

VICENTE ARIAS

called as a witness on behalf of the Prosecution, being first duly sworn through Interpreter Gojunco, was examined and testified as follows through the Interpreter:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Q (By Captain Pace) Give your name, please.

A Vicente Arias.

Q You will have to speak louder than that. Where do you live?

A (Through the Interpreter) 211 Carriedo Street.

Q Are you the owner of the Arias Building?

A Yes, sir.

Q Will you look at Prosecution's Exhibit 193 and point out where your building is located?

(The witness indicated on Prosecution's Exhibit No. 193.)

CAPTAIN PACE: Let the record show that the witness is indicating the building -- or the block south of Rizal Avenue, and just to the east of the foot of Rizal Avenue, on Carriedo Street.

Q (By Captain Pace) On the morning of February 5, 1945, did you see anything unusual?

A Yes.

Q What was it?

A On about eleven o'clock in the morning a group of Army men set fire to the north of Carriedo Street.

Q What Army did they belong to?

A The Japanese Army.

Q Will you indicate on Exhibit 193 where you saw the Japanese setting fires?

A The fire was set on the corner of Carriedo Street and Escolta, thereafter at the corner of Escolta and Rizal Street. From there they set fire to the building occupied by the Romanach music firm. The next building they set fire to was the one occupied by the Music Association, at the corner of Estero Cegado and Carriedo. The next was the Roces Building at the corner of Rizal Avenue and Carriedo.

CAPTAIN PACE: Will the record show that the witness has indicated the buildings on the north side of Carriedo Street, beginning with the unnamed street north and south at the extreme right of the photograph, and he pointed all the way along on Carriedo Street on the north side until he reached Rizal Avenue, to the point marked "L".

Q (By Captain Pace) Will you point out on this exhibit where the Roces Building is?

A It is where the letter "A" is shown.

Q You have mentioned the Romanach Music Store; is that correctly indicated by the letter "M" on this sketch?

A No, sir; it is in front.

Q You mean it is on the north side of the street, instead of on the south side as it is shown here?

A Yes, sir, it is in the north.

Q Now, will you describe how the Japanese set the fires in these five blocks that you have described?

A They started by breaking down the doors of the buildings at the corner of Carriedo, and they poured gasoline and set fire. And they continued with the same procedure, with the other buildings.

(A photograph was marked Prosecution Exhibit No. 196 for Identification.)

Q Will you look at Prosecution's Exhibit No. 196 and tell what pages 1 and 2 show?

A The photograph I have before me shows the building on the corner of Estero Cogado and Carriedo, where the Romanach business was. The second photograph is of the same building.

Q What are those shacks that appear in the picture?

A One of the buildings is the one occupied by the night club, and the other buildings were occupied by other businesses.

Q Were the shacks that appear on pages 1 and 2 on the exhibit there after the fire, or have they been built since?

A It is after the fire that they were built.

Q And immediately after the fire were any buildings left in the area which you have described?

A The northern part of the night club building.

CAPTAIN PACE: The witness is indicating a concrete structure in the background of the second page of the exhibit.

Q (By Captain Pace) Look at pages 3, 4, 5, and 6, and tell what they are.

A They show part of the building of Roces and the other buildings that were right by the fire.

CAPTAIN PACE: I offer this, Exhibit 196 for Identification, in Evidence.

GENERAL REYNOLDS: There being no objection, it is accepted in evidence.

(Prosecution Exhibit No. 196 for Identification was received in Evidence and so marked.)

Q (By Captain Pace) The buildings which you have described were all on the north side of the street, is that right?

A Yes, sir.

Q Your building is on the south side of the street; right?

A Yes, sir.

Q Did anything happen to your building?

A Yes, sir. It has been partially set on fire.

Q During the hours which you observed the Japanese doing this, was any artillery being fired into the area which you described?

A No, sir.

CAPTAIN PACE: You may inquire.

CROSS EXAMINATION

Q (By Captain Reel) Did your building catch fire from the others?

A A part of the building --. A part of the fire that burned my building was through the flames on the other buildings.

Q Yes. Nobody set fire to the building you were in? Nobody deliberately set fire to the building that you were in?

A Yes, sir. The lower part of the building was set on fire.

Q Was that deliberately set on fire by somebody, or was that fire started by flames coming from the other buildings?

A It was deliberately set on fire.

Q How many floors did the building have that you were in?

A Four floors.

Q And was the Japanese Navy using some of that space?

A Those that set a military outpost at the corner of Rizal and Carriedo Streets were the ones who occupied the building.

Q Were these other buildings that you saw destroyed also occupied by military forces?

A The Roces Building was occupied by the Navy, and the other buildings were not.

Q Do you know what the other buildings were used for?

A The other buildings were not occupied by the Japanese military, but were occupied by their owners and some leases.

Q And were the other buildings warehouses?

A No, sir, they were not warehouses.

Q Did they have storage space in them?

A I don't believe they had warehouse space.

Q What floor of your building were you on when all this occurred?

A On the third floor.

Q And did you stay there and watch all those fires being set?

A We stayed until about three o'clock in the afternoon when we were only able to go out.

Q Did you leave your building before it started burning?

A No, sir.

Q So you were in the building when it was on fire?

A Yes, sir.

Q And was there pretty heavy fighting going on in the vicinity of these burning buildings at that time?

A There was no fire.

Q Didn't you hear any machine guns?

A No, sir, I didn't hear anything of a machine gun sound, but there was a machine gun at the lower part of my building, but I believe it was not used.

Q Did you see the American forces that day?

A Yes, sir. I saw only an American soldier at the corner of Plaza Goiti and Rizal after about ten o'clock in the morning.

Q And that was before these fires were set?

A Yes, sir.

Q Didn't you see some more American soldiers after ten o'clock in that area?

A No, sir. It was until after three o'clock in the afternoon at when we saw in the middle of Rizal Avenue some more Americans.

Q Yes. And by 3:30 in the afternoon that area was pretty well in the hands of the Americans, wasn't it?

A I don't believe the area was well controlled by American forces at that time, and there was no fire.

Q So that whatever American soldiers got there got there without a battle, is that right?

INTERPRETER GOJUNCO: Would you please repeat that?

CAPTAIN REEL: So that whatever American soldiers got there got there without a battle, is that correct?

A Yes, sir; without any resistance.

CAPTAIN REEL: That's all.

CAPTAIN PACE: Thank you, Mr. Arias.

(Witness excused.)

DOCUMENT 2868

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, T. R. C. King, Major, Inf. (TD), Executive Officer, Legal Section, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, do hereby certify that Document 2868 is a true and correct copy of the transcript of the testimony offered by VICENTE ARIAS in the trial of the case against Tomoyuki YAMASHITA, General, Imperial Japanese Army, before a Military Commission in Manila; and that the whole record of the case, including the transcript of all testimonies taken, as well as the affidavits admitted in evidence, are now on file with this Section.

/s/ T. R. C. King
T. R. C. KING,
Major, Inf. (TD)

Witness: /s/ John R. Pritchard

Sworn to before me this 15th day
of November 1946, Tokyo, Japan.

/s/ John R. Pritchard
Capt. Inf.
Summary Court