

Emperor Hirohito on Localized Aggression in China¹

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I. Introduction

A highly emotional controversy surrounds the late Emperor Shōwa 昭和 or Hirohito 裕仁 and his leadership of Japan in World War II. On the one hand, his defenders argue that he personally opposed the war but was powerless to stop it; and they laud his "august decision" 御聖断 to overrule hard-line military leaders and end the war in August 1945. By contrast, his critics condemn him for failing to forestall the conflict. Their reasoning assumes that, since he had enough power to end the war, he also could have kept it from breaking out to begin with. Even his former Aide-de-Camp Vice-Admiral Hirata Noboru 平田昇 conjectured: "What [His Majesty] did at the end of the war, we might have had him do at the start."²

Two issues are noteworthy whatever our views in this debate. First, its focus is too often limited to the years 1941 to 1945. This reveals an America-centered bias--fostered by the Japanese Government, some Japanese historians, and Hirohito himself--that distorts the true historical character of World War II in East Asia. As Hayashi Saburō 林三郎, former secretary to Army Minister Anami Korechika 阿南惟幾, notes in a standard 1951 military history, Imperial Army Headquarters thought of China as the main war theater--and the Pacific as subsidiary--from July 1937 until December 1942. Only after losing Guadalcanal did Army war planners see a need to reverse their priorities.³ Given this prominence of the China front, Hirohito's views on it cannot be left unexamined. After all, Article 11 of the Meiji Constitution gave him power of "supreme command" over Japan's armed forces.⁴

Second, whatever our opinions in this controversy may be, they are based on a dearth of sources left by Hirohito himself. That is not mere happenstance. Japanese military and Government leaders had two weeks to destroy incriminating official documents between August 14, when they accepted the Postdam Declaration and August 28, when Occupation forces came ashore. And, Government officials even today refuse to declassify certain materials, such as records of Hirohito's historic first meeting with MacArthur on September 27, 1945. Those records are purported to be in Foreign Ministry archives accessible only to selected researchers.⁵ Thus, we must rely largely on non-official sources such as diaries and memoirs that convey second-

third-, or even fourth-hand accounts of what Hirohito said and did. Most of such sources were created by civil government or palace officials, not generals and admirals on active duty. Thus, the nature of available sources skews our image of Hirohito by making him look more like a constitutional monarch than a supreme military commander.

All historians, then, were pleased in December 1990 when the Japanese monthly Bungei shunjū 文芸春秋 braved possible violence from right-wing extremists by publishing the Shōwa tennō dokuhaku roku 昭和天皇独白録, which records talks by Hirohito.⁶ It is based on five audiences totalling about eight hours that he granted between March 18 and April 8, 1946 to Imperial Household Ministry officials: Matsudaira Yoshitami 松平慶民, Kinoshita Michio 木下道雄, Inada Shūichi 稲田修一, Matsudaira Yasumasa 松平康昌, and Terasaki Hidenari 寺崎英成 (of Bridge to the Sun fame). Inada took notes, and Terasaki, in consultation with Kinoshita, compiled these to produce the document by June 1, 1946.

Kinoshita mentioned the Dokuhaku roku in his Sokkin nisshi 測近日誌; so historians were aware of the document's possible existence. But the manuscript was discovered only in 1988, when it turned up in the Wyoming home of Terasaki's daughter, Mariko T. Miller. The manuscript was first sent to Professors Gordon Berger of the University of Southern California and Itō Takashi 伊藤隆 of Tokyo University; and later, Bungei shunjū decided to publish it unabridged. It should be noted that the Imperial Household Agency has officially expressed "displeasure" over this matter.⁷

Commentaries to the Dokuhaku roku text are provided by Handō Kazutoshi 半藤一利, a member of the Pacific War Research Society which produced Japan's Longest Day in 1965.⁸ His remarks, however, are hard to accept at times. For example, Handō tries to corroborate Hirohito's pacifism, adherence to the constitution, and fidelity to treaties by citing the diary of Lord Privy Seal Kido Kōichi 木戸幸一. Kido's entry for February 12, 1942 quotes Hirohito saying: "For the sake of peace and humanity, we shouldn't let the war drag on..." But Handō neglects to cite the whole passage, which ends: "On the other hand, we can't give up our [newly-won] resources in the south half-way through exploiting them."⁹

The Dokuhaku roku is not a primary source in a strict sense. It records Hirohito speaking retrospectively on topics, including China-related issues, arranged chronologically from Versailles in 1919 to the Imperial Conferences of August 1945. Moreover, he spoke in March and April of 1946--just before the Tokyo War Crimes Trials were to start in May. Hirohito accepted the Potsdam Declaration in August 1945 because he had come around to believe that US Occupation forces would preserve imperial rule (kokutai 国体) in Japan.¹⁰ By January

25, 1946, MacArthur had in fact decided not to indict Hirohito for war crimes.¹¹ And, Terasaki likely communicated that decision to him before the Dokuhaku roku talks began in March. But Hirohito was then contemplating abdication, and may still have felt himself in some danger.¹² After all, MacArthur could always change his mind.

Given these circumstances, we must question why Hirohito gave his Dokuhaku roku talks, not just ascertain their historical veracity. Four prominent Japanese scholars: Handō, Itō, Kojima Noboru 児島襄, and Hata Ikuhiko 秦郁彦 discussed this issue in January 1991. All except Hata argued that Hirohito did not record his talks to protest himself innocent of war crimes and did not plan to submit the document to MacArthur for that purpose, either directly or through Bonner Fellers, a key SCAP aide and relative of Terasaki's American wife.¹³ Whether Hirohito meant to submit the Dokuhaku roku to SCAP is a separate issue, but he clearly does deny personal accountability for the war in this document. And the august image which emerges from it is rather unseemly at times, as when Hirohito lambasts pro-German Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yōsuke 松岡洋右 by snorting: "He must be getting paid by Hitler."¹⁴

This colloquial human candor is refreshing, for it contrasts starkly with Hirohito's evasive postwar statements to the press. For instance, when asked by a reporter in September 1975 about his inability to oppose the military in the 1930s and in 1941, he answered: "What you say may be true, but the persons involved are still alive. If I said anything, I'd be criticizing the military leaders of that time; and I don't want to." Or, in October 1975, a reporter asked him how he interpreted the term "responsibility for the war" (sensō sekinin 戦争責任). He nimbly replied, "I can't comment on that figure of speech because I've never done research in literature."¹⁵

The Dokuhaku roku contains twenty-four sections, four of which deal with Japan's continental policy before December 1941: "Chang Tso-lin's Assassination, (1929?),"¹⁶ "The Shanghai Incident (1932)," "The China Incident (1937)," and "The Nomonhan Incident (1939)." These I summarize and analyze below. Two words of caution are called for here. First, I call Emperor Shōwa "Hirohito" throughout this article because that is how he is best known outside Japan among non-Japan specialists. Second, Hirohito uses the pejorative "Shina" 支那 for China in this and other wartime or early-postwar documents; and he followed Japanese usage of his day in calling northeastern China "Manshū" 満州 or "Manshūkoku" 満州国, rendered below as "Manchuria."

