

AFFIDAVIT

Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
 London, England) SS
 Embassy of the United States of America)

Hirota

I, the undersigned, Tadeusz ROMER, Polish citizen, born in Antonosz on December 6th, 1894, inscribed on the residents' lists of the City of Warsaw, former Polish Minister (26.IV.1937 to 1.XI.1937) and then Polish Ambassador to Japan (2.XI.1937 to 4.X.1941), former Polish Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. (2.XI.1942 to 26.IV.1943), former Foreign Minister in the Polish Government in London (14.VII.1943 to 29.XI.1944) and since then residing in a private capacity at 32, Hornton Street, London W.8., do make and swear to the following statement concerning the indictment as alleged war criminal of Mr. Koki HIROTA, former Prime Minister and former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

My personal friendly relations with Mr. Koki Hirota date from the time of my stay in Tokio as diplomatic representative of Poland, when, in June 1937, he became Japanese Foreign Minister and retained that position for nearly a year. Memories of old standing linked him with Poland, for, as a young man, he had been appointed to accompany Jozef Pilsudski, later Marshal of Poland, on his tour of Japan in 1905. It was during Hirota's term of office and largely owing to him, that on October 1st, 1937, the Polish Legation in Tokio and the Japanese Legation in Warsaw were raised to the rank of Embassies, in appreciation of the existing friendly relations between Poland and Japan. In these circumstances, I had the opportunity of meeting Mr. Hirota more frequently, perhaps, than my diplomatic colleagues, and of conversing with him both officially and altogether personally on current political matters.

These good relations between us persisted after Mr. Hirota's return to private life. We visited each other, and frequently exchanged views, solely in an unofficial capacity, of course. From my notes, upon which I regularly based my reports to my Government, and which I was lucky enough to keep by me throughout both my subsequent stay in Japanese occupied Shanghai, and later in German bombed London, I am able to quote the two following passages, translated from Polish. They seem to me to throw an interesting light on Hirota's clearly negative attitude towards the policy of the contemporary Japanese Foreign Minister, Matsuoka.

The following excerpt from my notes is dated 21st January 1941. A few days later, I had occasion confidentially to communicate its subject matter to my American colleague, Mr. Joseph C. Grew:

"...I gather confidentially from Hirota, former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, and ever a likely candidate for these posts, that he judges Matsuoka's policy with the utmost severity. According to his critical views, Japan by her rushed and thoughtless access to the Axis Powers has imprudently and pointlessly deprived herself of all freedom of manoeuvre. She is being unwillingly forced down a dangerous slope, where she may one of these days suddenly find herself in full swing of war against the United States...."

Several days later, exactly on 30 January 1941, I had Mr. Hirota at lunch in my Embassy, together with Sir John Lathan, the Australian Minister to Japan. My personal notes contain the following record of our conversation on that occasion:

"...From Hirota's reaction to my picture of the present political situation in Japan, I could clearly deduct that he shares my views, and is definitely critical of the policy pursued by the Japanese Government at present in power....He agrees that a war with the United States would be fatal to Japan..."

(SEAL)

(Signed) Tadeusz Romer

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 12th day of September 1947.

(Signed) Norah Alsterlund

Consul of the United States of
America at London, England.