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Defense Language Branch

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al

-vs-

ARAKI, SADA0, et al

Sworn Deposition

Deponent: ODAJIMA, Tadashi

Having first duly sworn an oath as on attached sheet and in accordance with the procedure followed in my country I hereby depose as follows.

1. I have occupied the posts of senior official in the Prisoners of War Information office and senior member of the Prisoners of War Supervision Department in the War Ministry since March, 1943, and held the rank of Colonel. The Prisoners of War Supervision Department was abolished in November, 1945.

During that period, I visited different POW's camps in the Home island, Korea, Formosa, Manchuria, etc. I not only know the fact about the supervision of P.O.W. but also many reports forwarded to the POW Information Bureau by chiefs of POW's camps and POW's employers. Therefore, I want to tell the facts relating to those matters.

2. At the beginning of 1944, due to the fact that the health conditions of POW's were not approvable, a notification concerning the improvement of administration of POW's, was issued to each Commanding General of the Army who was in charge of administration of POW's in the name of the Vice-Minister of War. (D.D. 2007)

3. Due to the fact that the sanitary conditions of POW's aboard transport ships were not approvable, a notification was issued to the units concerned in December, 1942, in the names of the Vice-Minister of War and the Sub-Chief of the General Staff, so as to call forth their attention concerning transportation of POW's. The attached is a copy of this notification, of which meaning was repeated in the said notification issued in March, 1944. (Exh. 1965)

4. On Dec. 26, 1943, Maj. Gen. Homada, Chief of the POW's Administration Division, War Ministry, expressed the intention of the War Minister Tojo to the meeting of the commandants of POW camps as to the inadmissibility of inflicting (mistreatment) upon POW's by explaining to the following effect:

The purport of the address.

While admitting that the treatment of POW's must conform to the circumstances of respective localities, I believe that we ought to be very careful not to exceed the proper limit at all, prompted by a sense of hatred. As such is nothing short of the expression of antagonism in a petty manner, a thing which is contrary to our "Bushido" as well as to the first principle of the present Greater Asiatic War, which itself is a moral war.

Especially we must consider the unlimited evils of (mis-treatment) as they, arising as they do from trivial personal feelings, will not only aggravate individual feelings on the part of the POW's but will also constitute a measure for the degree of culture of our country at large, and may help the POW concerned in promulgating anti-Japanese propaganda after his repatriation. Moreover, the most part of the motives of mistreatment can be attributed to the language difficulties and the improper understanding of rules and regulations on the part of those in charge of POW administration, and it sometimes occurred that some of them were knocked down by the enraged POW concerned in revenge. In such an extreme case our disgrace will not be redeemed by the penalty that the POW concerned will receive for his violence.

In this connection, I expect that you will be especially careful in directing those under your command, and improve every possible opportunity to make the purport of this address known to every unit concerned, and also to every unit or person employing POW's with a view to attain propriety in our treatment of POW's.

Note: I committed this purport of address to writing in accordance with my memory, as its original manuscript had been destroyed by burning.

5. The Army Medical College is expected to perfect the measures for the prevention of epidemics among POW's, and to provide for their medical treatment. They also considered it proper to carry out the bacteriological as well as the scientific research of the malnutrition patients who were many among POW's, and so from February, 1943, they carried out various thorough researches, by a specially detailed research party, with the POW's detained in Tokyo POW Camp. They had their results published and thus contributed to the promotion of the general state of health of the POW's.

The circumstance of this investigation and study may be known from two documents, one is the document in the custody of the Japanese Government POW Information Bureau (D.D.2006), and the other is (D.D.2005) attached herewith.

Moreover, in accordance with the results of the above-mentioned investigation and study, the Tokyo POW Camp took immediate steps as described in the attached. (D.D. 2004)

6. General Umezu, commander of the Kwantung Army, taking seriously to heart the POW's state of health and especially the number of epidemic cases among them, issued special instruction in February 1943 to the Chief Supply Officer of the Kwantung Army and the Officer-in-Charge of the Kwantung Army's Anti-infection and Water Supply Main Depot to the effect that the medical service at the Mukden POW Camp be strengthened by allotting or despatching many medical personnel to this camp, in order to take steps for the immediate restoration of the POW's physical strength, and to help and direct the medical service at this camp (DD 2003)

The annexed (DD 2002-2003) is the copy of the instructions and the account of the state in which the health service was carried out.

