

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al

-- vs --

ARAKI, Sadao, et al

Sworn Deposition

Deponent ; -- ISHII Laburo

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.

(I) Career--M.P., six times (the Seiyukai Party).

With the formation of a cabinet by Viscount Saito (May, 1933) became councillor of War Ministry, resigned from it about middle of General Hayashi's ministration of the Department; never in government service ever since.

(II) Relation with Gen. ARAKI.

Though acquainted with General ARAKI when he was still a colonel, not so much on intimate terms with him before the organization of the Inukai Cabinet. After the INUKAI Cabinet was formed, often had chats with him as an M.P. of the Seiyukai

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Party. When the SAITO Cabinet was organized, was appointed councillor of war Ministry under Gen. ARAKI, the then Minister, and served under Gen. ARAKI till his resignation in January in the 9th year of SHOWA (1935); remained in the post under Gen. HAYASHI who succeeded to Gen. ARAKI, and resigned in the middle of the service.

(III) Gen. ARAKI's Relation with the SEIYUKAI Party. Account of His Entering the INUKAI Cabinet. The SEIYUKAI Party had had no relation with General ARAKI before he became War Minister. After he entered the INUKAI Cabinet soon after it was organized, though it was natural that the members of the SEIYUKAI Party had some talk with him on government affairs, no special connection could be seen between them as regards the party itself and he had nothing to do with the business of the party. When Gen. ARAKI entered the SEIYUKAI Cabinet, many kinds of rumor were talked about it in these times. But I knew on entering the War Ministry that his entrance into the Cabinet was under quite the same circumstances as when any ordinary minister was appointed out of the Army.

(IV) The Situation Viewed By the SEIYUKAI Party at the Time When the INUKAI Cabinet Was Formed..

The state of affairs was already very serious even before the Manchurian Incident. Opinions prevailed among the nation

disapproval of political parties, protesting against the infirmness of the foreign policy of the government and complaining of the tyranny of Zaibatsu, The prestige of the government was on the decline. Since the outbreak of the Incident, the SEIYUKAI Party wished to solve the Incident rapidly by promoting the positive foreign policy. But it being gradually expanded, the relation with the League of Nations becoming worse and worse, the party conceived an appropriate plan to meet the situation together with the solution of the problem of gold embargo, because it was judged that any ordinary method could no more be adopted. To save the situation, the party therefore decided to present a united front plan and some claimed that coalition cabinet should be formed with the Minseito Party with the unsuccessful result of opposed opinions of both parties. It was rather because each party was keeping its own countenance, and the MINSEITO Party became opposed to it later. This caused the general resignation of the WAKATSUKI Cabinet of the MINSEITO and then the INUKAI Cabinet succeeded it.

(V) Policies Adopted By the INUKAI CABINET.

Taking the general situation into consideration, the SEIYUKAI Cabinet, with its gold embargo policy, decided to settle the Manchurian Incident as quickly as possible. Not only did it pursue the course to that end by suppressing battles in Manchuria and thereby adjusting the international

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affairs, it also had to deal with the Chinchou problem which was then in a high state of tension--the fate both Japanese residents and army were dependent upon it.

(VI) HOW WAS THE RELATION BETWEEN GENERAL ARAKI AND MR. INUKAI?

There had been no special personal relation between the two till the establishment of the INUKAI Cabinet. After the birth of the Cabinet, as the above-mentioned government principles must be carried out by the activities of the Army, the Premier put his trust in the General and asked his cooperation. The Premier, himself the admitted authority on Chinese affairs, seemed to have his own plan in his mind. General ARAKI, also respected Mr. INUKAI as a man of character and learning.

He was earnest about measures to be taken; and he told his candid opinions as he was very straightforward in character. It is believed that both opened their hearts. Mr. INUKAI had a deep knowledge of ink-stones, calligraphy and swords, and Mr. ARAKI was also a lover of these. They had the same taste.

A few days before the assassination of Premier INUKAI, they are supposed to have promised to make an evening of it with the object of talking about them and the current situation.

When the May 15th Incident happened, Minister ARAKI lamented deeply over his death saying he felt so sorry that

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the assassination was caused by the reckless participation of cadets inspite of young officers' dispassionate attitude and their no joining in.

