General staff. He was an ex-U.S. Major discharged on some demerit. He was willing to work for Japan to revenge on the U.S. for their firing him. Col. Nishi came to ask my advice how we could make use of such an agent.

I suggested that we should send him over to Panama Canal area and let him watch and report the activities of the U.S. Navy ship. As for the means of reporting, the choice was placed between Col. Nishi and the agent. What to be reported for sure and promptly was the names and the date of the passage of the ships thru the isthmus. Army and Navy attaché offices should split the expense for the espionage activities. And we agreed to call the agent Mr. S.

Col. Nishi asked me if I would meet Mr. S in person but I declined the offer because I thought it is against the principle of hiring an agent. Besides we were confident that we could pick up such report as moving of ships by ourselves thru "L" system. Such having been the case, Col. Nishi was to be in touch with Mr. S alone.

Col. Nishi discussed the contract in detail with him later. Mr. S said that he had an old classmate from Military Academy stationed in the Panama Canal area. That officer then was Lieutenant Commander. He could visit his old classmate without getting suspected. He accepted our request and left for the canal area.

Shortly Mr. S began reporting thru Col. Nishi the activities of the U.S. ships sailing past the canal. We were also getting information of the ship activities in and out the U.S. Navy radio picking thru "L" system along the Pacific and Atlantic. When we check Mr.S's information with our own, we discovered his report very correct. So we concluded he was dependable.

Send Mr. S to the U.S.

After the war broke out we called him back to Mexico and made sure of his intention and confidence in his work. Since his prospect sounded promising, we decided to send him into the U.S. to collect information around Washington D.C. and naval ports along the West Coast.

I was afraid that Mr. S might have been on the black list of the F.B.I. so I made sure with Maj. Nishi for his capability in collecting military information in the U.S. Mr. S cared in the least and off he went to the U.S. saying, "You can count on me."

On the other hand, Naval attaché office decided to send a Mexican couple to the West

Coast of the U.S. under the disguise of Christmas vacationers. They had been working for us in illicit dealings of mercury in Mexico.

They were to travel along the coast starting at Seattle, then to San Francisco and San Pedro. Then down to San Diego checking on the names and numbers of the ships damaged and under repair. We had given them some training in prior to the trip, but since they were lay Mexican civilian couple, we didn't expect too much from them. Our purpose was to double check Mr.S's information on the West Coast ports situation with the Mexican couple's.

Mr. S came back to Mexico with news

It must have been a little after Christmas in 1941 that Col. Nishi rushed into my office all excited. "Mr. S was successful in catching such important information that he returned to Mexico to report even canceling his trip to the West Coast." He was in Washington D.C. and around the officer's Club. He talked with his old friends and former colleagues and got two important pieces of information; one was the actual damage that the U.S. suffered at Pearl Harbor and the other was the operation plan of the U.S.

According to Mr. S's report;

1 The actual damage at Pearl Harbor. I can't recall as of now the exact number and names of the ships destroyed, but I remember getting overjoyed at the news. Because the outcome of the attack was much greater than that had been announced by the Japanese H.Q. I was particularly surprised to be

reported of the number of the aircrafts destroyed, which had not been revealed to us yet.

2 The U.S. Military Operation Scheme

a) ARMY

Aim at mobilizing 8,000,000 men at the earliest date possible. Those mobilized first would be sent to North Africa and support U.K. army which was in inferior power against Rommel Corps of Germany. Secondly send forces to Europe according to the situation and at the same time send some to Australia to strengthen their war potential. Thirdly take back the territories Japan would temporarily occupy, such as the Philippines, Bolneo, New Guinea. Dutch India and French Indo China.

b) NAVY

The U.S. Fleet had suffered a great damage at Pearl Harbor so they would temporarily retreat to the West Coast until they would resume their power. Since Carrier Squadron had not been damaged they would fight against the Japanese Fleet if they should sail north to attack. Construct submarines speedily and cut off all the sea transportation between the southern islands and Japan

c) Air Force

Prompt the manufacturing process of the new big bombers. Stretch air transport routes to Brazil, Azores Island, North Africa, Middle near East, India and China. Prepare establishing these bases thru both military and diplomatic means. Construct air bases for the big bombers in the mainland of China and together with the Navy submarine operation disturb Japan's sea transportation of men and resources.

d) To materialize these plans, obstacles may be the cases when the U.S. won't be able to attack General Rommel of Germany in North Africa and the reaction of General Ho in Changkin.

