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I N T E R R O G A T I O N O F

Sadao ARAKI

DATE: 23 February, 1946

INTERROGATOR: Mr. Elton M. Hyder

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INTERROGATION OF

ARAKI, Sadeo

Date and Time : 23 February 1946, 0920-1215 hours.

Place : Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan

Present : Sadeo ARAKI
Mr. ELTON M. HYDER, Interrogator
Mr. Tatsuo FUJII, Interpreter

Oath of Interpreter, Administered by Mr. Hyder:

Mr. HYDER: Do you solemnly swear, by Almighty God, that you will truly and accurately interpret and translate from English into Japanese and from Japanese into English, as may be required of you in this proceeding?

Mr. FUJII: I do.

Notes taken by Mr. Hyder.

In March 1936 it was suggested by the War Minister (General TERAUCHI, Hisachi) and the Navy Minister (NAGANO, Osami) in the HIROTA Cabinet that only active generals could become War Ministers. This was approved by the Cabinet after March 1936. I do not recall the date. It had the effect of a law. It must have been approved by the entire Cabinet to become a law.

It was rumored that the reason for the requirement that the War Minister be an active general was in order that the Army and Navy could approve or disapprove of any member of their staff taking office, and also to keep out older retired men, such as myself or HAZAKI. It might have been a reason also that the Army could prevent the cabinet being formed unless the cabinet was formed in favor of the Army and its policy.

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I knew General TERAUCHI but did not associate with him too closely. Our views differed. We did not get along too well because I did not think he was the proper man to lead a country. I felt that he was arrogant and looking out more for himself than his country. I felt that the Army should reform its system in this important time. It was important because officers did as they pleased.

I think General TERAUCHI, Hisachi, is in French Indo-China.

The February 26 Incident--the purpose of the plan involved in this Incident was: (1) to reorganize or reform the Army; (2) to reform the government; (3) to control the Zaibatsu so that they will work not for personal gain but also for the nation.

I think the purpose was to get those leaders out of the Cabinet and set up a new Cabinet. I think the Staff officers took advantage of this Incident to bring about a military dictatorship. I do not think the planners of the Incident thought that far ahead. Staff officers took advantage of this by ousting about ten men who were always in the way.

These Staff officers were in the War Ministry. I think Lt. General MUTO, (Sho), Lt. General SATO, (Kenryo), Maj. General KATAKURA (Chu), were among these Staff officers. I think SATO is around the Philippines. The last I knew, MUTO was Chief of Staff of YAMASHITA in the Philippines. They approached War Minister KAWASHIMA and requested that certain men be removed from certain positions. KAWASHIMA in turn told these ten men that certain Staff officers requested their resignations.

The ten men were: General HAYASHI, Senjuro; General MASAKI, Jinzaburo; General ABE, Shinko; General KAWASHIMA, Yoshuyuki; General MINAMI, Jirro; General ARAKI, Sadao; General TERAUCHI, Juichi; General UEDA, Kenkichi; General NISHI, Giichi; (The last three never resigned); General HONJO (not asked, but he resigned). (All members of Supreme War Council, except General MINAMI, then Commander-in-Chief of Kwantung Army, and General HONJO, then Chief Aide-de-Camp).

*Terauchi was
Co. Southern Army
Hq. at Saigon*

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By getting all these men out, the younger Staff officers could do as they pleased. The three men who remained were more or less lenient to newer and younger Staff officers and remained in office. I did not know the rest of the Staff officers who requested our resignations. The War Ministry did not tell me.

Leaders of the February 26 Incident were MURANAKA, Koiji, and ISOBE (I think his first name was Eiichi), who were former Army captains. ISOBE was captain in the Finance Department and MURANAKA was captain in a line outfit. I did not know their positions at the time of the Incident. Both are dead. They were executed after trial in June 1937.

They received help of Army officers - Captain YAMAGUCHI, Ichitaro; Captain NONAKA, Shiro; Captain KURIHARA; Captain HAYASHI; Captain TSUSHIMA and Captain ANDO. I do not know their full names. They are the only names I recall. Captain YAMAGUCHI was not executed, since he was not directly connected with the plot and Captain NONAKA committed suicide shortly after the Incident. The rest were executed.

Others implicated and who received sentences were: Maj. General SAITO, Ryu; Lt Colonel MITSUI, Sakichi; Captain SUGANAMI, Saburo. There were others but I do not recall their names. I think all of these sentenced and named here are living.

All of these men were tried by court martial, including the two leaders. The investigations and trials were all conducted secretly. Even General MAZAKI was investigated for about a year. I was questioned at my home once. I did not appear before the court.