(VII) Regulation of Chinchou District, the Shanghai Incident, and Setting Up Of "Manchoukuo"

When these happened, I was not a councillor yet and so I am not at all sure what the inner state of matters in the army was. But as I was a member of the party and also an M.P., I have some informations: By the regulation of Chinchou District, the crisis of the fate of Japanese residents there was tided over escaped. The Shanghai incident came to an end. It was entirely due to the firm resolution of the War Minister. The party was no doubt satisfactory with it. There were, however, some among the members of the party who complained of the decisive measures taken by the minister when he carried out complete withdrawal of the troops renouncing the rights stipulated in the truce pact. When the question arose to set up a state in Northeastern China, Premier INUKAI assumed a cautious attitude. But owing to the very earnest wish of the people there, he regarded it an inevitable step to maintain peace and order by establishing a new state. Especially, with Mr. Henry Pu Yi as Chief Executive Manchuria gained a little peace, so the Premier wished the newly-founded state to become

consolidated so as not to be disturbed again. In this connection, he said the Minister of War was of the same opinion as his.

(VIII) Main Events Happened While Taking Office as Councillor.

(I) Recognition Of "Manchoukuo".

(a) "Manchoukuo" was born during the administration of the INUKAI Cabinet, and the public opinions took a good deal of interest in the question of its recognition.

The policy adopted by the Saito Cabinet was the same with that of the preceding cabinet. It being to settle the situation and to harmonize affairs both at home and abroad, War Minister ARAKI who remained in office in the succeeding cabinet considered that maintenance of peace and order in Manchuria and reconciliation of international relations to be two important points. He did his best to reduce the field of operations to ease hostilities. He always asked the General Staff Office and the Foreign Ministry to follow this policy. Public opinion was aroused against it. In the capacity of War Minister Mr. ARAKI often told me as follows. In our country various affairs followed the March Incident. It was due to our poor administration at home and abroad for a long time. Therefore it was difficult to settle them. The Manchurian Incident was also developing into different phases. Under such circumstances any disturbances in the

country should be prevented. For this purpose the public should fully recognize the situation and be prudent. Paying special attention upon Japan's international relations, he advised us all that we should be prudent. Recognition was resolved the sixty-second session in June. KODAMA, Yuji of the SEIYUKAI Party, YAMAJI, Joji of the MINSEITO Party and KAMEI, Kanichiro of the Shakai-Taishu (Social Mass) Party made speeches representing their respective parties.

(b) Residents of the front line in the actual spot asked the government to recognize the newly founded political power, for in order to keep peace and order there it was necessary to strengthen it. The informations in this regard often reached the government political parties and the Army.

(c) Taking into account the intentions of the people at the actual spot, the Diet, the Foreign, Navy and War ministers, the Government tried to make a plan in consideration of Japan's relation with the League of Nations.

In view of the general tendency, the Army, too, agreed with it on condition that peace and order there should not be disturbed. General agreement was reached. In August, the cabinet conference made decision and it was publicly announced at home and abroad. And at length on Sept. 15, the state was recognized. Concerning this, Foreign Minister Viscount Uchida gave his opinion at the sixty-third session of the Diet on August 25.

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As an international problem this should be handled by the Foreign Office but in point of keeping peace and order it had to be treated by the War Ministry. There had been business negotiations between the two. Something like a committee was formed chiefly by the Finance and other Ministries with the object of deliberating measures. The Chief Secretary of the Cabinet was responsible for its business. And moreover the War Minister exchanged opinions with the General Staff. Office with a view to making steps perfect for peace and order. Their views agreed and finally it was realized. The plan was presented to the cabinet council by the Foreign Minister and was decided.

(2) Regulation of Jehol And Tangku Treaty.

(a) After the recognition of "Manchoukuo", the Army took part principally in maintenance of peace and order in Manchuria within the limits of the protocol agreed between Japan and "Manchoukuo".

(b) The government authorities seemed to have intended to solve the problem of stabilizing Jehol as a diplomatic question. However, the unfavorable attitude of the League of Nations made Cheng Hasueh-liang assume anti-Japanese and anti-"Manchoukuo" actions influenced by the League's atmosphere.