Telling me the above information, Colonel Nishi asked me, "Who can this General Ho

be?” I answered, “He is Ko Oh King, commander of the Headquarters there. He is a graduate of Military Academy in Japan and he is a pro-Japanese. So the U.S. is quite sensitive with him” Colonel Nishi was a cavalry officer and in his youth he was in the U.S. Cavalry Regiment for a while. So he was quite at home in English and well informed with things American. When it came to China, however, he was quite naïve.

On the other hand, I had served in China for three and a half years. One year on a gunboat on the Yangtze river and the communication unit in Shanghai for two and a half years. So I was quite well informed of China. By the way, Colonel Nishi came back to Japan after the war broke out and was assigned to work for the H.Q. later he was sent to Germany on liaison mission via Singapore, where his plane took off never to return. I feel great sorrow for his loss.

Report “S” information to the H.Q.

Within a few days after the war between the U.S. and Japan broke out, countries in Central and South America began one after another breaking diplomatic relationship with Japan. Mexico was no exception. So we were deprived of our diplomatic privileges and we lost the way to send back our secret cables. We discovered, however, Attaché Admiral Yukishita still held the privilege of free communication in Argentina which declared neutral. I figured out my own scheme in sending the secret cable to Tokyo, which I will disclose later, so I asked Colonel Nishi to leave everything with me as far as the report of “S” information to Tokyo H.Q. is concerned. Colonel accepted my request.

In Mexico City, I made friends with an Argentine Army Attaché to their legation there. He was pro-Japanese and our relationship grew very close. Once in the attaché's office I was introduced to an agent sent by the Nazi. That agent stayed in Mexico as a newspaper reporter and he held dual citizenship from Mexico and Argentina. He had been specifically trained for secret agent. Once while we were together he excused himself to men's room and surprised us coming back as a totally different human being.

He had a car completely equipped with a radio-telegraphic apparatus. After dark he would go to the top of the hill in the suburbs of Mexico City and at definite hours he exchanged communication with eight different fellow agents scattered in Central and South America, let alone Berlin. He gave me instruction in using a secret ink, to which we rewarded him accordingly.

The prescription of the secret ink was, get pills for a cold named "Pilladon." Mix it in gin to use it. The solution was the developer which didn't react to any chemical examination nor would you be suspected of carrying even if you were searched. However, he always kept the developer most carefully and never carried it with him when he went out on mission because it was such an important chemical that needed special attention.

We decided to work on two means of reporting "S" information to the H.Q.:

- 1 Using the secret ink. I typed a fake letter in Spanish addressed to an agent living in Buenos Aires, who was a comrade of the Nazi secret agent. In the letter I was asking after a sick aunt of his using a specific woman's name. That name was the key word hinting which developer to choose in releasing the concealment of the

ink. In the back of the typed letter I wrote in Japanese using the ink all the report of "S" and the naval bases on the West Coast. At the end I added the request to the agent in Spanish to hand it to the naval attaché Admiral Yukishita on his developing the letter.

The information of the naval bases along the West Coast was reported by the Mexican couple traveled during the Christmas holidays. Though that was not too reliable I put it in too for reference. This letter was mailed addressed to Buenos Aires by ordinary air mail but I was most cautious that the letter would pass the check all right. It went without saying that I had asked Admiral Yukishita in the letter to forward the information to the H.Q. in Tokyo by emergency cable.

