

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

H.G.W. Woodhead

H.G.W. Woodhead, being first duly sworn, upon oath deposes and says:

1. I have been acquainted with the former Ch'ing Emperor, sometimes known as Henry P'u-yi, for a great many years, and especially during the years that he resided in Tientsin I was a close friend, saw him often and was well acquainted with his personality and character.

2. In September 1932 I made a visit to Manchuria to study the situation. After brief visits to Dairen and Mukden I proceeded to Changchun, the new capital. I had hardly reached the hotel there when a young Chinese Foreign Office official called to say that the Chief Executive, Mr. P'u-yi, had heard of my coming, and would be pleased to receive me at 10:30 next morning. This young man, Mr. Yu, who can converse equally readily in Chinese, English, Japanese and Russian, called for me in good time and escorted me to the former Emperor's residence. After a wait of a few minutes in the official reception-room, a message was received that the Chief Executive would see me in his private apartments, to which I was immediately conducted.

3. The former Emperor greeted me with obvious pleasure, and had scarcely invited me to be seated before he remarked that on one of the last occasions on which I had seen him, in October 1930, at a private lunch in Tientsin, I had remarked that perhaps next time we met he might not be so accessible; that I might have to invoke the assistance of a Foreign Office official. "You see," he observed, "that your prophecy has been fulfilled." After I had inquired after the Empress, and he had asked for information regarding several of his former foreign friends in Tientsin, I told him that later I should like to put some formal questions to him for my newspaper articles, but asked whether first I might put some personal and unusually frank questions, as a friend. He answered that I might ask him anything that I liked.

4. I then said that it would be of interest to many of his friends to know whether he was really happy in his present position. He replied with emphasis that he was.

Was he busy?

Not, he said, so busy at the moment as he was a few months ago. The administrative machinery was now better organized, and though he devoted a considerable portion of every day to State business, he was not too busy to find time to see his friends.

5. I then remarked that the general impression that prevailed in Shanghai and indeed throughout China was that he had been coerced into his present position, and that he was not a free agent.

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From this report he emphatically dissented. He had, he maintained, been actuated by a double motive in accepting the office of Chief Executive. First, on account of political reasons. When the Manchu Dynasty abdicated it had been with the avowed intention of restoring the sovereignty to the people. Twenty years had elapsed since, but what had been the result? The political power had passed not into the hands of the people, but of ambitious and grasping militarists. There had been incessant civil war and disorder. The welfare of the people had been entirely disregarded. They had been tyrannized over and oppressed. China's relations with Foreign Powers had grown steadily worse. And the pledge made in the Abdication Treaty that absolute equality would be maintained between the five races of China had been flagrantly violated.

Secondly, he was actuated by personal motives. Manchuria was his ancestral home. It was only natural that he should feel greatly interested in what was happening in this territory. Moreover, every undertaking to the Manchu Dynasty contained in the Abdication Agreement had been wantonly violated. The allowance to be paid to him by the State had been cancelled. His private property had been confiscated. He had been treated with studied disrespect by the Kuomintang. And the ancestral tombs had been violated, and no serious attempt made to secure the restoration of the treasures stolen from them.

It was only natural therefore, that when trouble occurred in Manchuria he should follow developments with great attention and wonder whether he was not destined to play some part in an attempt to improve the condition of his ancestral provinces. Emmissaries of the separatist movement called upon him in Tientsin and urged him to proceed to Manchuria. And at last he felt that if he were ever to go he must go forthwith or he might find it impossible to leave.

The possibility of a restoration movement, he said, was obviously known to and feared by General Chiang Kai-shek, who offered temporarily to restore the Conditions of Favourable Treatment if he (P'u-yi) would repudiate it. He had intimated, however, that material considerations would not influence him; that the Republican Government could best fulfill its responsibilities by concerning itself with the welfare of the people, by giving them good government, and by restoring internal peace. If it had Tls. 4,000,000 (the amount of the Emperor's annual pension, as stipulated in the Abdication Agreement) to spend, let it spend that sum on relieving existing poverty in China.

6. When he had decided to leave Tientsin for Manchuria he did not even take the Japanese Consul-General into his confidence.

"Then the story that you were kidnapped and sent to Port Arthur under Japanese escort on a destroyer is not true?"

Mr. P'u-yi, who understands English quite well, threw back his head and roared with laughter. "Kidnapped?" he said, "Kidnapped? No, No."

I told him that that was the version of his departure from Tientsin that was widely current and generally believed, and asked whether I might be told the actual details of his movements, adding that what he had told me up till then was confidential, but that as a matter of historical interest I should like to know exactly what happened when he left Tientsin.

Mr. P'u-yi replied that his movements had had to be kept secret for two reasons: first, because his departure from Tientsin might have been frustrated; secondly, because he would have been in considerable danger of assassination had his whereabouts been revealed.