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As the result, persecutions against Japanese residents occurred everywhere and the situation in Jehol became very dangerous. Military actions by the combined troops of Japan and "Manchoukuo" based on the protocol were again taken in February in the 8th year of Showa (1934), and peace was restored after about two weeks time. I am not well acquainted with the actions.

(c) The War Minister made an effort so that the incident might not be expanded, by closely keeping in touch with the Headquarters of the General Staff and successfully prevented it from expanding into the Great Wall beyond the Province of Jehol.

(d) In a little while, hostilities were suspended by the Tangku Treaty, and after that no engagements could not be witnessed both formally and practically.

After he entered the cabinet, it was the final object of the Minister of War to put an end to the battles as soon as possible. He forgot his own comforts in settling the Manchurian problems till a truce treaty was concluded.

(3) Japan's Withdrawal from the League of Nations.

(a) The Minister of War took great pains to keep harmonious relations between nations and, considering the critical situation of that time, he hoped to attain his object by moderating the heated public opinions.

(b) At the beginning of the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident, something went wrong between Japan and the League. Bombardment of Chinchou during the WAKATSUKI Cabinet propaganda disadvantageously done by Chang Hseuh-liang against Japan caused much misunderstanding among those two were not so familiar with Manchurian circumstances.

When, the Shanghai Incident occurred, the Army was very sincere in settling it but the attitude of the League was unfavorable for us and endeavours of the Foreign Ministry in this connection were greatly wanted by the War Minister.

(c) While the Army was busy handling matters in perturbed Jehol district, a general meeting of the League was held. Both assertion and opinions of the Japanese plenipotentiary could be accepted by none, and prior to the solution of affairs in Jehol, Japan was obliged to withdraw from the League.

(d) The opinion held by War Minister was only to remain in the League as far as possible and to do our best of get it to appreciate the true motive of our country. Mr. Yosuke Matsuoka, ambassador plenipotentiary, had held this opinion before he left Japan for Geneva, and the cabinet council had supported it, too. Even after Japan's withdrawal, the War Minister hoped that some counter-measure would be taken within the limited two years.

(4) The Line of Policy and Its Execution By the War Minister.

(a) At the end of May, the Tangku Treaty was concluded and military operation were ceased at last. But to our regret, Japan had withdrawn from the League, so since then the Minister of War worked hard to build up a great principle to bring forth everlasting peace in the East.

(b) In that summer he seemed to have made various preparations for it. He often exchanged opinions with the aged Finance Minister Korekiyo Takahashi.

Talking of the Finance Minister in this connection, he was once President of the Seiyukai Party, at one time became Prime Minister, and he was a well-known authority on U.S.A. Though he had reached an old age of more than 80 then, he was an influential vice-Premier in the SAITO Cabinet and a man of sincere and earnest character.

(c) Mr. ARAKI was then in his 50's and very much younger than the Finance Minister. Stories are often told by the cabinet ministers who were party men that those two ministers were often seen debating in earnest, but they sympathised with, and trusted in, each other. Later, when Mr. Takahashi was assassinated in the February 26th Incident General ARAKI, hearing that, felt sorry for his misfortune and said if he had kept an important position in the Army at that time, misunderstandings would not have been allowed to cause.

(d) From the end of September to the beginning of October, the War Minister proposed to hold a Five Minister Gathering consisting of War, Navy, Foreign, Finance and Prime Ministers. General principles on the questions of coalition with other nations and of national defense, were discussed and determined. Its first 'communique' was published in newspapers, I think.

(e) Then early in December, soon after a military manoeuvre, the second Five Minister Gathering was held. This time, Ministers of Home, Agriculture, War Finance together with Premier participated in it. That was also proposed by the War Minister, and the chief object of the meeting was to relieve the agricultural districts which was in the most difficult condition. After about ten conferences the general principle was decided. Because the Minister of War was himself a proposer, he was asked by the Premier to take part in the meeting regarding agricultural administration, I hear.

(f) He then wished to hold meeting to discuss national policies on the internal affairs and thoughts. If they could be decided, he was to present them in the coming session of the Diet. He intended to propose a peace conference to the world with object of lightening the difficulties in the East and West and clearing the dark clouds away that were hanging over at home and abroad. His basic suggestions of emergency

policies he presented to the Premier on his resignation clearly revealed this intention of his.

