

December 16, 1947

DEFENSE - TOGO

NOGUCHI - Direct

PageDIRECT EXAMINATION OF NOGUCHI, Yoshio,  
by Mr. Blakeney.

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\* The witness identified and verified exhibit 3611 as his affidavit. \* The affidavit stated that the witness was a member of the staff of the first section of the European-American Bureau from July 1925 to March 1926, and TOGO was section chief from July 1925 to the end of the year. When the witness was in the first section from January 1930 to October 1933, TOGO was bureau director throughout. When the witness was a secretary-interpreter of the embassy in Moscow from October 1939 to November 1940, TOGO was ambassador, and the witness returned home about a month after TOGO was recalled by MATSUOKA.

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While in Moscow, the witness was interpreter at all conversations between TOGO and Molotov, following the settlement of the Nomonhan Incident in September. Thereafter he was in the same capacity in the European-Asiatic Bureau from December 1940 to February 1943, and TOGO was foreign minister from October 1941 to September 1942. It was immediately after TOGO became foreign minister for the second time that \* the witness was ordered to serve in the Political Affairs Bureau, TOGO remaining minister until August 1945. During the two tenures of TOGO's ambassadorship the witness was interpreter at all conversations with the Soviet ambassador, and he was therefore familiar with the negotiations and with TOGO's opinion in connection therewith.

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While TOGO was ambassador to the Soviet, he took the opportunity immediately after the Nomonhan Incident, when relations showed a favorable turn, to further improve relations, and succeeded in solving various problems which were described by the witness. As to the negotiations for the epoch-making neutrality treaty between Japan and the USSR, TOGO carried the negotiations all but to consummation. \* In this, TOGO did not insist on the exclusive interests of Japan, but maintained that the interests of both should be mutually respected. Whenever he found the Tokyo instructions excessive or improper he did not hesitate to ask reconsideration of Tokyo, and always undertook negotiations after fully understanding the facts. This attitude caused him to win Molotov's confidence, and the conversations were carried on in a most friendly atmosphere.

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Molotov then was concurrently chairman of the council of commissars and Commissar for Foreign Affairs. It was unusual in Soviet practice that Molotov accepted with hardly exception TOGO's request for interviews. In the all-night negotiations over the modus vivendi of the fisheries problem on the night of 31 December 1939, Molotov insisted when the \* question of the gold clause concerning the last payment for the CER that the opinion of experts be obtained, as the question was economic.

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TOGO, however, pointed out there was not enough time, and requested Molotov to accept his word that the proposal was not disadvantageous for the USSR. Molotov replied he would rely on TOGO's word and would sign the document. Upon the conclusion of the fisheries agreement on 1 January, Molotov expressed his respect for TOGO's efforts and that Russian-Japanese relations would become more friendly, thanks to TOGO.

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\* It was TOGO's intention to establish peaceful relations with the USSR, and he recommended the conclusion of a non-aggression pact, finally obtaining government instructions to open negotiations. He made the following oral proposal to Molotov in early July 1940: 1, the two parties should confirm that the basic treaty shall be the basis of relations and declare they will maintain peaceful and friendly relations, respecting each's territorial integrity; 2, if one of the two was attacked by a third power the other shall maintain neutrality; 3, the agreement shall be effective for five years.

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Some days later Molotov agreed in principle to the proposal, saying it was in substance a non-aggression pact, and communicated to TOGO in mid-August that the USSR would accept the proposal on condition that the paragraph referring to the fact that the basic treaty shall be the basis of relations \* be deleted, and proposed that the concessions in northern Saghalien be terminated. TOGO recommended to Tokyo that the Russian proposal should be accepted, and the proposed pact be concluded. However, MATSUOKA, who became foreign minister in July 1940, when the pact was all but concluded, ordered TOGO home and to suspend negotiations. Molotov repeatedly asked TOGO before his departure as to Tokyo's intentions concerning the pact, as to sudden change of ambassadors being incomprehensible, and that the new ambassador TATEKAWA had made a statement that Japanese-Russian relations should be restored to a clean slate.