7. From a letter found among the effects left by the late Maj. Gen. M.P. Beckwith Smith, a POW, which was in the custody of the Japanese Government POW Information Bureau, the following fact was revealed:

In 1942, General Yamashita, the Commander of the 25th Army at Singapore at that time presented such articles of comfort as beer, butter and cheese along with a cordial letter of comfort to the general officer POW's who were detained at Singapore.

The attached is a copy of the letter. (D.D.2001)

8. In accordance with Art. 5 of the regulations for the Treatment of POW's (Ex 1865) POW's enjoyed freedom of faith and were allowed to attend religious services of their respective sect. Moreover, at some POW camps, ministers were specially asked to officiate the religious services at the camps.

And again at Christmas the greatest possible facilities were specially allowed to the POW.

As to the funeral ceremonies for a deceased POW it is laid down in Art. 37 of the Detailed Regulations for the Treatment of POW's (Lxh 1965) that proper ceremonies be observed according to the rank and status of the deceased, and so at each POW camp such ceremonies were carried out most solemnly and wreaths were invariably offered on such occasions. (DD 2000)

9. The feelings of the nation toward POW's cannot be declared to have been cordial. As air-raids became more intensified, and as the number of those who had lost their kin in the war became more numerous, it was considered that these feelings were more aggravated.

In consequence the proper treatment of the POW's by the Army was censured everywhere that the Army was according too good treatment to the POW's. And again POW camp staffs, who were directly concerned in the treatment of POW's were looked upon by the nation at large with apathy, and were criticised by them as if they were unpatriotic to the state. There were instances that such staffs were disturbed by some of such unthinking people in the execution of their duties in connection with the POW administration.

The attached shows some examples of such censures and disturbances. (D.D. 2113)

10. With a view to rectifying the nation's feeling towards POW's, the Army, before quartering POW's at respective camps, used to send some members of the staffs concerned to the localities where such camps were situated to explain to the officials and people of the localities, especially to those who had been granted by the Army to employ the POW's, how to treat the POW's until they understood so thoroughly that there were no fear that undesirable troubles might occur in this connection. Even after POW's were quartered, the staff concerned improved every opportunity to rectify the people's ill feelings towards POW's.

And again at some POW camps, liaison conference between the POW camp authorities and the organizations employing POW labor were held once or more a month, in order to prevent the occurrence of any unpleasant troubles in the treatment of POW's. (the reports of various POW camp commandants have been consulted in drawing up this article)

The attached is a copy of record written by some member of the Port of Osaka Coast Stevedores Union according to his memory about the remarks made by Colonel Murata, the Commandant of the Osaka POW Camp at the time(D.D.2114)

11. The rule laid down in the International Treaty (General conference of 1907) that the ration for POW's is to be the same as issued to the members of the captor's army, was observed in the Japanese Army. The annexed table (D.D.1996) shows the comparison of the amount of staple food supplied respectively to POW's, the Japanese Army and the Japanese nation.

The ration for POW's at every POW camp was almost all supplied by the Army, and so there was no case of supply of such ration having ever failed to be carried out.

The subsidiary foodstuff for POW's different from the case of the staple food, was issued to POW's from the Army, not in kind, but in fixed allowance amount. The POW camp authorities supplied necessary foodstuff to POW's by purchasing it from dealers or markets with this fixed allowance. But as the nation's feelings towards POW's gradually aggravated, some people, seeing that there were considerable difference between the rations issued to the nation on one part and the POW's on the other, and that the POW's were daily supplied with fish, etc., things not to be obtained by the general public, became envious, and they either blamed the POW camp staffs, who were doing their best in feeding the POW's or, as in the case of some of them went so far as to interfere with their purchase of foodstuffs.

