

No. 3227

Def. Doc. # 2558

Exh. No. 3227

Translated by  
Defense Language Branch

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al,

-vs-

ARAKI, Sadao, et al,

SWORN DEPOSITION

Deponent :-- SAITO, Yoshie

I, SAITO, Yoshie, of lawful age, being first duly sworn in accordance with the usages and customs in my country, depose and state as follows:

I was born in 1880 and now live in Shoto, Shibuya-Ku, Tokyo, I attended the Tokyo Imperial University and after graduation, entered the service of the Foreign Office. I have been stationed as diplomatic and consular attache in Peking and Tientsin, China; was at one time Secretary of the Embassy in Washington, D.C., under Ambassador Shidehara. Later I became Director of the Bureau of Commercial Affairs of the Foreign Office, which position I resigned in 1926 to accept a position as a director of the South Manchurian Railway Company, Ltd.

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In July, 1940, upon the formation of the Konoye Cabinet, by request of Foreign Minister Matsuoka, I became an advisor to the Foreign Office and held that position until I resigned in July, 1941. In May, 1941, I attended a cabinet meeting with Premier Konoye and Foreign Minister Matsuoka. Other cabinet ministers attended. At this meeting the question of Japanese-American negotiations which were then in progress, was discussed. On this occasion I distinctly recall a speech made by the accused, HIRANUMA, Kiichiro, who was the then Home Minister. He stated, and the theme of his speech was, that Japan must not fight for any reason whatsoever. He gave as his reasons that if a war were started between big powers, it was highly probable, and almost inevitable, that it would develop into a world wide conflagration. Once started, it was evident that such hostilities would become a protracted war and no one could foretell the damage and devastation which would be wrought by the destructive forces of new weapons and scientific devices and appliances which had been, and were then being developed. Undoubtedly untold damage would accrue to the industries of all nations of the world and the human race would be thrown into misery. He also stated concerning the then present economic conditions of the country, that he firmly believed Japan would not be able to withstand or face a protracted war. He spoke generally along these lines for approximately thirty minutes in an impassioned

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plea against war. I remember this speech of HIRANUMA's particularly well because he was usually a silent and reticent man, and it was most unusual for him to speak at such great length. I received the impression, and there was no question among those present, that he spoke from an innermost, compelling conviction that he must state his position strongly. [There is no question that he was opposed to war.

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On this 30 day of Aug., 1947

At above address.

DEPONENT SAITO, Yoshie (seal)

I, USAMI, Rokuro, hereby certify that the above statement was sworn by the Deponent, who affixed his signature and seal thereto in the presence of this witness.

On the same date

At the above address.

Witness: (signed) USAMI, Rokuro (seal)

OATH

In accordance with my conscience I swear to tell the whole truth withholding nothing and adding nothing.

SAITO, Yoshie (seal)