35383

TOGO tried to dispel Russian concern by explaining that the negotiations had been conducted with full contact with the government and the cabinet change could not change the policy, and that he, \* on returning home, would do all he could to improve Russian-Japanese relations. The witness recalled TOGO's telling him that the motive for his proposing a neutrality pact was to take the opportunity for settling the Nomonhan Incident. The witness was then half TOGO's interpreter and half his secretary, and he recalled TOGO telling him that Japan should not seek in the south anything beyond the promotion of economic interests, for this would cause a clash with the U. S. and Britain. TOGO went to Berlin for a few days in May 1940 for a medical examination, and not for official business, and this was his only trip there that year.

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35384 When TOGO became foreign minister in October 1941, Ambassador Smetanin often communicated Soviet requests concerning the maintenance of neutrality between the two on these occasions. TOGO suggested his desire to render good offices for peace between Germany and the USSR. \* When Smetanin was leaving for home in January 1942, TOGO entrusted with him a message to Molotov that if the Soviet should come to entertain a desire for peace with Germany, he was ready to render his good offices. TOGO remarked that when the whole world had become involved in war, Japanese-Soviet relations were like a shaft of sunlight, and he desired to extend this light to the whole world. The witness recalled that in the summer of 1942, TOGO complained that the activities of the Japanese authorities abroad were too passive when it was deemed urgent to bring about a general peace through Russo-German peace. When he called on TOGO in early 1943, he urged him to act for Russo-German peace, and TOGO said he deemed this the most proper way to bring about general peace, and was willing to work toward that end if the government would give him powers for action.

35385 The witness returned from Bulgaria in April 1945, and TOGO summoned him in May and told him of his intention \* for negotiations with the Soviet to terminate the war. This intention materialized in June with conversations between HIROTA and Ambassador Malik, and the witness served as interpreter and liaison between TOGO and HIROTA. Although the negotiations failed, it was because the war situation had too far deteriorated.

THERE WAS NO CROSS-EXAMINATION OF THE WITNESS.

35386 Exhibit 3162, a supplementary personnel record of TOGO, was received in evidence but not read, to show that the accused was ordered home on 29 August, and left Moscow on 29 October 1940.

Exhibit 3613, a certificate of the foreign ministry, showing the appointment of TOGO's successor, General TATEKAWA in September, was received in evidence but not read.

NOGUCHI, Yoshio

Prefecture and Status: Fukui Prefecture  
Date of Birth: Feb. 24, 1904  
Domicile: No. 185-20 Tsunouchi, Tsuruga-machi,  
Tsuruga-gun, Fukui Prefecture

\* \* \* \* \*

1916 Apr. 1	Entered the 1st year class of the Preparatory Course of Tsuruga Commercial School established by Fukui Prefecture.	
1918 Apr. 1	The system of the said school being altered, entered the Russian Language Section, the 1st year class, regular course of the said school.	
1922 Mar. 18	Completed the course of the said school.	
1922 Apr. 20	Passed the examination for the students of Foreign Ministry to be sent abroad.	
1922 Jun. 5	Appointed a student of Foreign Ministry to be sent abroad. Ordered to Harbin for study. Granted ¥ 1,000 a year as study expenses.	Foreign Ministry Foreign Ministry Foreign Ministry
1922 Dec. 23	Granted ¥2,400 for each year as study expenses.	"
1925 Jun. 30	Appointed a clerk of the Foreign Ministry. Granted 7th Grade Salary. Ordered to stay at Harbin.	Foreign Ministry "
1926 Feb. 12	Ordered to stay at Chichihaerh.	"
1926 Dec. 27	Granted 6th Grade Salary.	"
1927 Feb. 10	Ordered to stay at Odessa.	"
1929 Mar. 31	Granted 5th Grade Salary.	"
1931 Feb. 28	Appointed a clerk of the Foreign Ministry. Granted 5th Grade Salary. Ordered to serve with the First Section of the Europe and America Bureau.	" " "
1933 Mar. 31	Appointed a clerk of the Foreign Ministry. Granted 5th Grade Salary. Ordered to serve at Petropavlovsk.	" "