(g) As far as I know, Japan's armament at that time deserved no special mention, because she was then faced with the emergency.

The Minister had his own opinion about war. He thought sense of morality in the Army more important than general armaments. Though the Army on the whole was not necessarily satisfied, in the 7th and 8th fiscal year of SHOWA (1932-33) not a little sum of money was divided to the Navy by his courageous decision. It was not from the agreement on armament but from the political point of view, for Navy Ministers twice to resign owing to the trouble caused by the Budget.

It was chiefly to prevent such resignation in view of the situation that he took such a step. The Navy Minister in the 7th year of Showa was Admiral Okada and in the 8th year it was Admiral Osumi.

(IX) WHOLE ACCOUNTS OF THE WAR MINISTER'S RESIGNATION.

(a) To determine fundamental principle of the international relations, calling a world peace conference had been War Minister's ardent wish but he fell seriously ill with pneumonia from January in the 9th year of Showa (1934).

He was unable to attend the Diet session after his illness and as he thought delay in establishing national policies might cause a misfortune to the Empire he selected his successor. Both the government authorities and the Army begged him to stay, but his intention was too strong to allow himself to remain in his office. It was his belief that the more the establishment of national policies was delayed, the more unfavourable the situation would be.

(b) Some cabinet ministers visited him asking to remain but it was in vain, for the reason mentioned above. A rumor had it that many troublesome questions were put him from the political parties and that it was the reason why he resigned. I dare say that it was an utterly groundless rumor, I, myself a member of the political party, can certify it.

(X) Though Mr. ARAKI had no connection with political parties, he respected parliamentary politics. He always asked me, who was a party man, whether or not there was any way to make election clean and just, for corrupt election would deteriorate the nation. He respected discussions in a Diet session, which was in accordance with the august intentions of Emperor MEIJI when He said that all measures of government should be decided by public opinion. Several times he attended the House of Representatives and asserted

that administration would be made smooth by proper application of parliamentarism. He was ready to answer even to ill-natured interpellations till the interpellators could fully understand. He opined that Japan's fundamental policies both internal and external, which had been at a deadlock, should be developed through the House and that in this way the House could recover its credit. On account of his illness, however, he could not afford to do so. But the opportunity should not be lost. With a view to getting national policies discussed in the Diet session, he recommended his successor to recuperate himself. That was why he resigned. In those days his absence in office on account of illness was admitted both by the Cabinet and the House. So he could have remained in post.

(XI) Interpretation of BUDO (Military Way)

I presided over a fencing-hall where many young men and children attended for Japanese fencing. I often asked Gen. ARAKI to come and make an address at the hall. On such occasions he always emphasized that BUDO (Military Way) aims at cultivation of one's own virtues. It should not be deteriorated into brutal force, and its mysteries lie

in defeating an enemy without weapons, or without staining one's sword with the enemy's blood. After the outbreak of the Pacific War, when he heard that the remains of five members of our special attack corps at Sydney were politely sent home, he was much pleased saying that there still flourished BUSHIDO (Chivalry Way) in Australia, and told them all that the BUSHIDO should be encouraged all the more in our country as it was on the decline.

A moving picture, entitled "Japan in Emergency" was produced while I was a Army councillor. It was based on his speech made at the request of the MAINICHI Press. His intentions lay in teaching our national way of benevolence and the fundamental character of the Imperial Army, let alone cognition of the critical situation. I enjoyed the movie with those who attended my fencing-hall and it was by this picture that most of us realized for the first time that the Japanese forces should be a moral existence.

(XII) On Guiding Young Officers and Other Military Personnel.

(a) From the beginning of the Showa Era, high-spirited young officers of the Army often visited their superiors without reserve and appealed their solicitudes them. General ARAKI always loved those young officers, Under these circumstances, he listened to their opinions with close

attention and earnestly endeavoured to convince them of doing their duties and warned against rash actions. He did so with warm sympathy.

(b) Especially after the plots for assassination were hatched one after another among the people like that of the "Ketsumeidan"--Blood-Union League, he was greatly anxious about this state of things and he did his best to keep an eye upon young officers of the Army and to guide them. Publicly as well as privately, he made them not to go astray. He asked even us to persuade them when we met them. It was evidently one of the results of his endeavours that none of them took part in the May 15th Incident. Some radical elements, however, blamed him on grounds that the General's moderate attitude was too lukewarm.