But the POW camp staffs continued their efforts single-mindedly in securing the amount of foodstuff required for maintaining the POW's under their charge in a healthy condition, in the face of such undeserved blames and interference. At every POW camp, the staffs, in their effort to obtain the required foodstuff smoothly, maintained a close contact with

the distributory organizations, and the city, town or village authorities, police stations or agricultural societies, and when they found that some one concerned were unreasonable, they did their best in leading them to the right path.

The staffs, when they succeeded in obtaining the required stuff, paid attention to such details in carrying such foodstuff into the camps as to cover it over, or to do the carrying at night, in the sole hope of not exciting the general public's antipathy.

As the food situation at home became so acute that it was difficult to secure enough foodstuffs through legitimate distributory organization, the POW camp authorities had to increase their efforts in this connection.

At every POW camp hitherto unutilized land was quickly turned into kitchen gardens in the hope of growing corn or vegetables to help the self-supply of at least a portion of the foodstuffs required. Sometimes the staffs had to go out far, with truck or, in the extreme case, with wagons manned by the staffs themselves, to purchase foodstuffs. At other times the staffs went to a fishing port before dawn and there waited long for the arrival of fishing boats to buy fish from them at black market prices. Thus they left no effort untried for obtaining foodstuffs even in violation of the food distributory system.

Some troubles occurred between a POW camp commandant and the organizations employing POW labor, when he approached the responsible persons of the companies or factories with requests to supply some reasonable amount of supplementary food to the POW's.

But most employers of POW labor supplied, out of their foodstuffs in stock, such supplementary food as macaroni, rice-balls, soups or bread to the POW's in their employ. And some such employer even supplied to the POW's a part of such food which was originally intended to be issued to the Japanese workmen. The attached (D.D. 1998) shows the result of the investigation made at the main localities in Japan Proper about the condition of the supplementary food issue.

By the strenuous efforts of the POW camp staffs and the cooperation of the POW labor employers, the feeding of POW's was carried out smoothly, and the ration issued to an individual POW amounted to 3,000 calories or more in nutrition value, and this was considered to be approximately sufficient for maintaining a POW's health.

Of course, as with the special local circumstances or the effect of the current season, a part of POW camps felt it extremely difficult to obtain subsidiary food stuffs, with consequent decrease in the amount of food issued to POW's. But this was only a temporary phenomenon and could be no means be properly attributed to any negligence in duty on the part of the POW camp staff concerned.

According to a document in the custody of the Japanese Government POW Information Bureau, the calculation of the amount of nutritive value of staple and subsidiary food as issued to POW's is shown in the attached copy. (D.D.1997 and 1999)

The attached table shows the comparison of nutrition value of food issued respectively to POW's, the Japanese Army, and the civil population

As to "taking POW's national and racial customs into consideration", every POW camp was very careful, and especially they paid attention to the issue of bread ration, animal albumen and fat, as well as to the manners of cooking. At many POW camps, baking ovens were provided with, and they had their yeast prepared by their own cooking detail. At some other POW camps POW's were allowed to do their own cooking and they were also consulted in preparing their menus. The attached (D.D.1995) is a copy of menu of a certain day at the Hiroshima POW Camp.

12. As to the medical treatment of POW's, every POW camp staff made enormous efforts. Especially when, with the progress of the war medicaments gradually became so scarce that the supply from the Army proved insufficient, they were compelled to make special efforts for the maintenance of POW's health, as for instance, to obtain medicaments from druggist or to go to mountains or fields for collecting herbs.

The employers of POW labor also cooperated with us in the utmost degree. Some of the examples of such cooperation are shown in the attached.