1933 Sep. 22	Ordered to stay in the Soviet Union.	Foreign Ministry
1934 June. 30	Granted 4th Grade Salary.	"
1936 Oct. 16	Ordered to stay in Poland.	"
1939 Mar. 31	Appointed a clerk of the Foreign Ministry. Granted 4th Grade Salary. Ordered to serve with the Third Section of the Investigation Department.	" " "
1939 Jun. 30	Granted 3rd Grade Salary.	"
1939 Aug. 11	Appointed Second Official Interpreter of the Embassy. Conferred 7th Rank of Higher Civil Service. Granted 3rd Grade Salary. Ordered to stay in the Soviet Union.	Cabinet Foreign Ministry
1939 Sep. 15	Conferred 7th Court Rank, Junior Grade.	
1941 Jun. 30	Granted 2nd Grade Salary.	"
1942 Dec. 9	Appointed Second Official Interpreter of the Legation. Conferred 7th Rank of Higher Civil Service. Granted 2nd Grade Salary. Ordered to stay in Bulgaria.	Cabinet Foreign Ministry
1942 Dec. 28	Appointed First Official Interpreter of the Legation. Conferred 6th Rank of Higher Civil Service. Granted 4th Grade Salary. Ordered to stay in Bulgaria.	Cabinet Foreign Ministry
1943 Feb. 1	Conferred 7th Court Rank, Senior Grade.	
1943 Nov. 16	Appointed 3rd Secretary of the Legation. Conferred 6th Rank of Higher Civil Service. Granted 4th Grade Salary. Ordered to stay in Bulgaria.	Cabinet Foreign Ministry
1945 Oct. 1	Became a liaison-official of the Central Liaison Office according to the Imperial Ordinance No. 550	
1946 Jan. 18	Conferred 5th Rank of Higher Civil Service.	Cabinet
1946 Feb. 19	Appointed Third Secretary of the Legation. Conferred 5th Rank of Higher Civil Service.	Cabinet
1946 Feb. 15	Conferred 6th Court Rank, Junior Grade.	

(Qualifications examined /T.N. under the purge directive/)

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al

-vs-

ARAKI Sadao, et al

- Defendants -

A F F I D A V I T

NOGUCHI YOSHIO



Having first duly sworn an oath as on the attached sheet, in accordance with the procedure prevailing in my country, I hereby depose as follows:

1. I served as member of the staff of the First Section of the European-American Bureau of the Foreign Ministry from July 1925 to March 1926, during which time Mr. Tōgō was the section chief from July 1925 till the end of the year. When I served in the First Section of the European-American (later European-Asiatic) Bureau from January 1930 to October 1933 Mr. Tōgō was the director of the Bureau throughout the period. While I was a secretary-interpreter of the Japanese Embassy in Moscow from October 1939 to November 1940 Mr. Tōgō was Ambassador to the U S S R, and I returned home about a month after Ambassador Tōgō was recalled by Foreign Minister Matsuoka. While I was in Moscow under Ambassador Tōgō after October 1939 I served as interpreter of all the conversations between Ambassador Tōgō and Commissar Molotov following the settlement of the Nomonhan Incident in September. I served thereafter in the same capacity in the European-Asiatic Bureau from December 1940 to February 1943, during which time Mr. Tōgō was Foreign Minister from October 1941 to September 1942. It was immediately after Mr. Tōgō became Foreign Minister for the second time that I returned home from Bulgaria, where I had been a secretary of the Legation, and was ordered to serve in the Political Affairs Bureau, Mr. Tōgō remaining Foreign Minister till August 1945. During these two tenures of Mr. Tōgō's Foreign Ministership I served as his interpreter for all conversations with the Ambassador of the U S S R. I therefore am familiar with the negotiations which Mr. Tōgō conducted with the U S S R and with Mr. Tōgō's opinion in connection therewith.

