



Doihara, Kenji (土肥原賢二) General

"Lawrence of the Far East"
Expert in Chinese affairs,
especially in creating trouble.

b. 1882 in Okayama prefecture.

Chief of the Special Service Section of the Kwantung Army; comdr. of the 12th Division and later of the 14th Division. It was his 14th Div. that was severely defeated in Honan, when the Chinese cut the Yellow River dikes and drowned most of his soldiers. He returned to Japan and was made Commandant of the Military Staff College. In August 1942, he was Inspector-General of Army Aviation.

Doihara is one of the few Japanese officers who has mastered the Chinese language to a degree where no

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Chinese can tell that he is Japanese when he is disguised in Chinese clothes. He not only speaks the language fluently, but he is also able to meet the Chinese on an even footing in such matters as etiquette, trickery, singing of Chinese songs, discussion of Chinese literature and art. The Chinese, however, gave him so much publicity that he became so widely known that he could no longer move about as freely as he desired. When the War started, it became evident that his days in China were over; his defeat in Honan confirmed the suspicion that he was a better trickster than he was a fighting general.

C. in C of Japanese Air Forces. "See "Current Biography" Vol 3, No. 3, March 1942, pp 14-16 (Carries photograph)

1938: Amletto Vespa in his book "Secret Agent of Japan" records this comment concerning Doihara, uttered by the "Chief" of the Japanese Intelligence Service: "Since in other countries they call him the Japanese Lawrence, he delights in showing his greatness by his hectoring manner. He has worked under me for

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many years, however, and I have no hesitation in saying that he is much less of a Lawrence than he thinks he is. Of course no one can deny that he has done well in many of his undertakings, but the fact remains that he has many failures to his discredit, so much so that one would imagine they were the mistakes of a simple corporal rather than a Colonel in the Japanese Intelligence Service." The "Chief", further on, admits by implication that Chang Tso-lin had been killed on the orders of the Japanese General Staff and implied that Col. Doihara had executed the order. p. 48

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The name of Kenji Doihara (土肥原賢二) constantly appears in popular accounts of the inner workings of Japanese espionage. A specialist on Chinese affairs, Doihara is one of the extremely few Japanese who can pass in all respects as a Chinese in China. He has been given so much publicity by the Chinese, however, that his identity has been impossible to conceal for some years. Alvaro Vespa in his book records this comment by a Japanese concerning Doihara:

1. "Secret Agent of Japan" and "Bushido".
2. Op cit.

"Since in other countries they call him the Japanese Lawrence, he delights in showing his greatness by his hectoring manner. He has worked under me for many years, however, and I have no hesitation in saying that he is much less of a Lawrence than he thinks he is. Of course no one can deny that he has done well in many of his undertakings, but the fact that he has many failures to his discredit, so much so that one would imagine they were the mistakes of a simple Corporal rather than a Colonel in the Japanese Intelligence Service."

That Doihara was not as successful as many believed is also indicated by his later career. It was his 14th Division that was severely defeated in Honan when the Chinese cut the Yellow River dikes and drowned most of his soldiers. In August 1942 he was taken out of China and made Inspector General of Army Aviation. It is thought his defeat in Honan confirmed the suspicion that he was a better trickster than he was a fighting General.