- 2 Made use of the Nazi agent's cable. I handed the Spanish copy of the above letter to the Nazi agent and asked him to send it to a Japanese Naval Attaché to the Japanese legation in Berlin in German cipher and to forward it to the H.Q. in Tokyo. He accepted our request but he was greatly surprised how we had obtained such top secret of the U.S. working in Mexico. Of course we never revealed him our means of acquisition.

"S" information had reached Tokyo all right.

I was sent back to Tokyo in August, 1942 by the first exchange boat between the U.S. and Japan. I immediately reported myself to the H.Q. and made sure if the "S" information had reached.

I found it filed in the Latin American section of the Navy Staff Bureau. However, I made no further effort to find out how much interest was focused on that information by the leaders of the operation at that time because I was afraid that might publicize my own activity too much.

Captain Kobetto of the Bureau was different. We had been close ever since we served in China together. So I expressed my opinion saying, "The U.S. seems to be very sensitive as for what about of General Ho. Don't you think Japan should do something about that?" Incidentally, I heard news soon after that he was discharged from his position as commander of H.Q. in Chang king. I thought the transfer must have been done with the U.S. influence.

Examination in Sugamo Prison

I was imprisoned in May in Sugamo Prison. The order of arrest was issued from the G.H.Q. by General Wilby's name. There was provision attached saying, "Not as a war suspect."

I asked the Japanese demobilization Department about the cause of might-be reason of the arrest, but no one was sure because it was most unlikely. I was any way imprisoned in a private cell on the first floor of the fifth building. Nothing happened to me for a month.

I killed time meditating and tracing all my life in the service. I composed poems in form of Chinese classics. When I concentrated myself in poetry composing, selecting accurate characters one by one, my mind became surprisingly pacific and I was able to overcome all sorts of human desires and shortcomings.

There was a yard between the fourth and fifth buildings. I saw thru my small cell window Adm. Shimada while A-class suspects had their turn to take a walk. He recognized me looking up at my cell and he seemed asking, "Why are you in her?" To which I would have answered, "I have no idea." That was actually was the situation with me then.

In the beginning of June I had my first hearing. When I entered the investigation room, there was an American gentleman waiting for me with a smile. I was in a bad mood so I began asking him questions one after another. "Are you a prosecutor of the Court Martial? What are you going to inquire into just leaving me in the cell for over a month?"

In spite of my rudeness, he was least disturbed and answered, "I'm not a prosecutor. I'm an F.B.I. sent from the U.S. I was delayed to come in getting in touch with people concerned with this case and preparing for it. As a matter of fact, I've come to make investigation into your secret communication activities in Mexico at the outbreak of the war."

My counterattack went for the second time. "It is quite natural for any military attaches stationed overseas to be involved in intelligence activities. It is absolutely unnecessary to imprison me in a place like this to investigate. I see no reason why you should do this to me."

The F.B.I. was still very gentle and said, “you’re right in saying the Sugamo Prison is to in turn suspect of the war and I feel sorry you have to be here. But we discovered that you held the top secret of the U.S. at the outbreak of the war.

We suspect that you must have been in close contact with some very high rank official in the U.S. Military department. We have to know who your partner was.

For a moment I wondered what he meant by my having held the U.S.’s top secret and my contact with some U.S. high officials. I thought it must have been a mistake. I had nothing to do with the top secret and the high official. I also thought it was not clever of me to be in unfriendly terms with him. So I took a Lucky Strike he offered me. He shared me his lighter and by the time we started to smoke together, I was myself and calm enough to talk even with a smile, “Ok I’ll tell you anything I know.

The F.B.I. began. “I understand you reported to Japan right after the war broke out, the U.S. operation scheme and the conditions of the U.S. naval ports along the West Coast very accurately up to date as they stood. Your making that much investigation and report living in Mexico can not been done without the cooperation of some high official of the U.S. I would like to know who he was.”

“Oh, you have imprisoned me here all because you mean to arrest the man?” I said.

“Exactly.” Was his reply. It must have been the leakage of the “S” system. An incident

flashed across my mind. Shortly before I was sent to the U.S. from Mexico, we had a farewell party at the Argentine attaché's quarter one night. The Nazi agent was very spirited and told me that he would soon sneak into the U.S. I warned him to be very cautious. I thought he must have been arrested and confessed. So I asked the F.B.I. to make sure, "How did you F.B.I. get the information?"

