

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ET AL

vs.

ARAKI, SAIDAO ET AL

Affidavit of

Sawada, Shigero

From October 1939 to November 1940, I was Vice Chief of the General Staff. The Chief of the General Staff during this time was H.I.H. Prince Kanin.

In 1940, because of Germany's extraordinary victories in Europe, her fame spread through all of Japan and soon the view became predominant in Army circles that Japan should use Germany's power and influence to bring the China Incident to a favorable solution. The Army was desirous of peace with China and so was War Minister General Hata. He always insisted that it was most urgent to bring an end to the China Incident. The question was, how was the Incident to be settled. It was Hata's contention that the best way to secure peace with China was to reduce the strength of the Japanese troops in China. As his first step in this direction, he sought to decrease, in drawing up the Army budget for the year 1940, the number of Japanese troops in China from 900,000 to 500,000. The General Staff was completely opposed to such an amount of reduction and said it was impossible. The matter was then taken up and discussed between the War Minister and the General Staff and eventually the number of troops was decreased to between 600,000 and 650,000.

Towards the end of June 1940, while I was in China for inspection of the operations, I was called back to Tokyo by an urgent telegram. I returned to find that the Cabinet, contrary to the general desire of the Army, was against entering into any close connections with Germany and that its policy was running contrary to the prevailing opinion of the Army. It was the ardent desire of Prince Kanin, Chief of the General Staff, to attain a solution of the Incident through use of Germany and it was about the beginning of July 1940 that he told me that he intended to accelerate peace with China through the mediations of Germany and that he intended to use the War Minister to break the deadlock between the Army and the Cabinet. So, he ordered me to consult with the officials in the War Ministry, with those ends in view. Accordingly, I called on the Vice Minister of War, Lt. Gen. Anami and we discussed the matter between the two of us. The Vice Minister said finally that as long as the Chief of Staff did not modify his view of using Germany to accelerate peace with China, there was no alternative but to change the present Cabinet; that in view of the character of the present Cabinet, it was impossible to comply with the Chief of Staff's objective even if some changes were made among its members. When I asked the Vice Minister if that was also the opinion of the War Minister, he informed me that that was not the opinion of General Hata, but it was the opinion

of the Vice Minister and the men below him in the War Ministry. I pointed out that the matter was of extreme importance as the opinion of the Army in general and that of the Cabinet were in opposition to each other and that we had better meet again after I had once more consulted with the Chief of the General Staff and then I parted with him.

The Chief of General Staff, having heard my report stated that since his opinion represented that of the majority of the Army and that since according to the Vice Minister there was no other way but a change of Cabinet, we must do our utmost to follow that method and that he was truly sorry for the War Minister that such an extreme measure had to be taken, but one must bear this for the good of the country in such a vital national affair. I again called on the Vice Minister, stated the decision of the Chief of the General Staff and learned that Anami had not changed his views since our previous meeting. Some days later by the orders of Prince Kanin, I wrote a letter which in substance stated as follows:

It is most urgent for Japan to end the China Incident as soon as possible. In order to achieve this it is absolutely necessary to use the influence and power of Germany. From my observation of the attitude of the present Cabinet, I believe it is unable to tide over this present difficult situation. So, at this moment it is necessary to establish a new and stronger Cabinet with the whole nation behind it, which will not waver but will carry out policies with a firm hand. With reference to the above, I demand the War Minister to take action in a manner appropriate to the situation.

The language used in the letter is the polite form of language generally used among highranking officers in the Military and in all government departments. Although the word "resign" itself is not used, the letter actually required the War Minister to resign. The letter was sealed and signed by Prince Kanin and he ordered me to deliver it to War Minister Hata. I did so. In this way, General Hata received the letter and I am not quite sure but it might be the following day or the day after that General Hata submitted his resignation, and then the Yonai Cabinet resigned en bloc.

H.I.H. Prince Kanin, besides being the Chief of the General Staff, was a member of the Emperor's Household and a Father of the Army, in age, rank, experience etc., and it was quite natural that General Hata, although War Minister, nevertheless, as a loyal subject of the Emperor, was compelled to obey his strong demand.

From the beginning, the Yonai Cabinet had been a conservative one and it was opposed to the idea of cooperation and ties with Germany and to the use of Germany in the settlement of the China Incident. Hence a majority of the Army branded the Yonai Cabinet as too weak to settle the China Incident and as lacking in ability to settle the general situation. The intention of overthrowing the Yonai Cabinet and the plan to effect peace by using Germany was predominant in the Army. Besides, War Minister Hata was one of the supporters of the Yonai Cabinet Policy. Hence