II. Matters Left Unsaid

In critically analyzing Hirohito's views on the China war, we must first note what he omits from his Dokuhaku roku--not just what he includes. For example, he says nothing about the fierce resistance put up by Communist forces. Prominent historians such as Ienaga Saburō 家永三郎 and Fujiwara Akira 藤原彰 attribute not only Japan's failure in China, but also her ultimate defeat in World War II, to the Red Army's ability to instill patriotism in the Chinese masses and to mobilize them in anti-Japanese struggles.¹⁷ One may not share this opinion fully, but the Communist factor in defeating Japan cannot be ignored offhand.

Hirohito is also silent about Japanese pillage in China. A young historian, Yoshida Yutaka 吉田裕, discloses that Hirohito's uncle, Imperial Prince Higashikuni Naruhiko 東久爾宮稔彦 presented him with several Chinese art objects in January 1939. The explanation was: "We always bring back such things as booty." Hirohito selected two tinted porcelains and asked, "Are they precious?" When told that they were, he said: "Then place them in Ueno 上野 [Museum]."18

Above all, Hirohito says nothing about the possibility that family members were involved in Japanese atrocities. In 1985, freelance historian Tanaka Nobumasa 田中伸尚 introduced a top-secret memo (see Appendix) unearthed by Yoshimi Yoshiaki 吉見義明 of Chūō University. Drafted by Imperial Prince Higashikuni on August 16, 1938, it authorizes the use of poison gas 特種火煙. Higashikuni acted with due concern for world opinion, that is, the Western powers; for, he ordered Japanese commanders to lodge protests claiming that the Chinese were the ones who really used chemical weapons, and he advised that gas would not be effective against "superior forces" such as the Soviets. What is more, Tanaka argues, the production of chemical weapons in Japan and their use in China--facts now established beyond any doubt--could not have taken place without Hirohito's authorization in the form of orders called rinsan-me 臨參命 and tairiku-me 大陸命 issued through the Army General Staff.

A document published in the widely-used source collection Gendai shi shiryō 現代史資料 sheds light on the emperor's cousin, Imperial Prince Takeda Tsuneyoshi 竹田宮恒徳. He was serving with the Army General Staff in 1939, when he blithely asked an officer named Hashimoto 橋本 about chemical warfare. Hashimoto answered that poison gas had often proved counterproductive because the Chinese gained more in propaganda than they lost in battle. But he did stress to Takeda that: "China is the opponent... So there's no need

for any reservations about using [gas]."¹⁹

In sum, these Imperial Princes authorized or condoned chemical warfare against China if it could be done effectively and without incurring Western censure. Higashikuni headed Japan's first postwar cabinet. But Occupation authorities forced its resignation because he refused to free some 3000 Japanese prisoners of conscience still held on charges of lese majesty. For his part, Takeda has promoted physical fitness at home and goodwill abroad in the postwar era by chairing the Japan Olympic Committee and Ice-Skating Federation and by serving on the International Olympic Committee.

It is possible that Hirohito issued these tairiku-mei and rinsan-mei without knowing precisely what he was authorizing; after all, he affixed his seal to thousands of wartime documents. And, it may be unfair to hold him accountable for what his uncles and cousins did or knew of. But Tanaka Nobumasa also introduces evidence suggesting that Hirohito's brother, Imperial Prince Mikasa Takahito 三笠宮崇仁 informed him about the Rape of Nanking. As a Staff Officer with the China Expeditionary Army, Mikasa viewed a war film entitled Shōri kōshin kyoku 勝利行進曲 which, according to other sources, portrayed the massacre. Later, he brought the film home for Hirohito's perusal. It may have been destroyed, or, it may be extant but remains classified. In any case, it has evaded researchers to this day. So, we cannot discover how much it told Hirohito about that atrocity.²⁰

Work by Japanese historians such as Tanaka--who must endure threats and harrassment for criticizing the emperor--casts suspicion on the activities of Imperial Family members during the China war. To date, those scholars have not discovered enough incontrovertible evidence to prove conclusively that Hirohito himself countenanced large-scale atrocities. But knowing that some such evidence does exist forces us to scrutinize his four China-related Dokuhaku roku accounts in a more critical manner.

III. Table Talks on China

Chang Tso-lin's 張作霖 Assassination (1929?)

Précis: Prime Minister Tanaka Giichi 田中義一 at first said he deplored Chang's murder and promised Hirohito he would express regret to China and court-martial the person responsible--Colonel Kōmoto Daisaku 河本大作. But the cabinet decided that would work to Japan's disadvantage; and when Tanaka came back with its decision, Hirohito exploded: "Aren't you going

back on your word? Why don't you resign."²¹ That "outburst of youthful rashness" caused Tanaka to resign and his cabinet to dissolve. Later, Hirohito learned that Tanaka followed his cabinet's advice because Kōmoto planned to expose all Kwantung Army conspiracies if a court-martial were held. Hirohito claimed he did "not mean to veto"²² the cabinet when he confronted Tanaka. After this, he vowed to approve all cabinet decisions--even those he disagreed with--such as the one to reject the Lytton Report. Tanaka sympathizers such as Kuhara Fusanosuke 久原房之助 later spread ugly rumors about a "clique of former premiers" (jūshin burokku 重臣ブロッキ) who had conspired to topple the Tanaka cabinet; and those rumors created a poisoned atmosphere that did much to cause the February 26 (2-26) Incident.²³

This account differs in some details from those left by Makino Nobuaki 牧野伸顯 and by Saionji Kimmochi's 西園寺公望 secretary, Harada Kumao 原田能雄; e.g., about whether Hirohito told Tanaka to resign in so many words.²⁴ But we are concerned less with such discrepancies than with what the Tanaka-Chang incident says about Hirohito as imperial Japan's sovereign head of state and supreme military commander. The affair has supplied "evidence" for two historical arguments. One holds that Hirohito's high-handed firing of his prime minister was anomalous; as Hirohito claims in the Dokuhaku roku, this was an isolated outburst of youthful indiscretion. After that, he vowed to behave strictly as a constitutional monarch--as he understood the term. That is, he might express personal opinions on the formulation of state policy; but he would never "veto" any cabinet decision brought to him, even if he disagreed with it. However, "constitutional monarchy" under the Meiji Constitution did not normally constitute parliamentary democracy.