2. While Mr. Tōgō was Ambassador to the U S S R, he seized the opportunity immediately after the Nomonhan Incident, when Russian-Japanese relations showed a favorable turn, further to improve the relations between the two countries, and succeeded in bringing about the solution of various pending problems one after another. Among these the exchange of prisoners of war of the Nomonhan Incident, the demarkation of the Mongolian-Manchuokuoan border, the settlement of the final allocation of the payment for the Chinese Eastern Railway, the negotiations concerning the Russian-Japanese commercial treaty, the question of the general settlement of border disputes, etc., were the most important. As to the negotiations for the epoch-making neutrality treaty between Japan and the U S S R, Mr. Tōgō carried the negotiations all but to consummation.

3. In conducting the negotiations with the U S S R, Mr. Tōgō did not insist on the exclusive interests of Japan only, but always maintained the position that the interests of both parties should mutually be respected. Whenever he found any instruction from Tokyo excessive or improper he did not hesitate to request the reconsideration of Tokyo, and he always undertook negotiations after having fully examined the facts underlying the issue in question. This attitude on the part of Mr. Tōgō caused him to win the confidence of Commissar Molotov, and the conversations between the two were always carried on in the most friendly atmosphere. I have never worked so pleasantly as I did in those days in Moscow.

4. Commissar Molotov at that time was concurrently Chairman of the Council of Commissars and the Commissar for Foreign Affairs. It was indeed unusual in the practice of the U S S R in those days that Mr. Molotov accepted with hardly any exception Mr. Tōgō's requests for interviews in spite of the fact that he was busily occupied with his official business, and habitually received him most promptly.

5. In the all-night negotiations over the modus vivendi of the fisheries problem, on the night of 31 December 1939, Mr. Molotov insisted when the question of the gold clause concerning the last payment for the Chinese Eastern Railway, the simultaneous settlement of which with the fishery agreement the Soviet side had previously insisted upon, came up, that the opinion of experts had to be obtained inasmuch as the question was economic. Ambassador Tōgō, however, pointed out that there was not time enough to obtain expert opinion, as the agreement had to be reached during the year, and requested that Mr. Molotov should accept the word of the Ambassador that the Ambassador's proposal was not disadvantageous for the U S S R either. Mr. Molotov stated in reply that if the Ambassador gave so strong an assurance he would rely on the Ambassador's word and would immediately sign the document.

6. Upon the conclusion of the fisheries agreement referred to above in the early morning of 1 January after the all-night negotiations, Commissar Molotov drank a toast, saying that he expressed his respect for the efforts made by Ambassador Tōgō, that it had been his pleasure that he had been able to solve the Nomonhan Incident with the cooperation of Ambassador Tōgō and that Russian-Japanese relations would become more and more friendly in the coming year, thanks to the efforts of Ambassador Tōgō.

7. It was Mr. Tōgō's intention to establish peaceful relations with the U S S R, and he recommended the conclusion of a non-aggression pact both by telegrams and by sending a member of his staff to Tokyo. He finally obtained instructions from the Government to open the negotiation for the conclusion of a neutrality pact, and made the following oral proposal to Commissar Molotov in early July 1940.

(1) The two contracting parties confirm that the Basic Treaty between Japan and the U S S R shall be the basis of the relations between the two countries,

The two contracting parties declare that they will maintain peaceful and friendly relations, and will respect each other's territorial integrity.

(2) In case one of the two contracting parties, in spite of her peaceful attitude, is attacked by a third Power or Powers, the other party shall maintain neutrality throughout the conflict.

(3) The present agreement shall be effective for five years.

Commissar Molotov some days later agreed in principle to the proposal, saying that it was in substance a non-aggression pact, and communicated to Ambassador Tōgō in mid-August that the U S S R would accept the proposal on condition that Paragraph 1 of Article 1 be deleted, proposing at the same time that the concessions in northern Sakhalin should be terminated. Mr. Tōgō recommended to Tokyo that in the circumstances, when it had become so difficult to execute the concession rights, the Russian proposal should be accepted and the proposed non-aggression pact be brought to conclusion.

