

17 Sep 1947

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Sutton
FROM : EDWARD P. MONAGHAN, Chief,
Investigative Division, IPS
SUBJECT : Defense Witness

1. Please find attached hereto list of material available on the following witness and/or witnesses.

DEFENDANT

Witness General

WITNESS

ISHII, Saburo

LIST OF MATERIAL AVAILABLE

Curriculum Vitae

2. Please acknowledge receipt of this memorandum by initialling and returning attached carbon copy to this office, Room 300.

Incl
(Described above)

EPM
EDWARD P. MONAGHAN

Personal History of ISHII, Saburo

Permanent residence and status:

Date of birth: 26 February 1880.

Name: ISHII, Saburo

Former status:

Former name:

- 10 May 1920 : Elected a member of the House of Representatives (14th election).
- 1 November 1920 : Granted a set of silver cups for services in the 1915-1920 Incident.
- 31 January 1924 : Term /in House of Representatives/ expired.
- 10 May 1924 : Elected a member of the House of Representatives.
- 21 January 1928 : Term expired.
- 20 February " : Elected a member of the House of Representatives.
- 10 November " : Awarded a golden cup.
- 21 January 1930 : Term expired.
- 20 February 1932: Elected a member of the House of Representatives.
- 1 June 1932 : Appointed a councillor in the War Ministry.
Given the second rank of the Higher Civil Service by the Cabinet.
- " " " : Appointed government member for matters under jurisdiction of the War Ministry in the 62nd Session of the Imperial Diet by the Cabinet.
- 15 " " : Conferred with the 5th Court Rank, Senior Grade.
- 22 August 1932 : Appointed government member for matters under jurisdiction of the War Ministry in the 63rd Session of the Imperial Diet by the Cabinet.
- 24 December " : Appointed government member for matters under jurisdiction of the War Ministry in the 64th Session of the Imperial Diet by the Cabinet.
- 3 August 1933 : Decorated with the Imperial Order of the Sacred Treasure, 4th Class. CANCELLED (27 December 1935 Official Gazette)

- 23 December 1933: Appointed government member for matters under jurisdiction of the War Ministry in the 65th Session of the Imperial Diet by the Cabinet.
- 1 June 1934 : Promoted to the 1st rank of the Higher Civil Service by the Cabinet.
- 27 November 1934: Appointed government member for matters under jurisdiction of the War Ministry in the 66th Session of the Imperial Diet by the Cabinet.
- 25 December 1934: Appointed government member for matters under jurisdiction of the War Ministry in the 67th Session of the Imperial Diet by the Cabinet.
- 28 February 1935: Relieved from principal post at own request by the Cabinet.
- 29 April 1934 : Decorated with the Imperial Order of the Sacred Treasure, 3rd Class, for services in the 1931-1934 Incident.
- 21 January 1936 : Term expired.
- 20 February " : Elected a member of the House of Representatives.

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Exh. No.

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 ; -- 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 ministrations 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

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

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 heart. 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

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 cautions 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 FINSUITO 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 Government 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 unfavourable attitude of the League of Nations made Chang Hasueh-liang assume anti-Japanese and anti-"Manchoukuo" actions influenced by the League's atmosphere.

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 9(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 solitudes 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 1, 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 calumnies 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

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)