

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al.

-VS-

ARAKI, Sadao, et al.

Basic Suggestions for the Emergency by ARAKI sadao,
January 20th, 1934.

His Excellency the Premier,
Viscount Minoru SAITO.

20th January, 1934

Your Excellency,

It is a matter of great congratulation for the Empire that Your Excellency and the members of the Cabinet are all in good health and are performing the important mission of being advisors to the Imperial Throne in order to cope with the present critical situation of our country.

At this grave moment I fell ill a fact, which fills me with trepidation concerning His Majesty; it also makes me ashamed of myself before Your Excellency and to the members of the Cabinet who are rendering important service as advisors to the Imperial Throne. I further feel ashamed of myself before all the people of this country.

Please accept my heartfelt gratitude for the valuable consideration that Your Excellency has extended to me while I was confined to bed. Fortunately, I am recovering day by day, and since yesterday I am permitted to meet a limited number of visitors. At present I am not conscious of any unusual symptoms. In fact, I feel I am greatly recovering my physical strength every day; but the doctor in attendance has advised me to take another four weeks rest cure, much to my disappointment.

In view of the present state of affairs, I am not inclined to idle my time away, more so when I consider the importance of the coming session of the Diet where several important military problems, including the Military Budget Bill as the most conspicuous issue, are to be debated. This very important Diet Session which deals with the outstanding problems of the day am I unable to attend --unable, at least, with the present condition of my health, for the former half of the session of the House of Representatives when the deliberation on the Budget Bill is to take place; I feel I am derelicting my duty as an advisor to the Throne

on one hand, and as a Cabinet Minister to cope with the momentous nature of the coming Diet on the other, and so while appreciating the sympathetic consideration extended to me by Your Excellency, by members of the Cabinet, by the members of the Diet and others, I am not disposed to stay in my post under the circumstances, and, furthermore, I consider that the most proper way for me to deal with the important session of the Diet under the present emergency situation would be to recommend a suitable person to take over my post and let him fulfil the task of advisor to the Imperial Throne. In these circumstances, I now solicit that Your Excellency will kindly accept my resignation and will submit the same to the Throne.

In tendering my resignation, I feel exceedingly sorry for Finance Minister TAKAHASHI and Home Minister YAMAMOTO, who, despite their advanced ages and not too good health, exert their utmost day and night to achieve their mission as Ministers of State. I offer my most profound apology to these gentlemen;

Next I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to those who, since the INUKAI Cabinet, have been my fellow Cabinet members for the past two years and also to those who have been with me in the present cabinet for the past one and half years; all of these gentlemen have kindly supported me through the various difficult problems that I was confronted with during those periods. I sincerely pray for their very good health and their successful activities in the future.

The present situation of Japan, both internally and externally, may appear in different ways to those who look at it from different angles, but if I may be allowed to tender my own appreciation, I firmly believe that this is not an emergency situation from a mere phraseological point of view, but a truly critical juncture at which the fate of our Empire is solely at stake. Opinions seem to differ among the general public as to whether or not a crisis in Japan will result, but real important affairs of a State are apt to arise without even a day's notice and my humble opinion is that a nation must be ready at all times, morally and materially, to avoid any possible portentous trouble and to secure a basis for her further development. This precaution, I may add, has been necessary throughout all ages.

From this viewpoint, I am not inclined to believe that we can afford to take a rose-coloured view of things. In fact, the potential danger of a nation is often made an actual one when people try to avoid tackling difficult problems and seek to comfort themselves by taking a light view of matters. Ill-informed though I am, this is how I feel when I trace back the history of the varied fortune of races.

I do not believe it a far-fetched opinion or an intentionally created pessimism if we forecast unseen difficulties in the immediate future of our country. On the contrary, I trust this is the very moment when national unity is most urgently required to bring about the prosperity of the Empire.

To cope with this important situation, I have in fact already expressed my views on various occasions, including that of the Five Minister Conference. However, as I regard it as a question of vital importance, I take the liberty of making my further suggestion, though it may partially overlap what I said before, under a separate cover, and solicit Your Excellency's valuable consideration over the future of Japan and that you kindly put it into practice.

It has not entirely slipped my notice that some

people are filled with misgivings concerning the attitude of the military authorities toward international problems. To this I may say that our attitude has been consistent and rigid in the past, and will remain so in the future, vis-a-vis those whose ideology and views on national polity are not reconcilable with the character of the national polity of our Empire. However, with my poor knowledge of international relations and also in an endeavour to maintain as close contact as possible with the relative branches of government authorities, I have been exerting what little service I could toward promoting our position among the powers and their confidence in us, explaining to them wherever possible the principle of the foundation of our Empire in connection with the national policies and principles of the present. My intention in doing so has been to seek either implicitly or explicitly for friends among the powers so that the Empire may not be reduced to a state of international isolation. I hope that Your Excellency will render your assistance in realizing closer relations between the foreign and military authorities, with whose cooperation, Japan may maintain her present superior position among the international communities, and her rightful claim may be duly complied with.

