

No. 3231



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: HIRANUMA, Setsuko

I, HIRANUMA, Setsuko, of lawful age, being first duly sworn in accordance with the customs of my country, depose and state as follows:

My name is HIRANUMA, Setsuko. I was born in Kamakura, Japan, in 1913, and now live at 1053 Yoyogi Oyamacho Shibuyaku, Tokyo. I have been asked if I know anything of the attack made on the home of the accused HIRANUMA on 15 August, 1945. I do know because I was there and because that was my home. Baron HIRANUMA is my mother's uncle, but we always called him "Ojiisan", Granddad, in our house. He was old and had no one to take care of him, therefore, my parents, my two children and I live with him. At that time my husband had been conscripted and was in the Navy. My mother was over sixty years of age, in delicate health, and I was managing the house.

During the night of August 14-15, 1945, there had been an air raid alarm and we were in a dug out air raid shelter which was in our yard. At about 3 a.m. on the morning of the 15th of August, the air

**FILE COPY**  
RETURN TO ROOM 361



raid alarm was lifted and we came out and went to bed in the house. At about 5:30 a.m. there was another alarm. I awakened, dressed and was ready to go into the shelter again when I learned that this time the raiders were carrier borne planes and not bombers. I attempted to get my two children to go back to sleep, but they wanted to stay up with me. Had I not permitted them to do so, I probably should never have seen them alive again, for suddenly I heard a terrific noise and loud shouting outside our house. I looked through my window and saw a gang of men coming through the front gate, making for the house proper. I had been warned by the police guards stationed in my house that something very unpleasant was likely to happen and I guessed accurately what this disturbance might mean. Just the day before one of the guards, TANAKA, Hiroshi, told me he did not like the way Army planes; that is, Japanese Army planes, had been flying low over our house and that we had better be prepared in the event they should drop bombs on us.

I knew the mob entering our front gate had come up after Granddad HIRANUMA because they had the police guards, about fifteen in all, lined up in a single row, with their hands over their heads, and I heard the leader of the gang, whom I could see and whom I later learned was an Army captain by the name of SASAKI, shouting at the top of his voice. He was saying, "Don't you know what sort of a bastard HIRANUMA is? You don't know, eh? He is a notorious leader of the pro-Anglo-American group! He is a traitor! Don't you realize our country is going to collapse and be destroyed! Guarding an arch traitor! You should be ashamed of yourselves!"



Def. Doc. # 2587

The first thing which occurred to me was that I must get Granddad away from the house. I left my children, who were clinging to me, a girl of 8 and a boy of 6, with an old Amah (elderly housemaid), and rushed towards his room. By this time a number of soldiers in uniform had come into the house and were throwing gasoline all over the house and setting fire to all the rooms one after another. Paper doors, screens and mats caught fire. I was not afraid, because I did not have time to become frightened, and besides I was dressed in a kind of uniform we all used to wear in those days when there was an air raid. I was much too worried over Granddad to be afraid. I got about half way to his room but was choked by smoke, and found it impossible to advance forward. At this time I heard one of the gangsters shouting, "We can't find HIRANUMA", and another one shouted in reply, "He will be burned to death in a minute." When I heard this I felt that someone had managed to take Granddad away from his room just in the nick of time, and I returned immediately to the servants quarters and sought for my children and Amah, but they were nowhere to be seen. I was extremely worried and asked one of the soldiers in the house what he had done to them and where they were, but he stated he did not know. I passed the leader of the gang and his soldiers when I was going out through the side gate. He was just inside the front gate with his men. They were all holding big drawn swords and pistols, and covering the police guards with at least one machine gun. The Captain, whom I later learned, as I stated, was named SASAKI, glared at me but I asked one of the soldiers whether he had seen my children anyway. He replied in a very brusque manner that they had



Def. Doc. # 2587

gone out.

I then went around the house toward the yard of the neighboring building. This building happened to be an office and library of a cultural organization known as Mukyukai, and Granddad was its President. I thought he might be hiding there. Amah and my children were there. The gang had guarded the front gate and a side gate with machine guns in the event Granddad came out, but they had overlooked a third gate through which one could go directly into the Mukyukai library. In the library was a lone police guard, who made a sign to me indicating that Granddad was in the building hiding. Some of the gang who raided our home that morning, appeared to have been students and one of them threatened Amah and my children with a drawn sword, in an attempt to force them to tell him where the old man was. He looked extremely vicious holding his drawn sword over his head, and Amah thought sure he was going to kill her. However, he did not harm either her or the children.

By the time I had located the children and learned Granddad was in hiding, the house was in full blaze, and it was completely destroyed, except the garage, which was only half destroyed. The mob left in a truck and shortly afterward the firemen arrived with their pumps, but they were too late. According to my estimate and that of the guards, there were roughly forty men, mostly soldiers and a few students. This attack occurred the same morning Premier SUZUKI's house was assaulted, but his house escaped with only small damage.

At Tokyo, Japan, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of September, 1947.



Def Doc No. 2537

On this 14 day of Sept., 1947

At the above address.

DEPONENT: HIRANUMA, Setsudo (seal)

I, USAMI, Rokuro, 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 same place.

OATH

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

HIRANUMA, Setsuko (seal)