(1) Colonel Murata, Commandant of the Osaka POW Camp, seeing that many of POW's under his charge were suffering from undernourishment, instructed Surgeon Lieutenants Nosu and Ohashi to carry out a thorough study and investigation of the situation. The two surgeons obtained useful materials for information and published them, and they also established a measure of cure for this kind of disease. The attached is the essay born from their investigation. (D.D. 1994)

(2) At the Tokyo POW Camp, "penicillin", which was then very difficult to obtain even by the Japanese Army, not to speak of the civil population, was once applied to a POW in that camp for his treatment. (From the report by Col. Sakaha, Commandant of the Tokyo POW Camp)

(3) In spring of 1945, Captain Numajiri, commander of Ashio Branch Camp, believing it to be most adequate measures judged from the condition of the patients, that those serious patients of beri-beri, namely Wise, Porter, Carril, Gutzman, Muraby and three others totalling eight persons should be transferred to an infirmary attached to the Tokyo Main Camp as soon as possible, and relying on the excellent skill of Surgeon Captain Tokuda, Chief of the Infirmary, succeeded, after conducting difficult negotiations with various parties concerned despite many objections and blame raised against the measures in preparing a special automobile for the transport of these patients. At last, these patients were transferred all the way from Ashio to Tokyo by automobile and were confined in Shinagawa Infirmary where they recovered. It is some 90 miles far from Ashio to Tokyo and if it had been a case of Japanese patients such warm treatment as stated above could not have been expected to be received from him judging from the traffic situation prevalent at that time. I was told the above information directly from Captain Numajiri.

(4) In the last of 1944 an army sergeant AIZAWA and an ambulance man KUBOTA of Niigata POW Camp who had in critical condition a case owing to acute pneumonia and they sat up with the sick POW throughout three days and nights and at last they made the POW an escape from the jaws of death. In this connection, POW Senior Officer Fulmer Richard B. expressed an appreciation representing all of the POW's to the camp authorities.

(5) On 11 October 1945 the Osaka POW Camp received unexpectedly an order for the internment of POW's who had been transferring to Japan proper aboard "Risbon" Maru, having been fatigued due to shipwreck. Due to many cases of dysentery, acute colitis and diphtheria among them, these POW's could not be transferred from Moji, the landing place, to Tokyo as scheduled. Therefore, following the instruction of the senior officer, these prisoners of war were en bloc taken into Osaka POW Camp. Thereupon, staff personnel of Osaka POW camp assumed the charge of internment and disposition of these patient POW's., furnishing them with gauze, newspapers and toilet paper, etc., which were gathered from the homes of the staff personnel, regardless of dangers for infection with these diseases upon themselves. (Report of Col. Murata, Commander of Osaka POW Camp)

(6) Many factories which employed Prisoners of War, such as Nihon Seitetsu Kamaishi Seitetsusho, Hirohata Seitetsusho, Kamaishi Kogyosho, Kamioka Kogyosho, etc. Sent a great quantity of medicines to POW's Camp, as gifts, and tried to help them.

13. Cases where Prisoners of War administrator and civilian concerned received several hundreds of letters of thanks, addresses of thanks, or letters of gratitude wherein prisoners of war expressed gratitude for their fair treatment as Prisoners of War; and for their efforts made for the sake of POW's happiness, are too numerous to be mentioned. Three of the representative cases is shown in the attached (D.D.1991-1992-1993)

14. The text of statement made by the Apostolic Delegation in Japan in its report to the Pope concerning the treatment of POW's by the Japanese, is shown as follows: This is a copy of document in the custody of POW Information Bureau(DD 1990)

15. Officer Prisoners of War have never been ordered or enforced to be employed at work. "Officer Prisoners of War may be allowed to be employed on work of their own choosing." This is a provision provided for in Art. 1 of the Regulations on the Work of Prisoners of War (Lx 1965). In each camp, they encouraged officer Prisoners of War to be

employed on work of their own choosing with various reasons. With respect to the work of officer Prisoners of War notification, dated June 3, 1942, was made from Director of POW Administration Division of War Ministry to the units concerned, requesting that officer Prisoners of War should be employed on work of their own choosing.

In the said notification, it was added that the following types of work were appropriate for the officer Prisoners of War to be employed, also it was requested that their rank and positions were taken into consideration, and imposition of hard work or the like was avoided.

1. Various works wherein techniques and sciences being utilized.
2. Agriculture.
3. Raising of live stocks and domestic fowls.
4. Supervision for the general labor Prisoners of War.
5. Description of data for the history of War.
6. Affairs of propaganda.
7. Other works which are deemed appropriate to employ them.