I am afraid I have not expressed myself quite clearly, on account of my being confined to bed, but I hope Your Excellency will kindly surmise what I intended to say, and will adopt my humble suggestions.

There are some more matters that I should very much like to allude to, but I have already exhausted myself and am not able to continue any further. Please accept my apology for having had to dictate this letter to another person instead of writing it myself.

Before I close, I wish to tender again my profound gratitude to Your Excellency and the members of the Cabinet, who have given me the most valuable guidance and direction in various matters. My sincere wish is that Your Excellency will be very careful of your health and will accomplish your great mission as adviser to the Imperial Throne.

I shall have the pleasure of expressing further views of mine when I had the honour of personally seeing you upon recovery from my illness.

Kindly give my best regards to all the members of Your Excellency's Cabinet.

I remain, Your Excellency,

Your obedient servant

Sgd
Sadao ARAKI

C E R T I F I C A T E

- (A) A letter of Sadao ARAKI dated 20th January 1934, addressed to His Excellency the Premier Viscount Minoru SAITO.
- (B) Top Secret No. 20 - Basic Suggestions for Emergency Policy.

This is to certify that (A) mentioned in the above is a copy of a letter which War Minister ARAKI dictated to me, who was then his secretary, on January 20th when he was confined to bed. When this letter was dictated to me, I had it transcribed by a clerk and together with a copy of (B) mentioned in the above, which was completed in October of the previous year, it was handed over to Lieutenant-General Heisuke YANAGAWA, Vice-Minister of War, who, as an emissary of War Minister ARAKI presented them to Premier SAITO. I further certify that these are the true copies of the above-mentioned documents and that I have kept them in my hands since then until today.

Dated on August 1st, 1946

At No. 1252, 5-chome, Nishi Nakanobu,
Ebara-ku, T OKYO.

Signed

Masami MAEDA

It is a matter of urgency at present to inspire the people with the moral sense of our Empire and to reveal at home and abroad the essential qualities of its culture by means of perfecting its national power based on nation wide harmony, and moreover, to aim at strengthening the recognition of our national structure and furthering the peace and security of our national life internally, and to expedite the establishment of peace in East Asia and the Pacific externally.

Due to the international crises marking the 10th year of Showa (1935) and to the general tendency toward renovation running high among the jurisdictional courts and also among other circles, several unfavourable social trends are expected to be revealed in the proceedings of trials and in other aspects of social life, especially in public speeches, etc., and these are liable to produce general unrest among the people and among rural communities in particular.

Combined with the disturbance in educational circles and the unrest in the labor field will be aggravated and there is a fear that some, if not all of the army and navy personnel may be influenced by these unfavourable conditions and be led into restlessness.

The general situation at present seems to be in apparent tranquility, but it is my opinion that it would be impossible for the government to tide over the real difficult situation, both internal and external, unless means are devised completely to dispel the prevailing unrest in public feeling.

Now that these tendencies have gathered strength discord and unrest refuse to be driven away by any ordinary or mediocre measures.

I really think the affairs of state of Japan should be a matter of religious service. The fundamental aims should be to enable the people to live in peace & contentment by observing such virtues as due worship of gods, intimacy between the sovereign and his subjects and perfect harmony between the high and the low. Therefore, we should make it our noble cause to act in observance of various virtues peculiar to our Empire and to reject both Communism and Fascism. Government means adjustment of tendencies as well; a tendency should be adjusted after it is taken into consideration, and then directed so that it may take a proper course. Natural tendencies do not always take reasonable courses but sometimes go astray; therefore those in a position to govern must devote themselves to assisting in the Emperor's rule, in conformity with nature and by transcending reason, so as to bring about the development of our national power and let the people live a peaceful life. This is the true way to govern.

Since these tendencies have already gathered strength and the crisis of our country is impending, we must, acting upon the fundamental principle mentioned above, be prompt in judging where this trend will lead us to. We must sacrifice ourselves in order to render allegiance and assistance to the Emperor in compliance with the source of our government which aims at worship of gods, intimacy between the sovereign and his subjects and perfect harmony between the high and the low. Since appeal to His Majesty's benevolence and then to transgress His Imperial virtues, would constitute an act certainly deserving our inevitable death, we must petition His majesty to grant amnesty to our brethren for their past crimes. Thus we may purify this bewildered phase of life and drive the offenders to devote themselves to a new

way of living in expiation of their sin. Hereby we can effect a complete change of public feeling, and furthermore, without scruple, we must carry out a large scale reform in diverse fields of government. For this purpose we shall have to request the Imperial decision so that the people may be informed on the boundless august plan, and shall have to adjust this tendency which is apt to be distorted, on this the eve of the national crisis and thereby consolidate the basis of our Empire which is destined to be everlasting and noble. Thus establishing the basis of development of our national power, we must thoroughly discharge at this juncture, our great duty of being of assistance to the Imperial Throne.

