

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 (Translation)

Deponent: MIYO, Tatsukichi
Residence: No. 36, Taira-machi,
Meguro-Ku, Tokyo-to
Born: January 12, 1902

Having first duly sworn an oath as an attached sheet
and in accordance with the procedure followed in my country
I hereby depose as follows.

I was formerly a navy captain.

During the period from November 1939 to December
1942, I served as a commander in the Operations Section
of the Navy General Staff in the capacity of a staff officer
of the Imperial Headquarters, taking charge of affairs
relative to aerial operations.

The following is what I was enabled to learn, at that
time by virtue of my official position, concerning the
advance of Japanese forces to South French Indo-China,
which took place while I was on duty in the Navy General
Staff.

1. At the time of my assumption of office in the Navy
General Staff, it was a consistent policy pursued not only
by the Navy, but by the entire nation, to try and effect
speediest possible settlement of the China affair.

Now, Japan's deadlocked land operations in China had
created such a situation as requiring the enforcement of
economic blockade against China as an all-important
factor in the solution of the Incident.

Our advance to South French Indo-China was prompted
by various economic and political necessities, but what
we, as parties directly concerned in military operations,

RETURN TO ROOM 361
COPY

✓ Def. Doc. No. 2097

felt most imperative of all reasons for this action was the necessity to avert a collapse of our national defense for one thing, and, for another, to bring the China affair to an early conclusion by means of an over-all economic blockade of our hostile neighbor.

It was about the beginning of July, 1941, if I remember right, that the First Department Chief of the Navy General Staff, while ordering us operation officers to make preparations for the proposed move to French Indo-China, initiated us into the reason briefly in the following terms why such a step was inevitable.

Much to the obstruction to our intended conclusion of the China affair, the Anglo-American aid to the Chiang Kai-shek regime through the southwestern part of China is growing increasingly vigorous. Worse still, the United States, Britain, China and the Netherlands are acting in concert, forming against our country the so-call "A B C D Line". They are pushing on with their steady war-preparations and at the same time hardening their economic pressure upon us. Here, in illustration of this fact, we may take the failure of the Japan-Dutch-India negotiations as one of the most outstanding cases.

"What is more, their evil influence is now reaching for French Indo-China and Thailand; and in fact, there are indications that the de Gaullist Partisans and other anti-Japanese elements in French Indo-China are, in collusion with the Britishers, inducing all French Indo-China to go over to the Anglo-American camp. There is indeed an unmistakable possibility of its becoming another Syria. If so, it is ten to one that Thailand will allow herself to be won over to the Anglo-American group in view of her prevailing domestic and foreign relations.

Should such a situation be created, the ABCD front would be invincibly fortified, forcing Japan to be completely isolated and shattering our project of blockading China whereby early to settle the Incident. Suppose we had our economic relations with Thailand and French Indo-China broken off, what would be the result? Excluded from Anglo-American trade as we actually are and with the economic negotiations with the Netherlands East Indies ending in failure, Japan would now suffer an economic collapse and be forced to fall on her knees before the joint ABCD pressure, to speak nothing of a successful settlement of the China affair.

"Suppose that British and some other allied forces made a move into French Indo-China, it would be very probable that the de Caullist elements and other anti-Japanese groups, would work together with these occupation troops, and provoke our forces stationed in North French Indo-China to a clash with them, which would ultimately lead to serious consequences.

"If we wish to prevent such an unhappy event to occur, the only possible way for us, though not a desirable one, is to get ahead of other powers by ourselves dispatching troops to South French Indo-China. There is no alternative.

"Speaking from the French standpoint, she will surely welcome the idea of defending her possession in East Asia conjointly with Japan, with a view to preventing it from becoming a second Syria."

2. Relative to the advance of Japanese troops to South French Indo-China, I will mention two facts.

(1) When I took office in the Navy General Staff, I found that the Navy had already been on its guard against Japan being involved in World War II.

The Navy had been consistently opposed to our country entering into an alliance with Germany and Italy, for fear that such a move on our part would cause increasing friction with the United States and Britain, and, moreover, would imply a danger for our country being embroiled in war.

Our Navy, after the conclusion of the Tripartite Pact, took special caution so that the Pact might not unnecessarily impose fighting obligations on Japan. It absolutely refrained from referring to any idea of concerted military operations with Germany and Italy or similar courses of action; for we were in dread that if we should unwittingly talk about such as any possible agreement among the three nations for joint military operations. Germany and Italy would at once take the Japanese Navy to be disposed to join in the war, and would even try to compell us under the terms of the Pact to fight their battles.

Such was the precaution that was adopted by the Japanese Navy at the time of Japan's occupation of South French Indo-China, and this precautions attitude on the part of our Navy was kept up to the time

immediately before the outbreak of the Pacific War. It is obvious from this fact that before the opening of the Pacific War there had been no joint operation agreement existing among Japan, Germany, and Italy.

(2) When the Japanese military move to South French Indo-China was launched, we staff officers who were responsible for the formulation of war plans had no mention whatsoever for war in the Pacific area, nor had we any plans or preparations under such intention. It may clearly be seen from this that the Japanese advance to South French Indo-China was no preliminary step that had been taken in readiness for the Pacific War.

When I first came to make arrangements for the advance to South French Indo-China of our troops, I was much annoyed to find that there was no adequate military information available concerning the place. For instance, when I wanted to know about of its ^{circumstances}, I found there was no data to work upon other than those materials collected by civilian interests, and it was from these meager materials that I managed somehow to get general ideas. The fact-finding survey that was conducted on the spot after our entry into the region revealed numerous errors in our previous calculation.

Immediately before the advance of our troops to South French Indo-China the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands almost simultaneously cut off economic relations with us and placed a ban on their oil exports to Japan. Japan, thus taken by surprise, endeavored to get the strained situation eased in any way, but there was no prospect of her efforts meeting with success; on the contrary things continued to go from bad to worse, with dark clouds hovering overhead. The outcome of all this was the September 6 decision of our National policy.

Immediately following the above decision came orders from our Section Chief in which he said that the Government had decided to make preparations for war that might break out any moment at the A B C D front, and that we operations officers should begin without delay to study and formulate plans of campaign in line with the government policy. To me, as one of the officers in charge of air operations, it appeared, a sheer absurdity to try to fight against the four Powers when we were finding the single China affair too much for us. So I said to the Section Chief; "With our air force so poorly equipped, we can't expect to wage war on the four Powers with confidence of success." Thereupon the chief said admonishingly: "It is not the question of our going into war because we are sure of success, or staying out of it because we are not sure of it. We are simply forced to be ready for any eventuality of war for the sake of self-defense. It is not for a war of our choice that we now stage preparations."

Faithfully following this admonition of our Section Chief's, we now set to work on the preparation of military operational plans for a self-defensive war in assumption that such might occur and it was with this intention that we pushed on with our undertakings. It was about the beginning of September, that is more than a month after the Japanese military occupation of South French Indo-China that we started to formulate plans with a view to the possibility of a conflict with the four powers which ultimately developed into the Pacific War.

On this 15th day of August, 1947.

At Tokyo

Deponent: /S/ MIYO, TATSUKICHI

I, YASUDA, SHIGEO, 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 Tokyo

Witness: /S/ YASUDA, SHIGEO.

Def. Doc. # 2097

OATH

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

/S/ MIYO, TATSUKICHI