Hirohito claims elsewhere in the Dokuhaku roku that he initiated only one other political act in his career: quashing the 2-26 Incident of 1936 when army officers attempted a coup in Tokyo. But, he says, he had to behave in an autocratic way because he believed his prime minister and other state ministers had been killed. Also, he argues that Japan's commencement of hostilities against America and Britain in 1941 was a cabinet decision that he, as a constitutional monarch, could not refuse to approve.²⁵

In these Dokuhaku roku talks of March and April 1946, Hirohito portrayed himself as unable to stop the war because his freedom to act was strictly curtailed by law. In November 1945, the Japanese Government had already authorized this portrayal as its official interpretation of Hirohito's prewar and wartime role.²⁶ He has re-

peatedly espoused it since then.²⁷ It often finds expression in the Japanese mass media.²⁸ And, it represents the mainstream view in Western scholarship.²⁹

But critical Japanese historians present a counter-argument. As they retort, Tanaka's dismissal indicates that Hirohito held well-nigh absolute power under the Meiji Constitution which he wielded when he chose to.³⁰ Thus, he executed rebellious army officers in the 2-26 Incident; and, in addition, he suppressed army aggression at Shanhaikuan 山海關 in 1928, at Changkufeng 張鼓峰 in 1938, and at Nomonhan in 1939. Such resolute action may have been exceptional rather than normal, but it proves that Hirohito could exercise the supreme command when he really wanted to. The key question is why he neglected to halter insubordinate officers on the continent more consistently, not why he approved the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Even Satō Kenryō 佐藤賢了 has stated: "There was nothing related to troop-dispatching or strategy planning during the China Incident that was not based on the emperor's orders. In no instance was central headquarters forced to accept what local [commanders] did."³¹ As secretary to Tōjō Hideki 東條英樹 and wartime Head of the Army Ministry's Military Affairs Section, Satō cannot be accused of leftist leanings or irreverence for the emperor. The sweeping nature of his claim cautions us against accepting it literally; but it should not be dismissed with a grain of salt either.

The Tanaka-Chang affair becomes important in this context, although it predates the China Incident that Satō discusses. Historians such as Inoue Kiyoshi 井上清 argue that Hirohito's angry dismissal of Tanaka did not stem from liberal sentiments. Inoue cites the Shihishō, a memo written by Chief Aide-de-Camp Honjō Shigeru 本庄繁, in which Hirohito reportedly confided to Grand Chamberlain Suzuki Kantarō 鈴木貫太郎:

Tanaka might have said, "I'm sorry this [cabinet decision] contradicts what I told you before. But that's unavoidable for political reasons, so please let me resign." Then, I would have forgiven him and said: "For politicians, these things can't be helped sometimes." But instead, Tanaka wanted me to sanction his false report itself. That would have meant lying to my subjects, and so I refused.³²

Hirohito, no less than Tanaka, abetted the Kwantung Army cover-up of Chang's murder; and that facilitated continental aggression. According to Inoue, Hirohito's concern was not to uncover the truth, but to avoid having to lie himself. That explains his rage.³³ When viewed in this light, it is conceivable that Hirohito lamented his action out of sympathy for Tanaka, who had done the only proper thing. As the Dokuhaku roku shows, Kōmoto would have exposed all

Kwantung Army plots if his court-martial had actually proceeded:

Historian Nezu Masashi ねず まさし gives a slightly different account of Hirohito's behavior during this affair. When first informed of Chang's death, the emperor took a hard line: "We should proclaim the truth candidly to foreign countries so that Japan earns the international community's trust." But the Army as a whole, Army Minister Shirakawa Yoshinori 白川 義則, and the Seiyūkai 政友会 majority Diet party which Tanaka headed all opposed taking legal action against Kōmoto. Then, after machinations by Shirakawa, Kōmoto was simply relieved of his post, not court-martialed. Hirohito reversed his earlier stand and approved this measure, saying only: "From now on, military men should not commit any more mistakes like this." This assured them that future insubordination would go unpunished.³⁴

Hirohito shows no concern for Chinese interests. He did not dismiss Tanaka out of sympathy for Chang, or because he wanted Kōmoto brought to justice, or because he sought to curb Kwantung Army aggression. Instead, he emphasizes two aspects of this Tanaka-Chang episode. First, he claims he learned his lesson and thereafter behaved according to his (really Saionji's) definition of a constitutional monarch--by approving all cabinet decisions, even those he disagreed with. Second, he cites the League of Nations' Lytton Report as one concrete example. He was for accepting it "without protest," but the cabinet wanted otherwise; so, he deferred to it.³⁵

This second assertion is startling. The Lytton Report of October 1932 condemned Japan's aggression in Manchuria and called for, among other things: 1) "constitution of a special regime for the administration of the Three Eastern Provinces [Manchuria]" consistent "with the sovereignty and administrative integrity of China," and 2) "withdrawal of all armed forces, including any special bodies of police or railway guards, whether Chinese or Japanese."³⁶ If Hirohito wanted to accept all this "without protest," he would be flying in the face of not only the cabinet and military, but Japanese public opinion as well.³⁷ That seems hard to believe.³⁸

The Shanghai Incident (1932)

Précis: Hirohito ordered General Shirakawa Yoshinori to limit hostilities to Shanghai; and Shirakawa did this on March 3rd (the Doll Festival), only to suffer criticism from Army Chief of Staff Imperial Prince Kan'in Kotohito 閑院宮載仁. This was a personal order, not one issued through the General Staff. After Shirakawa's death, Hirohito secretly sent his widow a poem about peace and the Doll Festival that extolled Shirakawa's meritor-

ious achievement in obeying the imperial will. Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yōsuke later asked Hirohito to issue a similar order to Honda Kumatarō 本多熊太郎 [the ambassador to Nanking]. Following Kido's advice, Hirohito refused to do so because Honda "was such a blabber mouth."³⁹

This account is rather damaging. It shows that Hirohito might issue personal orders directly to generals in the field rather than through the Army General Staff, or to ambassadors on assignment rather than through the Foreign Ministry. Thus, he had ways of skirting normal chains of command to make military or civil officials do what he wanted. Of course, not all of them obliged as readily or discretely as Shirakawa. Some, like Honda, could not keep a secret.