According to the purport stated above, I hereby suggest the following policy.

Policy

Petitioning the Emperor to exercise the Imperial prerogative in accordance with the provisions of Article XVI of the Constitution, we must, first of all, refresh public feeling and stir up popular sentiment by allowing our people to enjoy universally the boundless Imperial favours; whereby, next, we must urge the people to enter into the general spiritual mobilization to start our life all over.

We must make clear at home and abroad the great cause of our Empire and must strive with all the power of the nation, the power of unity, for the materialization and enforcement of various rules of government which are based on this great cause.

Thus we make it our fundamental principle to lay the basis of the prosperity of our Empire, by internally emphasizing the immutability of our national structure and securing the safety and soundness of our national life, and by externally securing the peace in East Asia and the Pacific.

Acting on the foregoing policy, the following provisions must be enforced.

1. The Revival of Public Feeling. We must revive public feeling, and with bright liveliness, by expelling all the past gloomy mud-flings, we shall lead the people to national unity. In order to attain this effect we should, according to the Imperial prerogative provided for in Article XVI of the Constitution, petition the Emperor for a general amnesty for various political criminals and other offenders in connection with them, which ought to be properly restricted to a certain limit in compliance with His Majesty's most benign will, and with due consideration of offences committed, their respective characters and their future activities, regardless of their past whether they belonged to the right wing or to the left. And at the same time, by petitioning the Emperor to issue an Imperial rescript, we must unity public feeling in the sole cause of assistance of the Imperial scheme and thus put the people's mind at rest; moreover we should lead the people, and together, devote ourselves to the cause of assistance and loyalty, and hereby pave the way to national revival and prosperity.

This article is to be put into operation first of all as the fundamental principle for the enforcement of our national policy. By such means we can awaken the whole national from the gloomy atmosphere, in which our people indulged in conventionalism and were unable to effect

any innovation, holding on to selfishness and cliquism throughout their respective classes. Thus, in consequence, we can effect a revival of public feeling and make a clean sweep of all the past grievances, whereby the people would be made conscious of the keynote upon which State affairs should be conducted.

I fully admit that it is with great trepidation that we humbly petition the Emperor to exercise the Imperial prerogative. However, judging from the origin of our national structure, we deem this the sole and unique way to reveal the truth, good and beauty of our national character by which we are enabled to save the situation and display our national virtue.

2. Emergency Policies.

The coming three years or so shall be the first term of urgency and importance. In this term we must establish national policies, adaptable to circumstances at home and abroad, upon inspiring the moral sense of our Empire, and then put in practice various institutions urgent and necessary to the occasion. Administration of diverse affairs should be conducted and ruled along the lines of this policy, and readjustment of urgent State affairs should be achieved with promptitude, while comprehensive regulation is required in general administration.

In order to attain this effect, the general principles demanding prompt enforcement are as follows:

A. Spiritual Restoration

In obedience to the Imperial order, we urge the people to put it in to daily practice. We also encourage their positive display of good morals and manners agreeable to our national condition, and especially with the cultivation of the character of statesmanship as well as of the virtues of countesy and faith, we must cultivate not only the fullness of our national power but also awe and respect of other nations.

B. International Policies

By judging the international situation, we shall determine our policies towards the political situation in the world, among which especially those towards Soviet Russia, U.S.A. and China are ranking. For this purpose the following must be decided upon, while preparations must be made for the invitation, at a suitable opportunity, of a Peace Conference among powers to establish a basis for peace in East Asia and the Pacific.

- a. Our policy towards Soviet Russia mainly in respect of the international relations in thought.
- b. Our policies towards China, U.S.A. and the League of Nations mainly in respect of The Manchurian Problems.
- c. Our policies towards Great Britain and U.S.A. mainly in respect of the London Disarmament Conference.
- d. Our policies towards Great Britain, U.S.A. and China mainly in respect of the international economic relation.

C. Home Policies.

Based upon the required policies to cope with the above-mentioned situations both at home and abroad, and in order that we may accord with them, both spiritually and materially, we must carry out necessary innovations and reforms to effect the regulations of

central and local administrations as well as to promote the prosperity of our rural communities and to stabilize our middle-class, all of which are partly the most urgent steps, to say nothing of general reforms in politics, economics, finance, education and armament. Thus, by taking such steps, we should establish the basis for general national spiritual mobilization and encourage its progress.

I have given in the foregoing only an outline of my suggested emergency policies. It is requested that the competent branches of government authorities should lay down their practical plans in conformity with the above, and those of importance should be passed by Cabinet channels, while those of less importance should be enforced forthwith.