How the officer Prisoners of War were encouraged to be employed on work is shown as follows:

- (1) Officer Prisoners of War were encouraged to be employed on work for the purpose of health.

It is more harmful than good for health to lead an idle life, and suffering from ennui would cause them to be spiritually weak, therefore, encouragement was given to them to engage in slight farm work or raising of live stocks.

- (2) Also for the purpose of rectifying the Japanese people's feeling toward Prisoners of War, they were encouraged to be employed on work.

It was afraid that the fact that those officer POWs who were not employed on work were allowed to receive much more ration than that of Japanese nationals and Japanese Military officers, would be the cause of aggravating national ill-feelings toward POWs; which would, in consequence, be the cause of occurrence of bad influence upon administration of whole POWs.

Thereupon, explaining that, under the state of war, every country in the world had deep anxieties respectively regarding the food distribution, and that, even though they were in captivity, it was their human duty to be employed more or less in the work of self-supporting, they were encouraged to be employed on work.

- (3) From a parent's heart whose desire was that an increased ration be given to officer Prisoners of War, considering the food situation in Japan, officer Prisoners of War were so encouraged to be employed on work.

With the development of the war, the food situation in Japan

became more and more difficult, and the staple food for both military personnel and nationals were inevitably decreased, besides, it became difficult all the more to obtain subsidiary foodstuff.

This state of affairs inevitably affected Prisoners of War. Whereas, up to June 1944, officer Prisoners of War had received 420 grams of staple food ration and non-commissioned-officer and private Prisoners of War had received 570 grams (however, additional amount of ration up to 220 over 570 grams was increased in accordance with the type of work and condition of individual health), on and after June 1944, the amount of staple food for officer Prisoners of War was decreased to 390 grams, and for those non-commissioned-officers and privates who were employed on hard work was decreased to 705 grams, and for those who were not employed on hard work, was decreased to 570 grams. Decreased staple food, however, would be no harm to health provided that the subsidiary foodstuff was supplied sufficiently. It became gradually difficult, as stated above, to obtain these subsidiary foodstuff, above all, the nutritive value which officer Prisoners of War who were not employed on hard work could take, showed gradually a declining trend. Nevertheless, the nutritive value taken by these Prisoners of War was much higher than that of the Japanese people. In view of the health condition of officer Prisoners of War in Zentsuji POW Camp in which many officer Prisoners of War were interned, a plan was made to increase especially the staple food of officer Prisoners of War up to 500 grams for which investigation had been made carefully under the central military authorities concerned. The plan, however, ended to a mere attempt proving that to distribute one and a half times more staple food for Prisoners of War than that for the general Japanese people, was not deemed to be adequate in view of food situation in Japan and from the point of view of proper guidance of the Japanese nationals. Thereupon, with the intention to supply the same quantity of staple food for the officer Prisoners of War as that for the non-commissioned-officers and privates, treating the officer POWs as if being employed on hard work by assigning a slight self-supporting work for maintaining their health, also with another intention to grant them an additional allowance of crops grown by farm work, they were encouraged to be employed on work. It was neither with any intention to exploit the labor facility of Officer Prisoners of War in order to relieve the shortage of labor facilities in Japan, nor with any intention to offer an insult to them without making much of their positions as officer, but with the parent's heart of the Prisoners of War administrators concerned who encouraged the officer POWs, for their own happiness,

Officer Prisoners of War were employed on work.
An actual case where Officer Prisoners of War were employed on work of their own choosing, is described in a document in the custody of POW Information Bureau as shown in the separate sheet, (DD. 1989)

16. Violence on Prisoners of War.

The Japanese are generally short-tempered and are in the habit of getting excited at trifles. Also, it was especially the case with military units that, despite the strict supervision and instruction of the senior officer, habit of inflicting the so-called private punishment, by assaulting the subordinate, from a slight cause was not extinct. Therefore, in a case where misconduct was committed by a Prisoner of War, for instance, failure in acting up to regulations or assuming a disobedient or haughty attitude, illegitimate punishment was liable to be inflicted on the Prisoner of War without discrimination.

These were the factual cases for which I must express my sincere regret.

