

Def. Doc. No. 2954
(Umezu)

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al

-vs-

ARAKI Sadao, et al

- Defendants -

A F F I D A V I T

AYABE KENTARŌ

Having first duly sworn an oath as on the attached sheet, in accordance with the procedure prevailing in my country, I hereby depose as follows:

1. I reside at Chiba-ken Kashiwa-machi Toyoshiki 822. I was formerly a member of the Diet, belonging to the Seiyūkai party over an extended period, and was Parliamentary Vice-Minister of the Navy in the Suzuki Cabinet.

2. I am well acquainted with General Umezu Yoshijiro, having had occasion to meet and confer with him quite often. From this association I knew him to be much opposed to Army officers' participating in politics, and that he deplored the increasing tendency to their activities in that direction, as instanced by the "5-15 Incident" (15 May 1932) and the "2-26 Incident" (26 February 1936). During his term as Vice-Minister of War we had a talk on this subject which stands out in my mind. The General said that he was doing his best to reform the Army in regard to its political activities, which, he said, owed much to the instigation of the rightist groups and parties. Army officers, being simple and straightforward, readily listened to the arguments of these people, which were of the line of resenting the present state of the world. Therefore, he said, he was taking steps to prevent the rightists from approaching Army officers; on my asking what these steps were, he smilingly answered that the Army would on no pretext give either encouragement or material support to the rightist parties or to the members of them. When, later, I heard being spread among the rightists infamous rumors discreditable to Vice-Minister Umezu, I knew that he was working straight in accordance with his conviction.

3. Then, hearing rumors that a large part of the military circles disapproved of political parties and were advocating their suppression, I confirmed from Vice-Minister Umezu what the higher levels of the Army were thinking about the matter. The General's opinion on this matter was very fair: that to abide by the Constitution was the foremost duty of the nation, and the Diet could therefore not be disregarded. So long as there was a parliament, there would be political parties, and sound political parties were necessary to sound statesmanship. On this point, I remember that at the 70th

Diet, in 1937, the question was raised in interpellation by Representative Hamano, whether the Army disapproved of political parties. In answering, General Umezu denied that he had ever had such a thought, giving great satisfaction to the political parties.

OATH

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

Ayabe Kentarō

On this 7th day of May, 1947

At Tōkyō

Deponent: Ayabe Kentarō

I, Ono Kisaku, hereby certify that the above statement was sworn to by the deponent, who affixed his signature and seal thereto in the presence of this witness.

On the same date

At Tōkyō

Witness: Ono Kisaku (seal)

Translation Certificate

I, Nishi Haruhiko, of the defense, hereby certify that I am conversant with the English and Japanese languages, and that the foregoing is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a correct translation of the original document.

Nishi Haruhiko (seal)

Tokyo
9 May 1947