(c) He also criticized the world history of the past that were full of illegal actions and aggressions, from his point of view that the Army was no other than a moral existence. Referring to World War I, he warned the Army for the future. This caused the high-spirited youngsters of the Right to attack him for the reason that he was too weak-minded.

(d) These columns had come to be directed against the General, and some of them were rather knavish. He was isolated from the current of the time. His character was

such that he did not pay so much attention to them, taking no special means against his opponents. His acquaintances became rather irritated about it.

(XI) The Other Accounts.

(a) After he resigned from his post, I often visited him and asked his opinion about the situation. He was opposed to the expansion of the China Incident and disagreeable with the Tripartite Pact. He was very anxious about the fate of the Empire saying it might be reduced more and more to a dilemma.

(b) When the South Sea Islands were occupied by the Imperial forces, hearing the over-production of gum, he said that we should like to have such grace as to present the enemy with amount of gum needed by them, together with invalid war prisoners when they were sent back. This, he said, was after the example shown very long ago in our history by the late Kenshin Uesugi, one of the war lords of the Japanese feudal times who sent salt to his rival Shingen Takeda. By this, in his opinion, the pride of the Japanese Army and the true merit of the Empire could be shown brilliantly. Once the war had begun, it was needless to say we must fight it out and win. Through admirable action of the Army he wanted to see the real aspects of Japan as of yore justified before God and man rather than victory. He

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spoke it boldly to the public strough emphasized it in his private talk.

On this 27 day of Aug. 1947

At Kamakura

DEPONENT /S/ ISHII Saburo (seal)

I, AROKI Teisuke, 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 same place

Witness: /S/ ARAKI, Teisuke (seal)

OATH

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

/S/ ISHII Saburo (seal)

極東國際軍事裁判所

亞米利加合衆國其他

對

荒木 貞 夫 其他

宣 誓 供 述 書

供 述 者 石 井 三 郎

自分儀我國ニ行ハルル方式ニ從ヒ先ツ別紙ノ通り宣誓ヲ爲シタル上次
ノ如ク供述致シマス

一 經歷 代議士六回政友會齋藤内閣成立と共に（一九三三、五）陸軍參與官となり林陸軍大臣の半頃辭任し其の後官途に就かない。

二 荒木大將との關係

大佐時代より面識はありたるも犬養内閣成立前までは懇意ではなかつた、犬養内閣成立後政友會代議士として屢々面談した齋藤内閣と共に荒木大臣の下に陸軍參與官となり昭和九年（一九三五）荒木大將が大員辭職迄其の下に働いた其の後引續き林陸軍大臣の下に參與官の職にあつたが途中辭任した。

三 荒木大將と政友會との關係と入閣の事情

荒木大將が陸軍大臣辭任迄は政友會は荒木大將とは没交渉であつた犬養政友會内閣が成立し荒木大將の入閣後は自然政務では政友會の人々も荒木大將と面談もしたが黨としては何等關係なく又黨務に就いては全然無關係であつた、荒木大將が政友會内閣に入られた事に就いては時節柄色々デマが飛んだが、通常の軍部大臣入閣の場合と少しも異なる所がなかつた事は自分が陸軍省に入つてから知り得た處である。

四 政友會より見たる犬養内閣成立當時の時局について滿洲事變發生前より國民は政黨反對外交軟弱財閥横暴等を唱へて世相は頗る險惡であつて政府の威信は乏しくなつた、滿洲事變勃發以來政友會としても積極的に外交を振作し事變の急速なる解決を希望して居たが、益々擴大し

て聯盟との關係も悪くなり到底尋常の方法では解決し難いと判断し金輸出禁止問題と合はせて其の善處をなすの策を樹て、居た。そこで時局收拾の爲、舉國一致の態度をとること、し一時は民政黨との合同内閣論も出たが兩黨の政黨の面目よりする立場から意見必ずしも一致せず後には民政黨も之に同意しなかつたので止んだが、民政黨は偶々此の問題が因をなして若槻内閣は總辭職して犬養内閣が成立した。

