

WHO'S WHO

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FILE NO. R-42-53
 PAGE NO. 1
 From: OARMA Japan
 Date: 11 Mar 1953
 Reference: Japan R-43-51

Surname: Higashikuni
 Country: Japan
 Full Name: Naruhiko HIGASHIKUNI (Prince)
 Variants: Naruhito
 Present Position: Reported to be confidential advisor to Japanese Government
 Date of Birth: 3 December 1887
 Place of Birth: Kyoto, Japan
 Nationality: Japanese
 Wife: Her Imperial Highness Princess Toshiko
 Children: One son - Prince Morihiro
 Politics: Leans toward Conservative-Right
 Relationship with other Personalities:

1190748

2201547

Brother of: Prince Field Marshal Nashimoto, head of the House of Nashimoto and member of the Supreme War Council as of 1940

Brother of: Prince General Asaka, head of the House of Asaka, member of Supreme War Council since 1935.

Uncle of: Nagako, the Empress. She is a sister of Prince Kameyama, a daughter of the late Prince Field Marshal Kuni.

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FOR COORDINATION WITH US Army

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

EXEMPTIONS Section 3(b)

- (2)(A) Privacy
- (2)(B) Methods/Sources
- (2)(G) Foreign Relations

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Uncle of: Princess Masako, consort of Prince Major General Gin RI of the Royal House of Chosen (Korea)

Cousin of: Hirohito, the Emperor. Prince Kuni, father of Prince Naruhiko Higashikuni, was a first cousin of the late Emperor Taisho, father of the present Emperor.

Past Career:

- Nov 1906 - Established House of Higashikuni by order of the late Emperor Meiji
- 1908 - Graduated from the Military Academy
- Dec 1908 - Commissioned 2nd Lieutenant; assigned to 3rd Regiment of Imperial Guards
- 1910 - Promoted to 1st Lieutenant
- Nov 1914 - Graduated from Army War College
- 1915 - Married Princess Toshiko
- May 1916 - Birth of son Prince Norihiko
 - Attached to 3rd Infantry Regiment and Headquarters of General Staff
- Jul 1918 - Promoted to Major; Battalion Commander of 7th Infantry Division
- Apr 1920 to Jan 1927 - Lived in France; studied military tactics
- 1921 - Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel
- 1925 - Promoted to Colonel
- 1926 to Nov 1943 - Honorary President of Nippon Shinbun Kyokai, which was dissolved in Nov 1943

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- 1928 - Commander of 3rd Infantry Regiment, Imperial Guard Division
- Dec 1929 - Promoted to Major General; Staff Officer of General Staff Headquarters
- 1930 - Commander of 9th Infantry Brigade
- Aug 1934 - Promoted to Lieutenant General; Commander of 4th Army Division
- Dec 1935 - Appointed Supreme War Councillor
- Apr 1937 - Appointed Chief of Military Aviation Department
- Apr 1938 - Commander of 2nd Army; took part in China mainland fighting
- Jan 1939 - Appointed Supreme War Councillor
- Aug 1939 - Promoted to General
- 1940 - Served in China; awarded Order of the Golden Kite, 1st Class
- Dec 1941 - Commander-in-Chief of Home Defense Headquarters and also Supreme War Councillor
- Apr 1945 - Appointed Supreme War Councillor
- Aug 1945 - Summoned before the Emperor at 9 a.m. this morning and was commanded to organize a cabinet. It is the first time in Japan's history that a member of the Imperial family has been commanded to head the Government. In selecting a successor to SUZUKI, His Majesty did not consult a conference of the Senior Statesmen as was customary since the death of Prince SAIONJI, but personally took the decision. (DOWNS, 16 Aug 45)
- Mar 1946 - Purged, Category G
- Oct 1947 - Purged, Category B
- Oct 1947 - Operating a grocery store in Tokyo (Nippon Times, 16 Oct 47)

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REMARKS: Prince Higashikuni expresses views typical of the group headed by Konoye, who was a close friend of long standing. He stresses the elches that the Army interfered too much in political and economic affairs, that the controls over war production were badly handled, and that repression was extremely severe. It would have been much better, he thinks, if the army had engaged only in strategy and the military conduct of the war, and business had taken care of the production side. He indicated that the Supreme War Council, of which he was a member, had no affirmative powers of any kind. Like others in his group, he concluded that the war was lost after the occupation of Saipan. He talked of the need of peace to his close friends in private, and claims that he urged both Tojo and Koiso of the necessity of ending the war. He believes Japan exerted its full effort in the China War.

