

3/82

## INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al

-vs-

ARAKI, Sadao, et al

AFFIDAVIT OF  
WATASE, Ryosuke

WATASE, Ryosuke, being first duly sworn in accordance with the customs observed in his nation, deposes and states as follows

That at the present time I am employed by the Tokyo Mainichi Press as a member of their staff, as Chief of the Investigation Board of the Editor Bureau. I have been asked if I am acquainted with the accused DOHIHARA, Kenji, and if I were familiar with his activities immediately following the Lukouchiao Incident of 7 July 1937 (12th year of Showa).

At that time I held the post of Vice Chief of the Political Department of the Osaka Mainichi Press and shortly after July 7, 1937, to be exact on July 14, 1937, I arrived at Tientsin. The China Incident had not been settled locally and, as I recall, one of the objects then in mind was for the Army to advance towards Pouting. The operation was under the direct command of Lt. Gen. KATSUKI, Kiyoshi, who initiated the actions and was in active command of the offensive operations. As I recall, there were three divisions, one under the command of Gen. TANI, Hisao, who took the central offensive along the Ching-Han line. This was the 6th Division. Lt. Gen. KAWAGISHI, Bunzaburo was on the right of the border between Hope and Shanhsi Provinces, while Lt. Gen. DOHIHARA moved on the left in the direction of Kuan and Manching, moving almost south toward Pouting.

I was attached to the correspondent work with the Tani unit and consequently on the march to Pouting I was not in a position to observe General DOHIHARA. However, our move was successful and without encountering any major opposition we, that is the Tani unit, entered into the fortress of Pouting on September 24, 1937. The unit under the command of General DOHIHARA entered the following day. As soon as I learned General DOHIHARA had arrived, I went to visit him at his command headquarters, where I held a conversation lasting over a period of approximately two



hours. We had many interruptions but I would state that I talked with him during that period of time at least one hour. I found him very cooperative, frank and perfectly willing to answer my questions. As nearly as questions, told me that apparently because of the action of Japan, there was little choice except to continue an offensive; that after the initial step had been taken it was foolish to hope that the attack on Pouting would conclude Japan's action against China; that the original incident, regrettable as it was, had aroused the Japanese to the point where further action unquestionably would have to be taken. He told me that the National Government would certainly continue to resist and that the only alternative was for the Japanese Army to withdraw of its own accord, and it did not appear that any such action would be taken by those in command. When asked how far he believed Japan would have to advance, he answered in substance, that since such conditions had come to pass as I, as a correspondent, had observed, that Japan has no way but to continue to attack, because the Chinese territory is boundless and it was impossible for him to state how far he believed Japanese forces would be required to go. He said there were many great difficulties before the Japanese and that no hasty judgment could be formed. However, he did state that the Chinese public, as distinguished from the Central Government, could not be considered as enemies of Japan and that to consider them as such would be a great mistake. Believing such to be true, he had placed rigid discipline on his troops with reference to the treatment of Chinese civilians; that he had warned his forces not to harass the Chinese public or non-belligerents, and that especially in time of battle his subordinates were not to injure the general feeling of the Chinese public. He stated that it was his policy to strictly punish, by military discipline, those who conducted themselves in any manner so as to harass the peaceful general public under any situation that was not absolutely necessary, in order to safeguard their own lives and property. He stated that this policy would be put in practice within his jurisdiction because Japan should never cause the general Chinese public to become her enemy. In short, General DOHIHARA was deeply worried about the future of the Sino-Japanese war, was willing to talk about it, and displayed, by his actions, his feelings in the matter. He was genuinely concerned over the enormous damage which would inevitably result to the Chinese public.



I was particularly impressed with the fact that General DOHIHARA did not display a single sign of pleasure as a result of the victorious attack on Pouting. On the contrary, I observed his deep worry about the future as caused by the incident. At the same time, after my interview with General DOHIHARA, I felt that I had come closer in touch with the real nature of the Sino-Japanese war than ever before. I came to seriously consider that Japan had now reached the moment when she must reconsider the then current situation. General DOHIHARA's interview had a profound effect upon my understanding of Sino-Japanese relations.

Subsequently I was not attached to General DOHIHARA's unit but I had many friends who were, and while I did not question his sincerity, I was interested to see whether he would continue the policy towards the Chinese people which he had outlined. I had many friends who were with DOHIHARA's unit from time to time and in my conversations with them they verified that not only did he carry out the policy, but as a matter of fact so strict was he with reference to his subordinates in carrying out the policy which he had outlined that there was often some dissatisfaction among his troops, and that they sometimes openly stated to the correspondents that it appeared as though General DOHIHARA loved the Chinese more than he did his own soldiers, and that he might treat them a little more liberally, especially in war time. It is true there was dissatisfaction with General DOHIHARA's troops and that it was generally attributed to the strict control which he exercised with reference to the treatment of non-combatants. It is also a fact that this strictness on the part of General DOHIHARA became widely known among the Chinese public and it is also a fact that they would remain in their homes when General DOHIHARA made an advance into their territory. As a result of that treatment, it is also true that the Chinese public supplied provisions and labor and otherwise assisted General DOHIHARA's unit.



DEF. DOC. #2107

Exh. No.

On this 19 day of August 1947

At Tokyo

DEPONENT Ryosuke WATASE (seal)

I, <sup>*Ohta*</sup> Kinjiro ~~OHTOO~~ 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 Tokyo

Witness: (signed) <sup>*Ohta*</sup> Kinjiro ~~OHTOO~~ (seal)

OATH

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

/s/ Ryosuke WATASE (seal)