

Interview of Mrs. Teresa Kroll de Rivera Schreiber
with Giovanni Volpi

Held in London, 2 July 1997, at 16:00 hrs

Present: Mrs. Teresa Kroll de Rivera Schreiber
Mr. Jorge Rivera Schreiber, her son, a lawyer
Giovanni Volpi

In this interview Mrs. Rivera Schreiber names her husband's Japanese informers probably for the first time. She kept silent for over fifty years, fearing very possible retaliations against those people in a society still harboring many diehards. Now, most actors of the war era are gone and so are the informants.

Words between parentheses are ours.

Mrs. Schreiber arrived in Japan in 1940, newly married.

The name of Amb. Ricardo Rivera Schreiber's valet is Felipe AKAKAWA, Japanese, catholic, employed because he spoke Spanish which he learned in Argentina where he lived.

No Filipinos whatsoever were ever involved in the Rivera Schreiber episode. (So much for too many renowned authors who transformed Felipe into a Filipino, just because they vaguely heard his surname. What else did they transform?)

The Japanese employee at the Peruvian Consulate in Yokohama was named SOGANUMA.

He was in charge because the consul had left Japan as there was little work to do. Soganuma, on loan from the Japanese Foreign Office, was probably a Japanese intelligence employee of low rank. He came to Tokyo once a week to report to Minister Schreiber. After his report, Soganuma would go down to the servants quarters and (usually) get drunk with Felipe. During these drinking sessions he got worked up and bragged with Felipe (starting in late '40), saying that he had a cousin at the Navy Ministry who kept him informed about a Pearl Harbor attack. This is how the information built up.

After Soganuma left, Felipe would always come upstairs to report to Minister Rivera Schreiber to whom he was extremely devoted. Mrs. Rivera Schreiber said that also her husband found out that in Japan secrets had a short life and that the country was a forest of rumors. (see *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* by Ruth Benedict, on Japanese devotion and loyalty, and on secrets)

Soganuma was thought to be a Black Dragon member or an informer.

It was university professor HOSHI (see Mrs. Rivera Schreiber's affidavit) who warned Minister Rivera Schreiber on Jan. 26, 1941. Hoshi was also a pacifist. He indicated that the Japanese would attack the US in the *Central Pacific* with all their might and aircraft. This corroboration provoked Rivera Schreiber's decision to see Grew immediately.

For some reason Grew did not send on Jan. 26 the telegram he and Rivera Schreiber composed together at their meeting, but sent something very different on the 27th. Grew apparently gave 2 telegrams to Embassy officer Frank Schuler.

Minister Rivera Schreiber also wrote a personal letter about the warning to the President of Peru, Manuel Prado. It was taken sealed to the US by a friend who did not know the contents and posted it from California to Lima. That is how foreigners mailed important papers abroad. The diplomatic pouch could not be trusted.

Mrs. Rivera Schreiber and her son consider that personal letter as destined to Prado's private papers, after he left office.

Rosa Prado, daughter of President Manuel Prado still lives in Lima. His son is a US citizen.

After being house-arrested for 2 months with 7-8 soldiers in house, against International Law, the Rivera Schreibers were moved for 2-3 months to the MYIANOSHITA hotel in the mountains thanks to the good offices of KOKI HIROTA (friend and ex colleague of Rivera in The Hague) who could do "everything he pleased". K. Hirota was in the Black Dragon society aka Secret Police.

While in the mountains the Rivera Schreibers got nearly killed by the angry peasants after the Doolittle raid.

The Peruvians were evacuated from Japan in June 1942 on a Japanese ship, the ASAMA MARU (see affidavit), along with Grew and the US and other diplomats[†]. They waited almost a month at anchor on the ship in Yokohama harbor. Rivera Schreiber met Grew on the ship for the first time since quite before the Pearl Harbor attack. The *Asama Maru* sailed from Yokohama to several Asian ports including Hong Kong and Saigon to embark more diplomats, on to Lourenço Marques. It was met there by the Swedish ship GRIPSHOLM that was coming from NY with the Japanese diplomats from the US. The exchange was made in Lourenço Marques. The *Gripsholm* sailed back towards Rio de Janeiro and New York. The Rivera Schreibers [and about sixty two other South American diplomats] disembarked in Rio.

Rivera Schreiber and Grew never spoke about the warning since their Jan. 26 meeting until they met on the ship. Mrs. Rivera Schreiber says her husband told her at once of the very brief exchange aboard the ship:

Rivera pointed out that: “the events have occurred in exactly the same way as I had reported to you in January of 1941”.

Grew replied: “Yes, indeed, lamentably so; but what you reported to me was conveyed the same day to my Government” and turned away.