五 犬養内閣の取りし方針に就いて

政友會内閣は金輸出禁止政策と共に滿洲事變は大局より判断して速かに政府の方針を定め兎に角滿洲の戦亂を速かに鎮定して國際間の諸問題を調整し事件解決を爲すの方針を決定したるのみならず當時緊迫を告げて居た錦州問題を處理せざれば居留民も軍も危険なので之が處置をとる事にして居た。

六 荒木大將と犬養氏との關係如何

兩氏は内閣成立迄は何の關係もなかつたが内閣成立以來前述の政府の方針を實行するには陸軍の活動に依らねばならぬので、犬養氏は荒木大將を信頼して其の善處を要望してゐた、そして自身は亦支那邊として胸中に畫策する所もあつた様だ。荒木氏も犬養氏の人柄と其の學識を尊敬し又大將の性格より率直に意見も談じて善後策に熱心になつて居たので、双方打ち解けて居た。丁度犬養首相の遭難の數日前硯書道

丁、乃劍について首相は造詣深かつたので其方面の趣味ある荒木大將と一夕ゆつくり之等の清談旁々時局をも話さうと約束して居た程である、五。一五事件の時荒木大臣は陸軍の青年將校は落着いてゐて之に参加しなかつたのに士官學校の生徒が加はつたのは残念だと語り犬養氏の死を非常に惜んで居た。

七、錦州肅正及上海事變滿洲建國當時に就いて

自分は其時はまだ參與官でなかつたから陸軍内部の事情は知らぬ。唯黨及び議會を通じて錦州地方の肅正により漸く居留民の危機を脱した事及上海事變では、陸相の英斷で事件の解決した事には黨も非常に喜んで居たが、停戰協定により、權利ありしに拘らず全部撤兵を敢行した事に就いては政黨内一部には陸相は餘りの決斷とて多少不滿のものもあつた。

滿洲建國の情況切迫した時には犬養總理は慎重であつたが、現地民意獨熱烈であつたので、治安維持を已むを得ぬものと、清儀氏の執政就任と共に滿洲が多少小康を得たので再び治安の亂れざる様其強化を希望して居た此點に就ては陸軍大臣も同様であつたと屢々語つて居た。

八、參與官に就任後の重なる出來事に就いて

イ、滿洲國承認

犬養内閣中に滿洲國は生れたが、世論は相當承認問題に熱心となつ

居た、そして齋藤内閣に至つても犬養内閣と同様時局を速かに收拾して内外を平靜にするにあつたから齋藤内閣に留任した。荒木陸軍大臣は滿洲治安の確保と國際協調の二つを中心として考慮し兎に角早く兵亂をなくする爲に全力を擧げ作戰の擴大を避くるに努め參謀本部と外務省には常に之を註文して居た。一方輿論が相當強硬になつたが陸軍大臣としての荒木氏は屢々私に國內に三月事件後起つた各種の事件は長い間の内外の政治の貧困より來つた事であるので、之を鎮めるは容易でない。滿洲事變も次から次へと變化して行く、此情勢を國內に騒擾を起さない様に收拾して行かねばならぬからよく時局の認識をせしめそれとなく一般を自重せしむる様にせねばならぬと苦衷を訴へ國際關係に深く心をとめつゝ其の自重すべきを皆に指示して居た。其内輿論は承認促進の傾向をとり議會も又輿論の動向を見て大勢之に傾き六月の第六十二議會には院議を以て承認の決議をした。政友會からは、兒玉右に民政黨よりは山道裏一、社會大衆黨よりは龜井貫一郎氏が代表演説した。

第一線現地居留民よりは治安確保の爲現政權を強化するの必要がある。るので承認を求めて來て政府にも政黨にも軍にも此の情報は屢々あつた。

政府は現地議會、外務、海軍、陸軍等の意圖を察し又別に國際聯盟との關

係も願慮して策案を研究して居たが、陸軍も一般の形勢から唯治安を亂さぬと云ふ一點を堅持して之を主張し一般意見の一致を見、八月閣議決定中外に聲明、九月十五日承認となつた。此點に就いては第六十三議會にて八月二十五日内田外相は所信を報告しました。此問題は國際問題としては外務省が主任であり治安確保としては主として陸軍の任であつたので、事務的には兩省の間に接衝が重ねられ又各關係省特に大藏省を中心としての委員會の様なもので善後策を練つた内閣書記官長が事務關係の責任には中心となつて居た陸軍大臣は參謀本部との意見を交換して治安の方策に遺算なき様にして居た、閣議には外務省より提案して決定となつたと記憶する。