Hirohito portrays himself honoring Shirakawa for limiting hostilities in the face of criticism from his superior, Army Chief of Staff Kan'in. That implies Hirohito wanted peace. But he praised Shirakawa explicitly for "preventing a clash with the League of Nations," not for reducing casualties and suffering.⁴⁰ So, we may conclude that Hirohito wanted the fighting localized mainly to avert Western criticism. And, even if he did want peace, he delivered his poem to Shirakawa's widow in the utmost secrecy. By contrast, his publicly-expressed sentiments at that time were far more influential; and he says nothing about these.

For example, two popular periodicals of that era, the Asahi guraifu 朝日クラブ of April 1932 and Fujin gahō 婦人画報 of April 1934, give glowing accounts of the Shanghai Incident and carry Hirohito's imperial rescript of March 16, 1932: "Soldiers and sailors at Shanghai harmoniously cooperated, expeditiously routed far larger forces, and thus allowed the might of our imperial armed forces to resonate at home and abroad. We deeply appreciate your loyal resolution."⁴¹ The Fujin gahō carried another imperial rescript, this one directed to Shirakawa: "Your Lordship commanded the Shanghai Expeditionary Forces, assiduously accomplished your mission on foreign shores, enhanced our military prestige, and so furthered international trust. We deeply appreciate your labors."⁴² Hirohito's rescript says "Your Lordship" because it came with an order making Shirakawa a baron. This bestowing of imperial honors has been central to the emperor system throughout Japanese history, and remains so today.⁴³

Imperial rescripts were of various types. These two were chokugo 勅語, which had no basis in law because they did not require countersignatures by cabinet members. But as Miyaji Masato 宮地正人 argues, they conveyed the emperor's absolute moral authority and so could not be publicly questioned, much less repudiated.⁴⁴ No matter how Hirohito may have felt privately, he issued chokugo

that publicly praised Shirakawa and Japanese forces in Shanghai for their glorious exploits. That made it impossible for Japanese subjects to work for peace by opposing the war or criticizing the military openly.

The Nomonhan Incident (1939)

Précis: The Kwantung Army and its Commander Yamada Otsuzō 山田 乙三 properly followed Hirohito's orders when they engaged what they believed to be invading Soviet forces. The Manchurian Army too was right to join the conflict under the Japan-Manchuria Joint Defense Pact. However, it was a mistake to try to defend the border in out-of-the-way areas or where boundary lines were unclear; so Hirohito relaxed that order in such areas.⁴⁵

Here, Hirohito's constitutional role as supreme commander of imperial armed forces comes through clearly. He stoutly defends Japan's disastrous border war of 1939; faulty strategy is his sole cause for regret. And, seeing his error, he revised his earlier orders appropriately. That both sets of orders were obeyed indicates his ability to control the Kwantung Army, at least to a degree.

The China Incident (1937)

Précis: After Soong 宋 family mercenary forces surrounded Tientsin, Sino-Japanese tensions in North China reached crisis proportions early in the summer of 1937; and this caused Hirohito to seek a rapprochement with Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石 on three occasions. First, he summoned Army Chief of Staff Kan'in Kotohito and Army Minister Sugiyama Hajime 杉山元 on the pretext of discussing the Kan-ch'a-tzu 乾岔子 boundary dispute in Manchuria; but in truth, he wanted to sound out their views on rapprochement. When they claimed they could settle the China Incident by delivering one good blow to Tientsin, he knew they opposed his will and declined to press the issue. The second chance came after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and the subsequent spread of fighting to Shanghai. Prime Minister Konoe [Fumimaro] 近衛文麿 and the Army General Staff shared Hirohito's desire this time, but the Army Ministry under Sugiyama opposed him. Third, German Ambassador [to China Oskar] Trautmann offered to mediate a settlement to the conflict after Nanking had fallen [in December 1937]. But Shidehara Kijūrō 幣原喜重郎 informed Hirohito that Japan's peace initiative

had never reached Chiang Kai-shek because Soong Mei-ling 宋美齡 [Madame Chiang] "smothered it." And, Commander Hata [Shunroku] 畑俊六 opposed the negotiations anyway. Konoe's policy was to limit the conflict. But Hirohito knew that was impossible after it had spread to Shanghai. So he strongly urged Ishiwara Kanji 石原莞爾 of the Army General Staff to send reinforcements. Ishiwara, however, refused because he was more concerned with the Soviets in Manchuria; and, on top of that, he tried to make it look as if the Government, not he himself, ignored the imperial will by refusing to dispatch more troops.⁴⁶

Hirohito lacks all guile in this episode. Thus, he says of Marco Polo Bridge: "I can't imagine the Chinese provoked it; no doubt it stemmed from some trivial dispute." Handō Kazutoshi's commentary reads: "What should we make of this? Is he observing that the incident erupted accidentally, due to neither a Japanese plot nor a Chinese provocation?"⁴⁷ That is more than a bit contrived. As is well known from the diary of Harada Kumao, Konoe's secretary, Hirohito told Kan'in and Itagaki Seishirō 板垣征四郎 on July 21, 1938:

The Army's behavior has disgusted me from the start. Both at Liu-t'iao-kou 柳条溝 in starting the Manchurian Incident, and at Marco Polo Bridge in starting this last China Incident, men at the front defied orders from central headquarters to employ despicable methods that disgrace Our imperial armed forces.⁴⁸

And, no matter how we interpret Hirohito's statement, "I can't imagine the Chinese provoked [Marco Polo Bridge]," he contradicts the Konoe Government line issued on July 11, 1937: "There is no longer doubt that this incident was a deliberate act of militant hostility toward Japan [perpetrated] wholly by the Chinese."⁴⁹ As with Chang's Tso-lin's murder, Hirohito took no real steps to discipline his army.