From Jan. 26 1941 on, Amb. Rivera Schreiber had forbidden himself to discuss the warning with anyone, he considered it strictly a United States matter. That was also his reason for not continuing that conversation with Grew.

US professors questioned Rivera Schreiber later about the warning episode but ethics prevented him from talking. Grew was alive and he considered it

[†] How and when, then, did Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Jurika, USN, Assistant Naval attaché at the Tokyo Embassy, and soon after Intelligence officer aboard the USS *Hornet*, briefing the pilots of the Doolittle raid on the latest AA and searchlight positions in Tokyo, get out so timely? [see Chronology for Richard Sorge’s involvement]

was Grew's business. Rivera Schreiber was even offered money.

In Japan, Mrs. Rivera Schreiber did not know RAdm. Paul Wenneker, the supposed, virtual Ingrid Lundquist, Anita Mohr, the Havas bureau chief Robert Guillain, Sorge, Eta Schneider [see Chronology] or anyone connected with the German embassy except Ambassador Maj. Gen. Ott and his wife. Rank met rank.

She remembers Riccardo Federici, Italian Air attaché, husband of Claretta Petacci (Mussolini's lover who was shot with him), because he was a man about town.

Mrs. Rivera Schreiber also says that since 1940 the atmosphere in Tokyo was extremely hostile towards foreigners even in the street. Passers by would point at anyone not Japanese as spies and the Rivera Schreibers went around almost always under the protection of their service car with flags on the fenders. Six months before Pearl Harbor, a count Tasher, commercial attaché at the French embassy, had been attacked on a train from Kobe and left for dead for 2 hours with a broken leg and invalid for life. Asked if she thought likely that Sorge could have walked around town unnoticed with Mrs. Ott [see Chronology] who was over six feet tall and had early white hair, as reported by many authors, Mrs. Schreiber smiled and answered with a skeptical "maybe".

Amb. Ricardo Rivera-Schreiber died in July 1969. He was Ambassador in Spain, Italy, United Kingdom and for the Preparatory Commission for the U.N. (London, 1945). He was the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru (1952-1954). Before these postings, he had been envoy to: Bolivia, Ecuador, The Netherlands, and Colombia before being sent to Japan & China [double posting].

(This writer was introduced to his family by Amb. Javier Perez de Cuellar, former Secretary General of the United Nations.)

Before being dismissed from the State Department in the '50s by Grew, Frank Schuler felt excluded and badly treated. His wife Olive worked in the State Dept.

Frank Schuler showed Mrs. Rivera Schreiber "a paperback book on the matter in question. It contained a photo of the open US Tokyo embassy

cable file photographed in Washington that showed that pages had been cut off or torn away”. That book must have been *The Pearl Harbor Cover-Up*, by Frank Schuler and Robin Moore, © 1976 Maurice J. Day, Pinnacle Books 1976, New York. The picture of a bound, amputated thick file, surrounded by more from the embassy in Tokyo, is on its cover.

Gilbert CHAUNY, currently [in 1997] Peruvian ambassador to Vienna, is the D.C. Embassy official who, by chance, told Schuler that Mrs. Schreiber and children were alive and well (see reports). Previously, Schuler had been consistently told by American officials and by the D.C. Peruvian embassy itself that both Rivera Schreibers were dead.

Mrs. Rivera Schreiber is firm and adamant about January 26 being the exact date of her husband’s warning-meeting with Grew and, given the grave importance of the discrepancy, is resentful about the persistent to this day and convenient confusion about that date with January 27. The date of the 26th remains sculpted in her mind, and came back to her countless times since the moment her husband told her why he was rushing to see Grew.

- *Giovanni Volpi*

Comments to Mrs. Rivera Schreiber’s interview

Joseph Grew plain lied about the provenance of the Rivera Schreiber information and its date and, as we try to understand what went on, it is natural to ask why. Why hide the 26th in favor of the 27th? One credible reason is that some message or document dated the 26th, maybe the telegram Grew and Rivera-Schreiber agreed upon, was sent and was quickly destroyed or buried very deep on arrival. Maybe someone in Washington rejected it and asked Grew to re-write. Maybe it was never sent, as Mrs. Rivera Schreiber supposes. Ambassador Rivera would certainly not have agreed to strange origin that Grew lent to the information. Furthermore, the warning was very serious but not of instant