8. However, Mr. Matsuoka, who became Foreign Minister in July 1940, at the time when the pact was all but concluded, ordered Mr. Tōgō to return home and to suspend negotiations concerning the neutrality pact. Mr. Molotov repeatedly inquired of Mr. Tōgō, before Mr. Tōgō's departure, as to the intention of the Tokyo Government concerning the neutrality pact, for the reason that the sudden change of Ambassadors in the midst of an important negotiation was incomprehensible and that the new Ambassador, General Tatekawa, had made a statement in Hsingking on his way to Moscow that Japanese-Russian relations should be restored to a clean slate. Mr. Tōgō endeavored to dispel the concern of the Russian authorities by explaining that the previous negotiations, although commenced on his own initiative, had been conducted with full contact with the Government and the change of the cabinet could not change the policy concerning the neutrality pact, and that he himself would upon his return home do all he could to improve Russian-Japanese relations.

9. I recall Mr. Tōgō's having told me that the motive for his proposing a neutrality pact was to take the opportunity of the settlement of the Nomonhan Incident to establish a fundamentally peaceful relationship between the two countries. I was acting at that time half as interpreter and half as his secretary. I recall his having told me that Japan should not seek in the south anything beyond the promotion of economic interests, for advance in the south would necessarily cause a clash of Japan with the United States and Britain. Mr. Tōgō went to Berlin for a few days in May 1940, but it was to be examined by a doctor there and not for official business to see the Japanese Ambassador there. This was the only trip to Germany that he made during 1940.

10. At a farewell party given at the official residence of the Foreign Commissar in honor of the Ambassador on the eve of his departure from Moscow, Mr. Molotov spoke words of praise, saying "I have never in my public life of many years seen any man who insists so earnestly and frankly as Mr. Tōgō does on whatever he believes to be right. I respect Mr. Tōgō not only as a distinguished diplomat and statesman but as a man."

11. I will now turn to the time when Mr. Tōgō was Foreign Minister. When Mr. Tōgō became Foreign Minister in October 1941, Ambassador Smetanin often communicated the requests of the U S S R concerning the maintenance of neutrality between the two countries. On these occasions Mr. Tōgō suggested more than once his desire to render good offices for peace between Germany and the U S S R. Especially on the occasion when Ambassador Smetanin was leaving for home in January 1942, Mr. Tōgō entrusted to the Ambassador a message to Commissar Molotov that if the U S S R should in future come to entertain a desire for peace with Germany he was ready at any time to render good offices for mediation. At that time Mr. Tōgō remarked that in the cir



cumstances when the whole world had become involved in the war the relations between Japan and the U S S R were like a shaft of sunlight in the midst of a shower, and that it was his desire and intention to extend this light to the whole world. I recall that in the summer of 1942 Mr. Tōgō complained that the activities of the Japanese authorities abroad were too passive at the moment when it was deemed urgently necessary to bring about a general peace through the Russo-German peace. When I called on Mr. Tōgō on the eve of my departure for Bulgaria in early 1943 and urged him to act for the mediation of Russo-German peace, he spoke to me to the effect that he deemed the Russo-German peace the most proper way to bring about general peace and that he was willing to work to that end if the Government would give him full powers for action.

12. I returned from Bulgaria in April 1945. Mr. Tōgō summoned me in May and told me of his intention of negotiations with the U S S R with the aim of terminating the war. His intention materialized in June as the conversations in Hakone between former Premier Hirota and Ambassador Malik, and I served as interpreter of the conversations and liaison between Mr. Tōgō and Mr. Hirota. Although the negotiations ended in failure, it was because the war situation had too far deteriorated to be saved through the negotiations.

O A T H

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

Noguchi Yoshio (seal)

On this 19th day of November, 1947

At Tokyo

Deponent Noguchi Yoshio

I, Nishi Haruhiko, hereby certify that the above statement was sworn to by the deponent, who affixed his signature and seal thereto in the presence of this witness.

On the same date

At Tokyo

Witness: Nishi Haruhiko (seal)

Translation Certificate

I, Nishi Haruhiko, of the defense, certify that I am conversant with the English and Japanese languages, and that the foregoing is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a correct translation of the original document.

Nishi Haruhiko (seal)

Tokyo  
20 November 1947