Hirohito tries to show a desire for peace by citing his eagerness to compromise with Chiang Kai-shek three times in 1937: 1) during the Kan-ch'a-tzu border clash with the Soviets in June, 2) after fighting spread to Shanghai in August, and 3) after Nanking fell in December and German Ambassador Trautmann offered to mediate a settlement. The third "lost chance" is quite bizzare. There is no conceivable reason for either Shidehara or Hirohito to have fabricated this account of Madame Chiang sabotaging Japan's peace initiative. But it must be considered apochryphal until other sources are found to corroborate it.

The first "lost chance" was the most important. Hirohito says he met with Sugiyama and Kan'in during the Kan-ch'a-tzu Incident

which we know began on June 20. Hence it putatively came before the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of July 7 that kicked off Japan's full-scale war with China. If a peace formula were to be reached, this was the best time. But when Sugiyama and Kan'in strongly opposed Hirohito, he deferred to their opinion against his better judgment. Hirohito's second "lost chance" purportedly came after Japan sent troops to Shanghai in August. He claims that Prime Minister Konoe too had wanted to limit the fighting, and the Army General Staff concurred this time; but the Army Ministry under Sugiyama insisted on escalation. According to Hirohito, Konoe later replaced Sugiyama with Itagaki Seishirō in order to control bellicose Army elements; but his stratagem backfired when Itagaki turned out to be an Army "robot."⁵⁰

Taken together, these Dokuhaku roku accounts are inaccurate. After the July 7th Marco Polo Bridge Incident, the Japanese China Garrison Army concluded a truce on July 11 with Chinese commander Sung Che-yuan 宋哲元 that granted Japan's demands. The Japanese field army thought the conflict could be localized and wired Tokyo that no more troops need be sent. Hirohito then met separately with Sugiyama and Kan'in on or about July 11; and Sugiyama issued his "one month" declaration at this time, after Marco Polo Bridge, not during the Kan-ch'a-tzu border incident of June.⁵¹ Field commanders wanted to halt the conflict, at least initially. So, the most bellicose party was not the Army, which was divided on the issue, but the Konoe civilian Government. In the "Konoe Declaration" of January 1938, it vowed "not to deal with" Chiang. When asked for clarification, Konoe said he meant more than just non-recognition of the KMT regime; he "rejected it" and would "eradicate it."⁵²

These inaccuracies probably stem more from faulty memory than a will to deceive. But again, such details are less important than Hirohito's general message in the Dokuhaku roku. For example, his explicit reason for localizing hostilities was that: "incidents might break out in the boondocks of Manchuria without causing any real problem; but if one broke out in the Tientsin-Peking area, Anglo-American intervention would intensify and perhaps lead to a clash with us."⁵³ Or, his strategy for settling the China Incident was: "I always advocated combining intimidation with peace offers."⁵⁴ That hardly befits a man depicted as "mild-mannered, retiring, [and] shy in the extreme."⁵⁵

Thereafter, Hirohito seems to have lost interest in reaching a rapprochement with Chiang's Nationalist regime. Primary sources such as the Army General Staff's Haisen no kiroku 敗戦の記録 show that he quashed such proposals. In September 1944, Prime Minister Koiso Kuniaki 小磯國昭 broached the possibility of a "Chungking Initia-

tive" designed to co-opt Chiang by letting him form a coalition government in Nanking, and by granting him certain concessions such as the return of Hong Kong. Hirohito's reply was:

Won't your Chungking Initiative seem like weakness on the part of our empire?... Won't the morale of our armed forces suffer? Doesn't it contradict the Konoe Declaration [of 1937]? The reversion of Hong Kong is provided for, but what will you do with Hainan? How will abrogating the Sino-Japanese Pact [with Nanking] affect Burma, Thailand, the Philippines, and other [subjugated] areas?⁵⁶

In sum, Hirohito vetoed his Prime Minister because he wanted to keep Hainan and avoid granting China concessions which, he feared, would signal Japanese weakness, create defeatism at home, and trigger independence movements in occupied nations. The war situation pleaded for a settlement with Chiang in September 1944. Then, Japanese troops in China could have been redeployed en masse to the Pacific, where they were desperately needed. But Hirohito refused. So, it is unlikely that he seriously wanted to compromise with Chiang in the summer of 1937, when Japan enjoyed a position of overwhelming strength.

Thus, all three of Hirohito's "lost chances" for peace in China appear spurious. And he also rejected Miao Pin's 繆斌 peace proposal in March 1945--though probably for valid reasons.⁵⁷ His account of the China Incident does, however, show the limited nature of his supreme command. Generals like Shirakawa obeyed the emperor, while those like Ishiwara defied him.

IV. The Question of Motive

Hirohito presented these same Dokuhaku roku accounts of China in another source: the diary of his most trusted palace advisor, Kido Kōichi. According to the entry for September 29, 1945, Hirohito was depressed because the Americans misconstrued his "true intentions," and so he "wanted to convey these either in the newspapers or by speaking directly to MacArthur." As he put it, "They think of me as if I were a worshipper of fascism; that is what I find most unbearable." Then he said:

In fact, things have come to this [war and defeat] precisely because I adhered to the Constitution too strictly... I tried extremely hard to avoid war. For instance, General Shirakawa did a fine job in obeying my orders during the first Shanghai Incident; that is why I sent his widow that poem upon his death. Or, when the incident at Tientsin broke out, I summoned Army

Minister [Sugiyama] and Chief of Staff [Kan'in] under the pretense of discussing the clash at Kan-ch'a-tzu. I wished to ask them if some compromise couldn't be reached with Chiang. But they flatly insisted that everything could be settled with one blow; so there was nothing I could do. I really deplore that now.⁵⁸

This entry comes five months before Hirohito's Dokuhaku roku talks began. Thus, on September 29, 1945, he explicitly desired to convey these same China-related episodes to US Occupation officials. That would dispel any mistake about what his "true intentions" had been and would show he was not "a worshipper of fascism." But Kido advised him not to: "Contrary to your hopes, the more you try to defend yourself, the more trouble you'll get into; so, it's better to endure your grief in silence."⁵⁹

I believe Hirohito took Kido's advice in this matter, as he did in most. Hence, Itō, Handō, and Kojima probably are right in saying that Hirohito did not plan to submit his Dokuhaku roku to SCAP. Still, he did record this manifesto to deny responsibility for the war--if only for posterity, and only toward Westerners.