SOURCE: 201 file, Sety Gp, G-2 AFPE (ADV)

CHARACTER: Higashikuni's physical appearance belies his age of 65. He is of slight stature and build (about 5 ft. 2 inches -- 120 lbs), dapper appearance, conservative dress, and a quick but precise manner of speaking. Although affable in behavior and conversation, he creates the definite feeling that he feels socially and intellectually superior to those about him. He spoke in a patronizing way of Messrs. Shigemitsu and Ogata, who formerly were members of his cabinet and are now head of the Progressive Party and secretary of the Liberal Party respectively. He implies that

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CHARACTER (Cont'd):

he is still a power within political circles and can arrange meetings with his former subordinates as desired. He gives the impression of being a very forceful character who is used to having people obey his direction. It appears that he would command the respect and deference of his colleagues and subordinates by virtue of his intellectual capacity, acquired honors and recognitions, and aloof manners. While he does not appear to be a brusque, aggressive individual given to table pounding and shouting to achieve his ends, he probably attains effective results by inspiring a cold fear in those under him. He is dogged and persistent in his ideas and repetitious, though valuable in expressing them. Certainly he is not a gregarious or highly social individual who would be intimate with many people. He professes to speak French fluently and understand and speak English a little. Though he did not use English in his conversation, he did interject the proper English expressions when he wanted to be certain that the interpreter conveyed an exact meaning and also he appeared to understand most of what the Reporting Officer said in English. In general, his physical condition may be classed as excellent, his character as forceful and determined, and his personality as aloof and intellectual.

SOURCE: Personal Observation (4 May 1953)

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COMMENT: Attached as Inclosure No. 1 for additional information is an exact copy of a memorandum entitled "A Profile of Mr. Higashikuni", which was written by Mr. Higashikuni himself for the information of the Army Attache prior to a meeting which was held on 4 May 1953.

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1 Incl:

Memorandum entitled "A Profile of Mr. Higashikuni"

Preparing Officer: *W. T. Rider*
W. T. RIDER, Colonel, GS
Army Attache

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"A Profile of Mr. Higashikuni"
by
Mr. Higashikuni (unedited)

"1. When General MacArthur arrived at Atsugi on August 30th, 1945, I intended to meet him, but I couldn't go because of the suggestion by U. S. authority. I, as the Premier of Japan, wished to see Gen. MacArthur, and I often expressed my desire to the Foreign Minister Mamoru SHIGEMITSU. But, he did not mediate between Gen. and me, saying that the time was not come. I couldn't understand why he said so. Anyhow I left it as he said.

On September 14th, my secretary called on Lieutenant General Ferocis (E.N. Apparently refers to Col. Bonner Fellows, Secretary to CincC) at the Yokohama Headquarters, and found that my desire had not yet been informed to Gen. MacArthur at all. My secretary was much surprised and he immediately appointed my visit to Gen. MacArthur at 5 p. m. on September 15th, the following day.

On that day I visited informally Gen. MacArthur and I also met the Chief of the Staff Sejarland (E.N. Apparently refers to R. S. Sutherland, Chief of Staff) without noticing to SHIGEMITSU. We talked about the matter in hand. I was impressed firstly that Gen. MacArthur was a excellent soldier as well as a talent statesman and

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I believed firmly that the occupation of Japan would be promoted steadily by his ability and his noble character.

2. I wanted to know the true thought of our people directly. Therefore, I announced all over the country to write me and express their frank opinions. Soon I received many letters from our people, which I brought back to my house and read till late at every night. Most of the letters are full with advices regarding the food questions; the remains are about overthrow the bureaucratism, improvement of the government organization, reform of the political circles, abolition of the economical regulation and demand of decampment of all members of Parliament. I studied these suggestions and arranged them at their discretion through the concerning authorities if there were rooms for further improvement.

3. Three days before the general resignation of our cabinet I met Gen MacArthur, The Chief of the Staff was also among the company. I expressed my hope as to "Instant release of the political criminals." But they seemed doubtful of the subject and I couldn't get their clear reply. Particularly, they seemed to be anxious about the release of communists. I asked them whether our cabinet were suitable or not, and I got their consent. Furthermore I was encouraged to do my best as the Premier.

Three days later, however, a powerful instruction was issued to release all the political criminals including the communists, and just then I was...

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relieve the Minister of Interior of his post. I was amazed a little, but I considered that I should obey the "instructions" faithfully, and took no objection. But the way of Cabinet organization at that time was different from that of the present one, and so I could not release the Minister of Interior alone. Therefore I determined to look general resignation. Anyway, I felt that my duty was discharged.

4. In the Japan-China War, I, as the Commander at that time, was ordered to occupy Hangzhou. But I thought that if the Japanese Army occupied Hangzhou, the War would be prolonged and the relief in the end at last. I considered that it was the best way to catch a chance for peace to fill my troop around Hangzhou preparing to occupy the city at any time and to watch the attitude of the Chinese.

I expressed my opinion to the General Staff in Tokyo not a few times and referred the matter to the Staff conference at the front. At last, however, my opinion was not taken. The order to occupy Hangzhou was suddenly changed to other troops, and my troop was ordered to take a long way about Hangzhou; the course of my troop was extremely hindered.

Long after that I heard from a Chinese high official that Hangzhou was the last chance for peace. It was because the Japanese occupation of Hangzhou that China determined to resist and fight to the last.

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In all matters, I think, it is most essential to seize an opportunity.

5. In 1945, I was charged to defend Tokyo as the Commander of Defence. If Iwo-jima (E.N. Apparently refers to Iwo Jima) fell into the hand of America, it was very clear that Tokyo would be bombed strongly more and more. So, I expressed to Gen. Unozu and Gen. Sugiyama to fortify the island completely, otherwise we should abandon the island. But they did not submit my opinion because the island was taken charge by Navy. Therefore, I wished to resign my post on my responsibility, but it was not allowed. Consequently, we payed dearly for the struggle in Iwo-jima and got nothing. Now, I am offering prayers heartily to the island of skeletons."

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