It is presumed that in most cases this violent behavior would not have been conducted if our officers had been acquainted with their manners and customs and had understood their languages.

For instance, when a certain non-commissioned-officer scolded a Prisoner of War at a POW camp, the Prisoner of War replied "I think so and so." Eye-witnessing the tongue put out naturally when he said "think", the non-commissioned officer inflicted a blow on him with rage in a moment presuming that he was insulted by the behavior of the Prisoner of War; when some Prisoners of War were scolded by others, the former would gape at the latter's face folding their arms, unlike a Japanese custom, which was liable to be regarded by the Japanese, as very haughty attitude.

Of course, in Prisoner of War Administration Division they prepared notifications on manners and customs of Prisoners of War and transmitted them to Prisoner of War Camps as an aid to put out troubles to be caused from misunderstanding.

The trials presently conducted at the Yokohama Military Tribunal testify to the fact that cases of some of the POW Camp Staff members having had inflicted violence upon POWs

But on the other hand, it was always with a sense of respect that I witnessed, while my visits of observation to POW camps, the staffs of such camps concentrating all their efforts, in the face of various abuses and interference of the nation who had no cordial feelings toward the POWs, in obtaining foodstuff, medicaments, or in completing their arrangements for the protection against cold or damp, being inspired by a sense of genuine friendship toward the POWs.

A certain N.C.O., now being detained at the Sugamo Prison was alleged to have assaulted the responsible person of a organization, which then was employing POW labour, out of his indignation for the employer's lack of enthusiasms towards the POW's under his employ. The injured person lodged a protest to me personally against the N.C.O. on the occasion of my visit to that organization. At other time the fact came to my knowledge that a certain interpreter attached to a POW camp, though he had the habit of striking a POW from a slight cause, would, when a POW happened to fall sick, attend on him whole-heartedly almost without taking any rest, or food, with the natural result that he was always popular with the POW's in spite of his bad habit. From these facts I can assure you that the POW camp staffs were real guardians for the Prisoners of War under their charge.

17. Measures Relative to the disposition of POW's in case of Gradual Change in the Situation (Army, Asia, Secret, No.2257) Aimed at the Following Two Points:(Ex.No.1978)
- (1) To transfer POW camps in order to avoid, by all means, the giving up of POW's to enemy hands, and to prevent, as much as possible, POW casualties which might be inflicted by the air-raids.
 - (2) Not to make any mistakes in disposition in the event we were obliged to resort to emergency measures against POW's, owing to unavoidable circumstances, as stated above, this notification was made in order to protect POW's, and did not bear any implication of mistreatment towards them. As a result, for the purpose of preventing POW casualties to the utmost, about 10,000 POW's held in our homeland were removed from the Tokyo-Yokohama area, Nagasaki, Osaka, Kobe, Hakodate, Muroran areas, where air-raids were expected to be intensified, to such places deemed to be comparatively safe from air-raids as the TOHOKU, HOKUROKU areas and the interior parts of HOKKAIDO.

Thanks to these steps taken, casualties inflicted by air-raids upon the POW's were smaller than our expectations, hardly amounting to 100. As a matter of fact, more than 13 places of the evacuated camps in the Tokyo and Osaka areas had actually been bombed.

18. It was from March, 1942 that the POW Information Bureau began its communications with regard to the POW situation. Up to August 1945, the number of POW's and internees reported was about 210,000, and since then up to August 1947 approximately 100,000 cases were reported, totalling 310,000. The number of the deceased reported of the POW's and the internees numbered about 45,000 cases.

The POW Information Bureau also undertook to release communication with regard to enemy personnel killed in action. Up to August 1945, they reported on about 11,000 cases.

In addition, the POW Information Bureau took it upon themselves to answer, with sincerity, any inquiries relative to POW's. They had answered about 1,000 cases, up to August 1945.

On this 29th day of August, 1947
At IMIFE

Deponent: /S/ ODAJIMA, Tadashi (seal)

I, _____ 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 _____

Witness: /S/ _____ (seal)

OATH

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

/S/ _____ (seal)

Check for certification
and 6-B-1.