V. Table Talks on the Pacific War

After Trautmann failed to mediate an end to the China Incident, Hirohito claims, the Army channeled "popular hostility" toward Britain and America in an attempt to deflect criticism of its interminable China war. That led Japan to sign the Tripartite Pact of 1940 and a corollary agreement in December 1941 which forbade Japan from seeking a separate peace with the US.⁶⁰ In the Dokuhaku roku, Hirohito twice blamed this corollary agreement for ruining his plans to end the war quickly. He recalled that:

[In 1941,] we thought we could achieve a draw with the US, or at best win by a six to four margin; but total victory was nearly impossible... When the war actually began, however, we gained a miraculous victory at Pearl Harbor and our invasions of Malaya and Burma succeeded far quicker than expected. So, if not for this [agreement], we might have achieved peace when we were in an advantageous position.⁶¹

This explains why Hirohito told Kido on February 12, 1942 that he desired to negotiate an early end to the war.⁶² And it betrays the claim of historians such as Handō, who portray that desire as motivated by a love of peace.

The war started to go badly, and Hirohito observed in his Dokuhaku roku: "I knew we had lost any hope for victory when we

failed to hold the Stanley Mountain Range on New Guinea [late in 1942]." After that setback, "I hoped to give the enemy one good bashing somewhere, and then seize a chance for peace. Yet I didn't want to ask for peace before Germany did because then we would lose trust in the international community for having violated that corollary agreement."⁶³

As the front moved steadily northward, this chance for "one good bashing" kept eluding Hirohito. In the autumn of 1944, he hoped to deliver it at Leyte.⁶⁴ But Japan lost there too. Then, on February 14, 1945, Konoe Fumimaro presented his famous memorial urging Hirohito to suppress army fanatics and terminate the war. Konoe argued that imperial rule (kokutai) might emerge intact through defeat and surrender, but not through the Communist revolution he believed was imminent.⁶⁵ His secretary, Hosokawa Morisada 細川護貞, quoted Hirohito's reply:

[Army Chief of Staff] Umezu [Yoshijirō] 梅津美治郎 says we should fight to the bitter end because the Americans will not budge in their aim to destroy our imperial house. I, too, have my doubts about them. Umezu and the Navy say that, if we can lure the Americans to Taiwan, we can bash them there. So I think we should do that first, then resort to diplomatic means [to end the war].⁶⁶

The Americans somehow managed to evade that trap. Then Hirohito knew that "Okinawa...would be our last 'decisive battle.' If we lost there, unconditional surrender would be unavoidable."⁶⁷ Okinawa fell in June 1945. But, as Hirohito recalled: "One shred of hope remained--to bash them at Yunnan 雲南 in conjunction with operations in Burma. If we did that, we could deal a very telling blow to Britain and America..."⁶⁸

VI. Concluding Remarks

On August 19, 1968, a Japanese reporter asked Hirohito: "Your Majesty, when did you decide that the war must be terminated?" He replied, "When I was young, I toured Europe [in 1921]; and that convinced me we should never go to war. So, [the issue of] when to end the war was on my mind from the very start. I was constantly thinking, 'When should we end it? When should we end it?'"⁶⁹ Just after Hirohito's death in January 1989--conveyed by the honorific term 崩御 used only for him--Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru 竹下昇 issued a Government declaration 謹語 stating in part: "His Majesty resolutely brought an end to the war that had broken out against his wishes."⁷⁰

Such retrospective avowals of Hirohito's pacifism hold true, with certain qualifications, for Japan's war against America and Britain. Therein lies the gist of our problem. Only four of the 24 sections in his Dokuhaku roku deal with Japanese actions in Manchuria and China before Pearl Harbor. For him, "the war" denoted the Pacific War, not the Manchurian and China Incidents. When he talks about the "outbreak of hostilities," (kaisen 開戦), he means December 1941, not September 1931 or July 1937. Hirohito recorded his Dokuhaku roku to defend himself against charges of fascism and war-mongering against Westerners, not Asians.

As his statements therein show, he never opposed war or expansion as such. When he clashed with Army hawks over China policy, it was because they flouted his right of supreme command and because he wanted to contain Japanese encroachments within Shantung and Manchuria. He supported orderly operations to achieve geographically limited aims, and thereby steer clear of British and American interests on the continent. Early in the 1930s, at least, this strategy of localized aggression was perfectly realistic.

Imperial Navy leaders told Hirohito in 1941 that: "An overwhelming victory like Tsushima is out of the question; and indeed, victory at all would be uncertain" if Japan challenged the US fleet. So, he knew full well, and stated quite clearly, that any conflict with America "would be a war of reckless abandon--something truly dangerous."⁷¹ China never presented this danger because she lacked the sea- and air-power to attack Japan proper. That is why Hirohito gave the Chinese such short shrift in his Dokuhaku roku, and why he felt little need to cover up or explain away his aggression against them.

Hirohito opposed war with the US and Britain not because he loved peace, but because he feared Japan would lose; then, his 2600-year dynasty might not survive. He hoped to end the war with America as soon as possible. Ideally, that would have been in February 1942, when Japan was flush with victory and in her strongest bargaining position. When this proved impossible, he insisted on "bashing" the Americans once; that is, winning a "decisive battle," and then negotiating to get the best deal he could. That was the same wishful thinking displayed by hard-line military leaders such as Anami and Umezu. In the summer of 1945, Hirohito differed from them only in accepting the reality of defeat more readily.

Hirohito did not espouse "imperial absolutism" as some Japanese historians hold. His authority up to 1945 rested on three elements. First, he was a constitutional monarch subject to legal restrictions and binding conventions, as he has so often stressed. Second, he was supreme commander of Japanese armed forces, though his orders were

often ignored and sometimes defied. Third, he wielded absolute moral authority in Japan by granting imperial honors that conveyed incontestable prestige and by issuing imperial rescripts that had coercive power greater than law.

In the postwar era, the Japanese Government, some Japanese historians, and Hirohito himself have downplayed or ignored these second and third elements, which were strongest up to 1945; and they have overemphasized the first, which was weakest. Hirohito was no despot. But he did retain "absolute" power in the sense of ultimate and final authority to sanction a particular policy decision by agreeing with it, or to force its reformulation or abandonment by disagreeing with it. When he really wanted to put his foot down, he did--even to the army.