熱河の肅正と塘沽協定

滿洲國承認後は陸軍は主として日滿議定書の範圍に於て滿洲の治安確保に任じて居た

政府は外交問題にて遠かに熱河地方の安定を解決せんとして居た様だが國際聯盟の日本に對する空氣が悪いので張學良は之を利用して反滿抗日を煽つて居て日本人に對する迫害が到る處に迄り熱河も頗る危険になつたので日滿議定書に惹づいて日滿聯合の軍で昭和八年二月（一九三四年）再び軍事行動が取られ二週間許りで鎮定した作戦の事は私はよく知らぬ。

陸軍大臣は參謀本部と密接に連繫して事件の擴大豫防に力を盡くし熱河省より關内への進出を喰止めた。

間もなく塘沽協定により停戦し爾來戰鬥行爲は形式、實質共に完全に止んだ、陸相は就任以來一日も遠かに戦亂終息を目標として居たから此停戦に導く迄の間の滿洲の處理には寢食を忘れて努力して居た。

八 國際聯盟離脱

陸軍大臣は國際協調には常に苦心をし時局が時局であるから輿論の激化を緩和しつゝ之が善處をせんとして居た。

併し滿洲事變勃發當初より聯盟との間には多少行違ひがあり若槻内閣

時代の錦州の爆撃其の他張學良側の宣傳に依りて滿洲の事情に通ぜざるものゝうちには誤解が多くなり更に上海事件には充分に陸軍が誠意を示したるに拘らず國際聯盟の空氣は悪いので陸軍大臣は頻りに外務の奮斗を切望懇談して居た。

一方熱河地方の悪化で陸軍は忙殺せられて居る間に聯盟總會となり全滿の主張や意見も通らず熱河肅正の解決に先ちて日本は已むなく聯盟を離脱することになつた。

陸軍大臣は飽くまで聯盟に踏み止り其の理解を得るに力を致すべき意見を持つてゐた。松岡全權出發の際にも全權は飽く迄踏み止る意見を持ち閣議も皆此意見を堅持して居た。離脱後も陸軍大臣は尙二ヶ年余の餘裕あれば其間に善處方策を講ずるに望みを囑して居た。

二、陸軍大臣の其の後の方針と実行

五月末塘沽協定が出來兵力使用は漸く止んだが強念ながら聯盟とは袂を分つた後でもあり陸軍大臣は爾來大方針を決定して永遠和平の策を樹つるに苦心して居た。

夏季は其の準備をして居たらしく休養もせず高橋老蔵を説き頻りに方策を練つて居た。こゝで關係があるから高橋老蔵の事を話して置くが、蔵相は政友會總裁もし總理大臣もした米田通であり八十歳の高令で隠然たる齋藤内閣の副總理格であつて我輩を眞面目の人であつた

つたが英断で七。八の兩年度共海軍に少からぬ額を割いた之は兵備の協定
ではなく政治上よりのもので當時海軍大臣が二回共豫算の事で辭職すると
いふので時局柄之を阻止する爲であつた、當時の海軍大臣は七年度は岡田
大将、八年度は大角大将であつた

九、陸相解任の事情
國際の根本を決し世界平和會議迄を意氣込んで居たのに中途にて九年一月
一日より肺炎となり病後議會へ臨む事が出来ず國策樹立の遲延は國家の大
事たりとて後任を選定した、政府も軍部も留任をすゝめたが國策樹立が遲
るれば政局は如何になるか知れぬとて決意堅く解任を執行した。
内閣よりは二、三の閣僚慰留に來たが右の次第で意を翻さなかつた、政黨
側から種々の難題を持ちかけたといふが如きは全然根據のない事は政黨内
部の者として断言し得る