He left Tientsin just as the trouble between the Japanese and Chinese in that city started, and traveled direct to Yinkow (Newchwang) on the steamer Awachi Maru. He left a letter behind to be delivered to the Japanese Consul-General informing him of the departure, and asking him to afford adequate protection to the Empress (who remained in his residence in the Japanese Concession) when she followed. From Newchwang he proceeded to Tang Kung Tzu (the hot springs between Liaoyang and Tashihchao), where he remained only a couple of days, returning to meet his wife at Port Arthur. She also traveled on an ordinary steamer. The next few weeks were spent at that center, where he amused himself by studying the siege operations in the Russo-Japanese War and visiting the ruins of the former Russian fortifications. He and his wife then returned to Tang Kung Tzu, where they lived quietly until he proceeded to Changchun. When he was convinced that it was his duty to go north and assume the office of Chief Executive, he went straight through to Changchun by train. At no time, in Tientsin, in the Leased Territory, or in Manchuria, was he ever under any restraint, nor was any coercion applied to him.

7. The former Emperor emphasized that I had seen from my own experience how nonsensical the stories told about his position in Changchun were. Here we were, talking without restriction, with only a young Chinese present, who made no attempt to direct the course of conversation, and who only interpreted my remarks and questions when Mr. P'u-yi did not understand them, with no Japanese within hearing, and absolutely no restriction upon the topics discussed. Could I, he asked, really believe that he was virtually a state prisoner under such conditions?

8. I asked his views on the government of Manchoukuo, and he at once replied that he favored the adoption of the Wang Tao doctrine, based upon the teachings of Confucius. "Heaven," he said, "did not divide people into nations, but regarded them all as human beings and desired peace between them, and love. Competition and strife between nations only led to war and intense suffering. Confucius taught that governments should rule honestly, observe the golden rule toward each other, and work for humanity and peace. That crystallized the Oriental spirit. That was the spirit in which Manchoukuo had issued its declaration of independence. We are opposed to racial and national animosities. That is why we call this the Ta Tung (Great Equal) era. We should like to have the friendliest relations with Great Britain and all the other Powers. And we believe that we can contribute towards the realization of world peace. Our domestic policy will aim at making it possible to lead peaceful and happy lives. We shall have no political parties in the new State. They only make for disharmony. We shall do our utmost to show ourselves trustworthy in our foreign relations. I hope that the people of your country (Great Britain) will understand and appreciate our attitude. We shall welcome the investment of their capital in enterprises in Manchoukuo. We shall be pleased to have them come and dwell among us. For many years I had a British tutor (Sir Reginald Johnston), and I therefore acquired some knowledge of British history and civilization and principles. Therefore I have a special interest in fostering friendly relations between Great Britain and Manchoukuo. Your Sovereign, King George, has already been acquainted with my views."

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9. Mr. P'u-yi admitted the gravity of the bandit situation, but said that though recently aggravated by external influences, it was not a new problem and required all to give all the assistance in their power to eliminate this evil. In this connection, he paid a very warm tribute to General Mutō, the Chief of the Japanese delegation to Manchoukuo. Very friendly personal relations had been established between them as a result of General Mutō's recent visit to Changchun to extend his Government's formal recognition to Manchoukuo. And he felt confident that General Mutō would help to smooth over past and present difficulties.

10. Mr. P'u-yi had informed me when I arrived that he would be at my disposal until noon and that he had ordered luncheon to be prepared for me, but that owing to the fact that he was on a diet in consequence of his infected foot, he would not be able to share the meal. He handed me over, however, to his younger brother, the former Prince P'u-chia, and then bade me farewell.

After lunch he once more took me upstairs where he presented me with his latest photograph and bade me revisit him at the earliest opportunity. Almost his last remark was that perhaps I had been able to convince myself by now that he was perfectly happy in his present office.

11. About seventeen months later I again paid a brief visit to Hsinking (Changchun) to be present at the enthronement of Mr. P'u-yi as Emperor of Manchoukuo. The actual ceremony by which he was installed upon the Throne of the earlier members of his Dynasty took place during the morning of March 1, 1934. The Emperor accorded me a private interview on February 28. I found him looking well and obviously pleased at the turn of events. He conversed with me freely for a quarter of an hour, allowed me to take several snapshots of him, and in the belief that I should broadcast a description of the ceremony to Great Britain, gave me a message to the British nation. (The arrangements for the broadcast were cancelled.) As I was leaving, the Emperor placed his hand on my shoulder, saying how pleased he was to see his "old friend", and invited me to come back for a longer talk later.

Further the affiant saith not.

H.G.W. Woodhead

Colony of Hong Kong)
City of Victoria)
Consulate General of the) ss
United States of America)

Colony of Hong Kong)
City of Victoria)

Subscribed and sworn to before me, the undersigned authority, this
20th day of August 1947.

W. D. Boyd
Vice-Counsel of the United States
of America