

Excerpts from ARAKI, Sadao Interrogation, 11 February 1946.

- Q. When I was here on the 7th of this month, I asked you this question: (Reading) "Then I understand that when you were Minister of War you attended these meetings but when you were Minister of Education later, you did not attend the meetings concerning foreign affairs", and you answered as follows: (Reading) "During my tenure of office as War Minister there were very few of these meetings to the best of my recollection, but during the time I held office as Minister of Education these matters were usually discussed at the usual cabinet meetings held once a week". Do you remember those answers?
- A. Yes. When I was Minister of Education, I did not attend these meetings. If a question regarding foreign policy came up, this would be discussed at the usual cabinet meetings.
- Q. And you were appointed Minister of Education in May, 1938, and held that position until August 29, 1939, and I understand then that important matters concerning foreign affairs were discussed at full cabinet meetings during that period?
- A. At one time the Premier requested SUETSUGU, Nobumasa who was Home Minister, and myself to confer with him on the China question. It was decided to hold these meetings regularly but as my views and SUETSUGU's views differed so widely and we could not agree, it was decided after the second meeting to hold no more. I do not know whether SUETSUGU was requested to attend this meeting as Home Minister or as an Admiral.
- Q. That is SUETSUGU who is dead now, who was Minister for Home Affairs?
- A. Yes.
- Q. I assume that the Prime Minister was the one who decided what foreign affairs were important enough to discuss in the full cabinet meetings, is that correct?
- A. Yes, that is correct.
- Q. Did the Foreign Minister ever bring up a question as to foreign affairs for the full cabinet meeting to discuss?
- A. Yes the foreign minister would also have to bring up the question at full meetings.

Q. And did the War Minister bring up such questions before the full cabinet meetings?

A. As this was during the China incident, and the War and Navy Ministers were deeply concerned, they would also bring up such questions before the full cabinet. However, matters of great importance to the foreign office, the War and Navy and Finance Ministries, were usually not put before the full cabinet meetings as interference by other ministers was not relished and matters were usually discussed by the respective ministers direct with the Prime Minister.

Q. That seems to contradict what you said up to now. Do I understand then that the full cabinet has nothing to do with decisions made?

A. Yes, the full cabinet was concerned with decisions made, but, if the four principal ministers mentioned previously, and the Prime Minister decided on a line of policy, this would be pushed through the cabinet in spite of opposition.

Q. If there was opposition in the cabinet to a decision made by these four would a vote be taken on the question submitted?

A. No, a vote would not be necessary. The Prime Minister would request opinions from the other members, but when he had decided, the measure was put through. If that became impossible, the cabinet would fall, or the member opposing any measure up for discussion would resign.