十、荒木氏は全然政黨には關係がないが議會は尙重して居た唯腐敗した選舉による事は人心を悪化する、之れだけを明朗にする方法はなにかと常に政黨人たる私に語られた。又議會の言論を重んじ議會は明治天皇の萬機公論に決するの御趣旨であり何回か議會に臨み之が運用を適切にするは政治を容易ならしむると主張し随分皮肉な質問が出て喜んで相手にされ理解し行く様に努めて居られた、辭任の原因も何とか行詰れる内外の根本策を議會を通して打開したし之によつて議會の信用も恢復出来るとの意見を洩らされ病氣の爲之が出来なくなつたので此時期を失つてはならぬとて國策を議會を通じて斷言して貰ふといふ意から後任をすゝめて靜養されたものである、當時病氣缺席の事は議會も内閣も承認したのだから辭任はしなくてもすんだのである。

十一、武道の見解

私は劍道の道場の主宰してゐたから若者や子供が多く出入りして荒木大將の臨場を乞ふた事が幾度もある。其の折々常に武道は暴力に陥つてはならぬ。刀に皿を見ずして勝たねばならぬと無勝手流が劍を用ひずして勝つ奥意を話され武道は已れの徳を磨く人の修業であると教へられた。太平洋戦争後、シドニーの五勇士の遺骨が丁重に返されたといふことを聞きて歐洲に武士道ありと喜ばれ今や我國は衰へんとする武士道

に更に磨きをかけて行かねばならぬと皆示された。
 又一「非常時日本」といふ映画は私の陸軍參與官の當時出来たものであり
 ますが、毎日新聞の依頼で滴説をされたものであります。非常時の認
 識もさることながら我國の仁悉の道と我が建軍の本質を教へねばならな
 いと云はれて居りました。出来上つた後私も亦道場に入入する者も見
 ました、之で始めて日本の軍隊は道德的存在であらねばならぬと悟つた
 ものが多くありました。

十二、青年將校其他軍の指導に就て

青年將校の元氣のよいものは陸軍高官を無遠慮に訪問して苦衷を訴へる
 のが昭和初頭より多くなつた。荒木大將は若者を愛するため此等團氣の間
 によく其の意見を聴かずにはならぬ事を流情を以て説き聞かせた。
 を守り尊擧してはならぬ事を流情を以て説き聞かせた。
 就中民間に血盟團等の暗殺事件が起りたる以來は一層苦慮し先づ青年將
 校の監視指導に力を盡くし時に之を公私兩方面より誤らざる如く指導せし
 め私共にも青年將校に遭ふた時はよく説き聞かせて呉れと話されました
 五。一五事件に青年將校の参加がなかつたのもその一つのしるしである
 併し過激分子からは其の穩健な態度を生ぬるしとして種々中傷されて居
 ました。

又軍は道徳的存在として建てられたものだからとて非合法又は侵略等の過去の世界史に批判を加へ歐洲大戦の例を引用して深く戒めて居た、之も左翼の元氣な若者から諷らずとされて來た原因である。之等が將來荒木大將に對する中傷となり相當惡辣なものもあつて時流より孤立せしめられた原因である。荒木大將は其の性格上余り之も氣にせず之等の反對の人々に對して別的手段をとらず平然として捨て、置いたので知己の人々は、はらくした位である。

十三、其他

一、大臣辭任後も絶えず訪問して大將の時局に對する意見も聞いて居たが時局の推移につれ常に又那學變の擴大は反對だし三國同盟にも同意せず、そして段々國家は不幸に陥るといふて非常に心配して居られた。一、又南洋占領當時「ゴム」の過剰を聞き、上杉謙信の故智に倣ひ敵側に對し病弱の俘虜と共に敵の困つてゐる所のゴムを送つてやる位の氣品が欲しい。こゝに皇軍の一面目も日本の眞値も見せる事が出來よう。戦となりし以上は勝たねばならぬが然し勝敗よりも我等の立派な行動により天地に堪らざる言ながらの日本の姿を見度いものであると大體に一般に語り盛談會の席上などでも強く話して居られた。

昭和二十二年（一九四七年）八月二十七日 於

鎌倉市材木座三二七番地

供 証 者 石 井 三 郎

右ハ當立會人ノ面前ニテ宣誓シ且ツ署名捺 印シタルコトヲ證明シマス

同 日 於

立 會 人 荒 木 貞 亮

善
良心ニ從ヒ眞實ヲ述ベ何事ヲモ獻秘セズ又何事ヲモ附加セザルコトヲ

宣

善

書

署名捺印

石井

三郎