Japan was an imperialist power in an age when imperialism and colonial rule were becoming harder to defend, but were not yet in total disrepute as they are today. As sovereign head of state and supreme military commander in imperial Japan, Hirohito pursued policies of armed expansion against weak Asian neighbors; and he did so as a matter of course. Also as a matter of course, he wanted to keep what his generals conquered--though he was less greedy than some of them. None of this should surprise us. Hirohito would no more have granted Korea independence or returned Manchuria to China than Roosevelt would have granted Hawaii independence or returned Texas to Mexico. To portray either man as wanting otherwise distorts historical truth and ignores common sense.

附録第六

二軍作命第四四六號

第二軍命令

八月十六日二二〇〇
於 南 京

本次作戦間師團長ハ適時特種煙ヲ使用スヘシ
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第二軍司令官 稔彦王

下達法 印刷交付

武漢作戦の第二軍司令官・東久瀨宮による毒ガス使用命令書
(一九三八年八月十六日) / 早稲田大学所蔵

Notes

1. Maruyama Makoto 丸山真人, Kurihara Tamiko 栗原武美子, Janice Matsumura, and Clark Taber kindly obtained materials from Japan needed for this study. Igarashi Akio 五十嵐 曉郎 served as liaison with Bungei shunjū. Bill Deal and Ann Sherif arranged a lecture at Case Western Reserve University on April 17, 1991, where I aired some of my ideas. Sophia Lee and Parks Coble offered helpful comments. SJS editor Josh Fogel endured my revisions and resubmissions of the manuscript with saintly patience. Finally, Mikiso Hane has provided warm encouragement through correspondence over the past two years.
2. Quoted in Kojima Noboru 児島襄, Tennō to sensō sekinin 天皇と戦争責任 (Tokyo: Bungei shunjūsha 文芸春秋社, 1988), p. 73.
3. Hayashi, Taiheiyō sensō rikusen gaishi 太平洋戦争陸戦概史 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten 岩波書店, 1951), pp. 80-81.
4. The exact nature and extent of Hirohito's powers in this capacity are hotly debated. See "Dokuhaku roku o tettei kenkyū suru" 独白録を徹底研究す, in Bungei shunjū 文芸春秋 (January 1991), especially pp. 142-44.
5. Kojima Noboru gained access to these records and published them in Bungei shunjū (November and December 1975); and in Tennō to sensō sekinin, pp. 59-66. When Takahashi Hiroshi 高橋 紘 and Suzuki Kunihiro 鈴木 邦彦 asked to see the records in April 1981, Foreign Ministry officials said these "could not be found;" see Takahashi and Suzuki, Tennōke no mitsushi tachi 天皇家の密使たち (Tokyo: Bungei shunjūsha, 1989), p. 264. In 1990, Toyoshita Narahiko 豊下 柗彦 reported that the records remained classified in the Foreign Ministry; see Toyoshita, "Tennō wa nani o katatta ka" 天皇は何を語ったか, Sekai 世界 (February 1990), p. 251. Assuming that Kojima reproduced those records authentically, it is clear that Hirohito did not offer to bear sole responsibility for the war as many have claimed based on MacArthur's memoirs; for example, see Fujita Hisanori 藤田 尚徳, Jijūchō no kaisō 寺従長の回想 (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha 中央公論社, 1987), p. 175. Fujita first published this account in 1960.
6. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan" 昭和天皇の独白八時 冊, Bungei shunjū (December 1990), pp. 94-145.

7. Prof. Igarashi Akio, personal communication of June 13, 1991.
8. For the original Japanese edition, see Ōya Sōichi 大宅壮一, ed., Nihon no ichiban nagai hi 日本の一 番 長 い 日 (Tokyo: Bungei shunjūsha, 1965). The English translation appeared three years later as Japan's Longest Day (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1968).
9. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," pp. 112-13. For the original passage, see Kido nikki kenkyūkai 木戸日記研究会, ed., Kido Kōichi nikki (ge) 木戸幸一日記下 (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppankai 東京大学出版会, 1966), p. 945.
10. Sambō hombu 参謀本部, ed., Haisen no kiroku 敗戦の記録 (Tokyo: Hara shobō 原書房, 1989), p. 290.
11. Bungei shunjū (December 1990), p. 98; Takahashi and Suzuki, Tennōke no mitsushi tachi, p. 44.
12. Takahashi and Suzuki, Tennōke no mitsushi tachi, pp. 35-44.
13. "Dokuhaku roku o tettei kenkyū suru," pp. 128-47.
14. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," p. 113.
15. Takahashi Hiroshi, Heika, otazune moshiagemasu 陛下お尋ね申し上げます (Tokyo: Bungei shunjūsha, 1988), pp. 220, 226-27.
16. The question mark is in the original. Chang's train was blown up on June 3, 1928.
17. Ienaga, Taiheiyō sensō 太平洋戦争 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1968), pp. 18-29 and pp. 76-121; Ienaga, trans. Frank Baldwin, The Pacific War (New York: Pantheon, 1978), pp. 3-12, 57-96; Fujiwara, Taiheiyō sensō shiron 太平洋戦争史論 (Tokyo: Aoki shoten 青木書店, 1982), pp. 24-50.
18. Yoshida, Tennō no guntai to Nankin jiken 天皇の軍隊と南京事件 (Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1986), pp. 153-54.
19. Tanaka Nobumasa, Dokumento Shōwa tennō 2: Kaisen ドキュメント 昭和天皇2: 開戦 (Tokyo: Rokufū shuppan 緑風出版, 1985), pp. 105-106.
20. Ibid., pp. 80-82.

21. The distinction between direct and indirect quotes is extremely vague in conversational Japanese. I have inserted quotation marks here and below based on the context and on Japanese colloquial usage; but there is no punctuation in the original Dokuhaku roku text to signify direct quotations.

22. Strangely, Hirohito uses the English word "veto."

23. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," pp. 100-102.

24. Harada's diary has long been available as Saionji kō to seikyoku 西園寺公と政局 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1950-56), 9 vols. Excerpts from Makino's diary were published only recently. See Chūō kōron 中央公論 (August 1990), pp. 342-67; and (September 1990), pp. 348-60.

25. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," pp. 104, 141-45.

26. See Ienaga Saburo, Sensō sekinin 戦争責任 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1985), pp. 352-54.

27. For but three examples: in February 1946, see Fujita Hisanori, Jijūchō no kaisō, pp. 205-208; in September 1975, see Takahashi, Heika, otazune moshiagemasu, p. 212; and in August 1979, see Takahashi, Heika, otazune moshiagemasu, p. 282.

