

Def. Doc. #1980

Translated by
Defense Language Branch

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al.

- vs -

ARAKI, Sadao, et al.

Sworn Deposition

Deponent: SHINA, Etsusaburo

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 was born in January, 1898. After I was graduated from the Law Department of the Tokyo Imperial University in 1923, I joined the Agriculture and Commerce Ministry. When the Ministry was divided into two Departments, namely the Department of Commerce and Industry and the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, I served in the former ministry. From October, 1933 to March 1939, I assumed an office, as an official of Manchoukuo, and was responsible for the execution of various policies chiefly with regard to the mining industry. In April, 1939, I reassumed the office in the Commerce and Industry Ministry. Since then, I filled various posts successively as the chief of the Fifth Section of the Provisional Price

Coordination Bureau, a collateral bureau of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry from April, 1939 to June of the same year and as the chief of the General Affairs Section of the General Bureau about three and half months since July of the same year; as the Director of the General Bureau about two years since October of the same year, and then I was appointed the Vice-Minister of Commerce and Industry in October, 1941.

With reference to the demand and supply condition of raw rubber of this country, prior to the outbreak of the Pacific War, as I was connected with the execution of policies pertaining to this particular industry as the head of the Fifth Section of the Provisional Price Coordination Bureau and also the Director of the General Bureau, I am in a position to depose as follows on my own responsibility:

The demand for raw rubber in peace time in Japan was, according to the research made sometime about 1937, said to be about 60,000 tons. The ratio of the demand between the civil and the military (direct need by the military) was roughly 5 to 1 and out of the private demand, about one third was assigned for re-export to the foreign countries as a raw material for the export goods or an export to Manchuria.

On account of, however, the sudden run of an acute course of decline of the foreign exchange condition of Japan after the year of the outbreak of the China Affairs, and the Japanese government's policy to strengthen the restriction over every imported goods one after another, the import of the raw rubber, therefore, also became difficult.

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However, for that demanded by the military, it was under such circumstances that the projected quantity by the military should preferentially be secured since the China Affairs was in progress. So all the shortage in supply had to be supplemented by a restriction on the civil demand. The actual enforced rate of the constriction in 1938 and in 1939 was about 20 per cent of the private demand in peace time, and in 1940, it became as much as 50 % of the volume demanded by the people. Thus the ratio between the civil and military demands became 3 versus 1.

Facing such situation, the Japanese government had naturally to exert every possible effort so as to economize the rubber and execute such pretty strong policies as the prohibition of use of material in certain kinds, and the suspension of the management for those enterprises whose business efficiency is not high, etc.

In spite of the foregoing, the future prospect was still exceedingly dark and there were some among the government authorities concerned who were fearful lest a serious breakdown might be resulted from the cause of demand and supply of rubber alone, should the condition be left untouched. I recall that some urgent measure was frequently called for at the government meeting.

Such sad plight was relieved for the time being by the import of a great deal of raw rubber from Thailand and French Indo-China from the summer to the winter 1941 where we had very little import from these countries heretofore. That is to say, we had about 20,000 tons each,

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about 40,000 tons altogether, imported from Thailand and French Indo-China, and adding those imported from other countries, it was totalled about more than 70,000 tons. The increase thus made in the import from Thailand which was used to be 2,000/ 3,000 tons annually, was due to the financial agreement with that country, and the import of 20,000 tons from French Indo-China which had none hitherto was because of the Japan French Indo-China Treaty, concluded in May, 1941. I am aware of the fact, however, that the imports of raw rubber based on these two arrangements accompanied no small disadvantage in price and some other points, and required exertion on the part of the financial authorities in making these arrangements.

On this 4th day of August, 1947

At SHIINA's Office, Ginza 4-Chome, Tokyo.

DEPONENT: SHIINA, Etsusaburo (monogram)

I, SHIOBARU, Tokisaburo, 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/ SHIOBARU, Tokisaburo (monogram)

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OATH

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

/s/ SHIINA, Etsusaburo (monogram)