The only trial known is the trial of General MAZAKI. On this court martial were General ISOMURA, Nen (Chief) and General MATSUKI, Chokuryo, and others. MAZAKI was tried separately. General ISOMURA is still living.

If records were kept they should be in the War Ministry. To this date many of the judges were unknown. War Minister TERAUCHI ordered the court martials. Trials began sometime after March 1936 and continued for almost a year.

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General ISOMURA, Nen and General MAZAKI should know what was developed during the trial and also General SAITO, Colonel MITSUI and Captain SUGANAMI.

There were either twelve or thirteen executed. The number tried I don't know, nor the number sentenced. I have heard that several were tried and sentenced because they happened to be around. Some enlisted men were tried.

"I acted as mediator between MAZAKI and the court in his trial. I did inquire as to other trials to mediate, but such things were not permitted."

As to the reason for the court martial proceeding on MAZAKI, I think that at one time the young officers requested MAZAKI to become the next premier. Some of these men, such as SAITO and MITSUI, had visited his home and the trial was to make it appear that MAZAKI was in on the plot. MAZAKI received no sentence. He was exonerated.

The plan to make MAZAKI premier became known the afternoon of the Incident. General ABE heard it from MURAKAWA and ISOBK. The press stated that I was to receive a post outside of Japan, such as Korea or Manchuria, as a part of the plot. I heard of the plan from General ABE, and that the leaders of the Incident desired MAZAKI as premier. Others were present when ABE stated this, in the residence of the War Minister. General ABE, Shinko, was at that time a member of the Supreme War Council. The War Minister was not present--just the Supreme War Counsellors. (all of the eight men named, including MAZAKI, who resigned were present, except one--Generals HONJO, KAWASHIMA and MINAMI were not there).

This was the night of the 26th of February. I do not know who called this meeting--it was decided by all Supreme War Counsellors to have this meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to settle the Incident without bloodshed and have the responsible parties make a statement to the Emperor that they were sorry for the act. Nothing was decided on so I went home.

Around the 29th of February I was requested by the War Minister to resign, and others were requested at the same time. I told the War Minister that it was not the proper procedure for the War Minister to bring a message at the request of a subordinate.

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CERTIFICATE OF INTERPRETER

I, Tatsuo FUJII, being sworn on oath, state that I truly translated the statements from English to Japanese and from Japanese to English, and that the above statements, consisting of four (4) pages, are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

TATSUO FUJII

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 25th day of February, 1946.

ELTON M. HYDER

Duly Detailed Investigating Officer,
International Prosecution Section, GHQ, SCAP.

CERTIFICATE OF INTERROGATOR

I, ELTON M. HYDER, certify that on the 23rd day of February, 1946, personally appeared before me Sadao ARAKI, and according to Tatsuo FUJII, Interpreter, gave the foregoing statements set forth therein.

ELTON M. HYDER

Tokyo, Japan
25 February 1946

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INTERNATIONAL PROSECUTION SECTION

Doc. No. 2341-2353, inclusive

2 July 1946

ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHED DOCUMENT

Title and Nature: Transcripts of Interrogations of General ARAKI, Sadao

Date: (See Below) Original (x) Copy () Language: English

Has it been translated? Yes () No (x)

Has it been photostated? Yes () No (x)

LOCATION OF ORIGINAL: Document Division

SOURCE OF ORIGINAL:

PERSONS IMPLICATED: ARAKI, Sadao, et al

CRIMES TO WHICH DOCUMENT APPLICABLE: Aggression, Manchuria

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT POINTS:

Interrogations of ARAKI have been assigned following document numbers: (All are from Document Division Exh.290)

<u>Doc. No.</u>	<u>Date of Interrogation</u>
2341	5 Feb 46
2342	18 Jan 46
2343	19 Jan 46
2344	22 Jan 46 (A.M.)
2345	22 Jan 46 (P.M.)
2346	6 Feb 46
2347	12 Feb 46
2348	14 Feb 46
2349	15 Feb 46
2350	18 Feb 46
2351	20 Feb 46
2352	23 Feb 46
2353	25 Feb 46

Analyst: W. H. Wagner

Doc. No. 2341-2353, inclusive.

CHARGE OUT SLIP

DATE

July 3

EVIDENTIARY DOC. NO. 2352

TRIAL BRIEF _____

EXHIBIT NO. _____

BACKGROUND DOC. NO. _____

SIGNATURE

Stephens

ROOM NO. _____

*Original presented in
Court*

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