

Sugihara Seishiro  
2-18-15-504 Niiza, Shin-Niiza City,  
Saitama Prefecture  
〒352-0006

March 16, 2020

Mr. Kato Takeo  
Director  
Japan National Archives

Mr. Hatano Sumio  
Japan Center for Asian Historical Records

**Third request for answers, dated March 16, 2020, to the National Archives of Japan**

Dear Sirs,

In response to my open letter, dated December 8, 2019 and sent on December 10, regarding your Special Internet Exhibit “Archives Reveal Diplomatic Negotiation Between Japan and the United States—the Process Leading to the Outbreak of the War,” I received your response on January 15, 2020. However, finding your response lacking, I sent another letter, dated January 17 and a third letter, dated February 17, in which I requested for a response by March 17. I received your response dated March 13 and I truly appreciate your response.

Unfortunately, however, your response made me more suspicious about the matter in question:

- 1) First, in compiling “reference literature”, the person responsible for the task referred to sources he judged necessary for the purpose and wrote a textbook-like explanation for viewers, without referring to all of the high quality, specialized and scholarly literature that are available. If this was exactly as stated, that he referred to sources he deemed necessary to write textbook-like explanations, then my book should have

been one of the first to have been referred to. My book, *Study on Japan's Diplomacy after the Opening of the War between Japan and the United States*, published in 1997 (by Aki Shobo) is a scholarly look at a very important historical fact related to U.S.-Japan diplomatic negotiations before the War. After publication, a group of scholars led by Mr. Iokibe Makoto, who later became President of the National Defense Academy of Japan, announced at a press conference held in 2001 that they discovered for the first time that Japan, to a limited extent, decoded American diplomatic telegrams, thus engaging in intelligence warfare with the United States. Considering this fact, my book should be listed in the "reference literature."

- 2) Next, regarding the circumstance of decoding the enemy's messages, on both sides, and the actual use of decoded messages and the delay in the delivery of the Ultimatum before and after the attack on Pearl Harbor, you stated that "these events remain controversial to this day and there are no academically confirmed 'historical facts' or 'interpretation.'" I will accept your interpretation. However, would it not then be necessary to actually show the various interpretations within the debate, for the sake of fairness?
- 3) I am puzzled by your statement, "to have avoided depending on the specific interpretation." Do you mean that you used scholarly works without any "interpretation" in them in your reference literature? Really, there isn't an expert or scholar without an opinion or their own "interpretation". Scholarly books in your "reference literature" all have a degree of interpretation based on the findings from the available historical records of each author. For example, books written by Mr. Hatano Sumio, Director of the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records, whose name appears in your letter of response, contain opinions and "interpretation" based on available sources and historical materials--and his books are included as reference literature. To "have avoided [scholarly references] depending on the specific interpretation" sounds like those scholarly references with the "wrong" interpretation were excluded from the reference literature by the person in charge of creating the reference literature list. If this was the case, then this goes against the duties of a government official, whose public position requires fairness and impartiality.
- 4) Moreover, what "specific interpretation" is to be avoided? The person in charge of creating the reference literature should clearly define this and I urge him to do so promptly.

Regarding these four questions, I ask for lucid responses. Again, I also ask that an explanation be given by the person responsible for the “reference literature” as to why my book was excluded, inclusion of my book as a source in your list of reference literature and an apology for this omission from the “reference literature,” as I requested previously in my letter of December 8, 2019.

Lastly, I will note that my letter dated December 8, 2019 (sent December 10, 2019) regarding your Special Internet Exhibit “Archives Reveal Diplomatic Negotiation Between Japan and the United States—the Process Leading to the Outbreak of the War,” your reply dated January 15, 2020 and my second letter dated January 17, 2020 have been posted, together with English translations, by the Society for Disseminating Historical Fact. Further, I hope to post your letter of response dated March 13 and my letter dated March 16 in the near future.

I am hoping for a response to my letter in one month, by April 16, 2020. I appreciate your cooperation in advance.

Sincerely yours,

Sugihara Seishiro