

SHORIKI  
Domain

MEMORANDUM

21 Jul 55

TO : C 3

FROM : C 3

SUBJECT: Interview with Matsutaro SHORIKI, owner of Yomiuri, president of the Japan Television Co., and independent member of the Lower House.

A visit was made to Mr. Matsutaro SHORIKI at his home in Zushi on Sunday afternoon, July 17, 1955. The writer has known him for the past 4 1/2 years.

The conversation mostly consisted of his political activities during the past 2 years.

He stated that he spent his best effort in trying to bring YOSHIDA and HATOYAMA together to reconcile about 2 years ago, and Jiro SHIRASU, a good common friend of SHORIKI and YOSHIDA, was to visit HATOYAMA to conduct him to YOSHIDA. In order to convey this arrangement SHORIKI visited HATOYAMA at Nirayama. No sooner than he broached the subject to HATOYAMA, HATOYAMA was so angered that he left the room and refused to talk to SHORIKI any further. SHORIKI, therefore, merely had lunch with Mrs. HATOYAMA and Tomejiro OKUBO, the current state minister and director general of the Hokkaido Development Board, without accomplishing his mission. 1/

SHORIKI stated that YOSHIDA persistently told SHORIKI that he would like to turn over the Government to HATOYAMA when the time comes, and SHORIKI firmly believed this assurance to be bona fide until YOSHIDA stated in the press interview given at Paris during his last trip abroad, that the rein of Government cannot be turned over to an invalid like HATOYAMA. This statement hit SHORIKI like a bolt from the blue. From that day, he says that he realized that he had been betrayed, and he completely changed his attitude towards YOSHIDA and from the very next day he ordered Yomiuri to change its editorial policy to oppose YOSHIDA.

At the time of the political crisis of last November, he said that he maintained intimate liaison with Bamboku ONO, chairman of the Executive Board of the Liberal Party, and worked toward resignation of YOSHIDA government instead of Diet dissolution; and therefore, Yomiuri, armed with this knowledge, was the only paper which maintained that the Cabinet must and will resign from the outset.

Concerning the current movement for conservative merger, he stated that it was he who brought Bukichi MIKI and Bamboku ONO, who were traditional enemies, to meet secretly to lay the ground for the merger. This meeting he said was responsible for MIKI's announcement of conservative merger, at the risk of HATOYAMA's resignation and his retirement, made on April 13.

Concerning his admission into the Democratic Party, he stated that the admission will take place on or about July 20th (Reported in the July 20, evening papers).

He further added that there is no conditions attached to his entrance. According to SHORIKI, when he met HATOYAMA about a week ago, SHORIKI stated that he does not want any Cabinet post as it is nothing compared with what

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

FILE IN C 3 =

- EXEMPTIONS Section (b) (1)
- (2)(A) Privacy
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he has already attained and that it will not make him any more famous or greater; consequently, he stated that there would be no Cabinet reshuffling, incumbent upon his entrance.

Concerning the leader of the proposed merger party, he stated that HATOYAMA is the only man. OGATA he said would be strongly opposed by YOSHIDA group, which might prevent a successful merger. YOSHIDA, he says, hates OGATA most, and YOSHIDA's objection against HATOYAMA only lies in the latter's foreign policy handling, which SHORIKI thought could easily be readjusted.

1/ Two years ago the writer was informed reliably from Tomejiro OKUBO's source (OKUBO was present when SHORIKI broached the subject) that HATOYAMA resisted, because SHORIKI hinted to HATOYAMA that since HATOYAMA must be short of money, if he would shake hands with YOSHIDA, it could be provided. Another reason for HATOYAMA's anger was Jiro SHIRASU, who several years prior to that time tricked HATOYAMA in connection with HATOYAMA's meeting with John GUNTER. This point, the writer is afraid, SHORIKI was or is not even aware now.

COMMENTS:

Obviously SHORIKI intends to bring pressure upon OGATA by the maximum utilization of Yomiuri's power of mass communication, while playing up HATOYAMA as the best bet for the leader of new merged party, to arouse public sentiment for another HATOYAMA boom. Asahi, of which OGATA had been a member, might counter attack HATOYAMA, but inasmuch as the press war is concerned, the writer thinks that SHORIKI has the edge, because OGATA's influence over Asahi cannot be compared with SHORIKI's complete control over Yomiuri, and moreover, a great deal depends also upon what attitude MURAYAMA (Asahi owner), who is not very friendly with OGATA, would take.

It must be an interesting contest of words to watch, which the writer thinks would commence to be felt by the public readers before long.