consequence. Japan was clearly not going to attack the United States the next morning. With better reflexes of diplomacy, and he would have had ample time for that, Grew could have said to Rivera on the *Asama Maru*, and to the Pearl Harbor inquiry commissions that he cabled the next day after doing some vague check or other. He did not, and either chose to or was ordered to lie. After all a less than 24 hours delay was nothing off anybody's back. Grew, instead, took another tack that leaves everyone uneasy. He obliterated the 26th and on top of that gave a false source about the information [one wonders what the necessity was there] and let freely ride [or prompted] the most varied fables about the source which became multiple sources and created yet another mystery for all of us to unravel. Why this obstacle course? We have all read to exhaustion about the Filipino valet or cook or whatever else he was made to be, about Edward S. Crocker, even about Grew's deputy Eugene Dooman, about a chance meeting while lining up at a bank teller between Max Bishop and Rivera, at which Rivera asked Bishop to pass on the info to Grew, and we even read about a letter Bishop sent to Robert P. Stinnett on Sept. 19, 1988 [*Day of Deceit* pp. 30-2 and notes 26, 27, 28 at p.319, and other publications, and an otherwise interesting interview he gave to John Toland on 22 Feb. 1979 - Toland papers. Surprisingly, the otherwise punctilious Stinnett does not bother to examine and research the attack on Taranto]. In that letter, Bishop supposedly asserts he got the information from Rivera and so on. This merry go round is a bit much.

The American anthropologist Ruth Benedict tells us that Japan is also a country of rumors. Rivera-Schreiber's wife says her husband thought the same [see the Non-Aggression Pact rumor in the affidavit]. Richard Sorge sure proved it. As most judge others according to themselves, that is why the Japanese were obsessed with the fear of espionage – with final practical success at Pearl Harbor – but when you think of tipsy Soganuma and of prof. Hoshi...

In September 1941, the Pearl Harbor attack plan was distributed throughout the Imperial Navy and other military levels in 750 copies. It is credible that before September its draft was printed in maybe one or two dozen copies. It is similarly credible that a dozen, oh, so secret, early prints were handed out at the end of '40 or the first days of '41, after Adm. Yamamoto's initial conference. The military do write down things.

The last riddle is that not a single one of the 750 copies was officially found in Japan in 1945 except for the only surviving copy which surfaced long before, aboard a captured Japanese cruiser.

Given the state of things, it is more than possible, it goes almost without saying that Sorge, through his vast network of informers, the equally vast German embassy, the unwitting Japanese military, prince Konoye's own Cabinet through Hotsumi Ozaki, and who knows what else, found out about Pearl Harbor.

If you also look closely at Taranto, and track down everyone concerned, it follows that the Germans, after helping at it, knew enough to form an opinion. Add to that that the German armed forces and intelligence services were thoroughly infiltrated by the Soviets, that, besides the Soviets, the Abwehr was infiltrated by a score of British double agents one way or another and you can draw more conclusions. The only bright spot in all this is that maybe, and only maybe, Admiral Canaris got vent of a Pearl Harbor possibility and prevented it from going 'upstairs'. But this was only the Abwehr. The Germans had other services and military means. What's more, Dusko Popov, the most decorated and effective of those British double agents, met and warned Edgar J. Hoover around 12 August, 1941, and met him again after the war, whatever the FBI alleges to deny it. They made a mistake, though. We found it and it proves that they met indeed [see Chronology].

The first documents we have put on line about Taranto and the Rivera Schreiber event may seem another protest against the Pearl Harbor attack. It is not so. There is no doubt that Pearl Harbor was what got America in the war. We all know how that war ended and shaped the world until today. It is only that sixty-three years later history could tell the truth about what happened and how. For the moment it is like being adopted knowing it, and not knowing who our real parents are. Knowledge would finally turn that page in a neat way, make many puzzles fit, make the experience more useful, and the future easier to face with less strings attached. Napoleon said that historical truth "is too often merely a phrase... a story that has been agreed to tell". It has really proven to be that. The Soviets went a bit far with their internal and 'for export' self-serving fables. Their indefatigable fellow-travelers [Lenin's "useful idiots" – see Chronology]

elsewhere did and still do as much. Not to mention all the timid western historians who politely waited half a century for Gorbachev to declare that the Katyn Forest Massacre was perpetrated by the Soviets, so they can now 'discover' that themselves. The Germans denounced it first but they were the enemy and then the losers and therefore had to be wrong. Our other concern is about Admiral Kimmel and General Short. The official history about them looks too much like something political that 'has been agreed to tell'. Too many famous admirals concurred about their innocence, but they were bound by law and could not tell more. Every little new tassel could help - we try to bring ours.

Last but not least, there seems to be some silent agreement between the US and Japan, that has no real correlation with the necessary reconstruction of Japan: as long as the Japanese appear as geniuses of daring for inventing [which they did not] and carrying out the Pearl Harbor attack, and the US goes on appearing as having been ambushed completely unprepared and stabbed in the back, everyone is happy. Not finding copies of the Japanese plan of attack became part of the corollary necessities - and just forget about all the US Naval exercises simulating an attack on Pearl Harbor, in which the attacking force always won.