28. Three of the best examples are by Itō Takashi, Hayashi Kentarō 林健太郎, and Kojima Noboru. See Itō's succinct piece, "Shōwa ki to tennō no seijiteki yakuwari" 昭和期と天皇の政治的役割 in Asahi shimbun 朝日新聞 (8 January 1989); Hayashi, "Sensō sekinin to wa nani ka" 戦争責任とは何か in Bungei shunjū (March 1989), pp. 254-65; and Kojima, Tennō to sensō sekinin, which first appeared in Bungei shunjū (November and December 1975).

29. See Mikiso Hane, Emperor Hirohito and his Chief Aide-de-Camp, (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1982), pp. 43-69. Or, Robert Butow, writes: "it is assumed, for the purposes of the discussion which follows, that the Emperor would personally have acted to prevent war from breaking out in 1941 had he been able to do so." See Butow, Japan's Decision to Surrender (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), p. 229 note. For a critical view, see Edward Behr, Hirohito: Behind the Myth (New York: Random House, 1990). However, this is not a scholarly work; Behr is long on assertion and short on

documentation.

30. For a masterfully succinct presentation, see Yoshida Yutaka, "Tennō no sensō sekinin" 天皇の戦争責任 in Fujiwara Akira, et al., ed., Tennō no Shōwa shi 天皇の昭和史 (Tokyo: Shin Nihon shuppansha 新日本出版社, 1984), pp. 42-100. The most thorough and persuasive study is Inoue Kiyoshi 井上清, Shōwa tennō no sensō sekinin 昭和天皇の戦争責任 (Tokyo: Akashi shoten 明石書店, 1989). This re-issue of Inoue's 1975 work Tennō no sensō sekinin comes with a rebuttal to a critique by Charles Sheldon in Shokun 諸君 (March 1977), pp. 118-43. For Sheldon's critique in English, see Modern Asian Studies 12:1 (1978), pp. 1-35.

31. Satō, Tōjō Hideki to Taiheiyō sensō 東条英樹と太平洋戦争 (Tokyo: Bungei shunjūsha, 1960), p. 81.

32. Quoted in Inoue, Shōwa tennō no sensō sekinin, pp. 70-71. Hane renders this passage a bit differently into English; see his Emperor Hirohito and his Chief Aide-de-Camp, p. 77. Behr quotes Hane's translation without proper citation. Moreover, he has Hirohito saying this directly to Honjō; in fact, Suzuki related the account from Hirohito to Honjō.

33. Inoue, Shōwa tennō no sensō sekinin, pp. 19-20, 70-71.

34. Nezu, Tennō to Shōwa shi (jō) 天皇と昭和史上 (Tokyo: San'ichi shobō 三一書房, 1976), pp. 76-78.

35. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," p. 101.

36. Quoted in Sadako N. Ogata, Defiance in Manchuria (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), pp. 171-72.

37. Kitaoka Shin'ichi 北岡伸一 holds that the emperor here was probably referring to the January 1933 British proposal to the Lytton Commission. See Bungei shunjū (January 1991), p. 107.

38. Hane, based on Saionji, says that Hirohito did advocate relinquishing extraterritorial rights in Manchuria. See Hane, Emperor Hirohito and his Chief Aide-de-Camp, p. 64.

39. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," pp. 103-104.

40. Ibid., p. 103.

41. Asahi gurafu (April 1932), p. 71; Fujin gahō (April 1934), p. 162.

42. Fujin gahō (April 1934), p. 166.

43. See B. T. Wakabayashi, "In Name Only," Journal of Japanese Studies 17:1 (Winter 1991), pp. 25-57; and Wakabayashi, "Eiten juyo no dōtokuteki igi" 栄典授与の道德的意義, Shisō 797 (November 1990), pp. 137-47.

44. Miyaji, "Seiji shi ni okeru tennō no kinō" 政治史における天皇の機能, in Rekishigaku kenkyūkai 歴史学研究会, ed., Tennō to tennōsei o kangaeru 天皇と天皇制を考へる (Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1986), pp. 83-84.

45. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," p. 108.

46. Ibid., pp. 105-108.

47. Ibid., pp. 105-106.

48. Quoted in Inoue, Shōwa tennō no sensō sekinin, p. 61-62.

49. Quoted in Hayashi Shigeru 林茂, Nihon no rekishi 25: Taiheiyō sensō 日本の歴史25: 太平洋戦争 (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1967), p. 49.

50. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," p. 106.

51. Inoue, Shōwa tennō no sensō sekinin, pp. 88-91.

52. Hayashi, Taiheiyō sensō, p. 66.

53. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," p. 105.

54. Ibid., p. 106.

55. Japan's Longest Day, p. 30.

56. Sambō hombu, ed., Haisen no kiroku, pp. 165-66.

57. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," pp. 130-31.

58. Kido Kōichi nikki (ge), p. 1238.

59. Ibid.

60. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," pp. 106-108.

61. Ibid., p. 112.

62. Kido Kōichi nikki (ge), p. 945.

63. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," p. 129.

64. Ibid.

65. Konoe did not submit the memorial itself, but instead, read it before Hirohito in audience with Kido. Kido compiled his account based on what he heard that day. Kido nikki kenkyūkai, ed., Kido Kōichi kankei monjo 木戸幸一関係文書 (Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppankai, 1966), pp. 499-97. Hosokawa had access to Konoe's manuscript on February 28, two weeks after the imperial audience took place, and reproduced it in his diary on March 4. Hosokawa, Hosokawa nikki (ge) 細川日記下 (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1979), pp. 80-85.

66. Hosokawa, Hosokawa nikki (ge), p. 74. This is Konoe quoting Hirohito to Hosokawa. Kido corroborates Hosokawa's account in general, but not in such graphic detail; see Kido Kōichi kankei monjo, pp. 497-98. Behr quotes this Hosokawa entry without citing the source and mistranslates it as: "Umezu says they will massacre my whole family but I don't entirely believe him." See Hirohito: Behind the Myth, p. 282.

67. "Shōwa tennō no dokuhaku hachi jikan," p. 134.

68. Ibid.

69. Takahashi, Heika, otazune moshiaemasu, p. 140.

70. Asahi shimbun, January 7, 1989.

71. Kido Kōichi nikki (ge), pp. 895-96.