"I am the inquirer. You are only to answer my question. I feel as if I'm getting investigated." He said. "It looks like it, indeed." I said and we both started to laugh. Then I began to disclose the way we got "S" information as it was and told him, "There never was an American high rank official who was unpatriotic to his own country selling information to its enemy." I also stressed however, precisely they might examine me, they would never find out any U.S. high official.

The F.B.I. looked disappointed and then he altered his inquire to Mr. S. I told him repeatedly that as was always the case with intelligence activities, I left all the contact with him to Colonel Nishi alone and I had never met him and I can't even recall his name for the moment. I also added, "With all the efficiency of the F.B.I. I'm sure you can locate him wherever he may be." He said, "I'll report myself to the office in the U.S. first and I'll come back again. So please be patient and put up with your imprisonment by the time I'll come back." And he left.

After that first investigation I was moved to a general cell in the 2nd building From the private cell in the 5th building. It was July. The life in the prison was not too bad after all. It was during that time I made acquaintance with General Kawabe.

In late July the F.B.I. came back and began my 2nd investigation. We met shaking hands and asking, “Long time no see. How have you been?” as if we had been friends.

Enjoying Lucky Strike he offered me as before, I started off, “Have you found anything about Mr. S?”

He was professional enough to answer casually, “He’s still in Mexico. His name is Suten.” And he searched my reaction. I also commented casually, “That name sounds sort of familiar to me. If you say he’s still in Mexico, even the F.B.I. can’t arrest him, can you?”

“No, we can’t. But we are rather happy that your disclosure didn’t bring up any arrest of the U.S. high officials. Such a minor agent as Mr. S is not of very importance.” He said.

I said, “Minor as had he been, Mr. S was very cooperative informant for Japan. So I’ll be sorry if he ever gets arrested. Would you kindly inform him not to leave Mexico until his crime will be extinguished?” as a joke. “I’ve never heard of such a kind-hearted F.B.I. in the U.S.” he grinned and we both laughed.

He was serious again and said, “As a matter of fact, I’m sent here also to investigate how your Mr. S information actually affected on the operation of the Japanese Forces. I would like to know your opinion on it.” I was at a loss what to reply. Looking back at the war and how it was carried out, except for the operation of the U.S. Forces attacking

into the Central Pacific area, things went as had been informed by “S”, and Japan lost the war. The strategy of the Central Pacific must have been discussed at the conference in San Francisco. So it had slipped out of our “S” information which mostly leaked out of Washington D.C.

To answer the F.B.I. I stammered but said, “I had never evaluated the information of Mr. S as the U.S. top secret because he did his job talking mainly with his old friends around the Officer’s Club in Washington D.C.

When we sent that information to Japan it was at the very beginning of the war, when Japan was ecstatic with its consecutive victories battle after battle so those who were on the top of the operation didn’t consider our information of much importance. Eventually as you know Japan lost the war. So judging from the outcome, I’m afraid the evaluation of “S” information accounts for nothing.”

The F.B.I. left saying, “I would report to the G.H.Q. that they can release you anytime.” He also left a pack of Lucky Strikes for me, which was quite a luxury for a citizen living in the occupied country.

Epilogue

While I had nothing to do in the prison but to meditate and look back upon the past, I was keenly aware and repentant more than ever of the unfortunate decision we had to follow.

I was particularly regretful about the urgent cable in the first episode. If it had been sent to General Kawabe, the China Incident must have been prevented so there had never been the World War II. I can't help recalling ruefully the judgment of the Army Adjutant General.

On the other hand, I am consoling myself that I was given a chance to testify before the court about the cable that prevented the prosecutor from accusing General Kawabe to be responsible for opening fire at Marco Polo Bridge. It also kept people in general from misjudging the China Incident broken out by the Japanese Army as they did with Manchuria Incident.