

## **Final report on my protest against the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records**

January 5, 2022

### **The Final Report on a Case of Protest against the Japan National Archives and the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records regarding the Special Internet Exhibit, “Diplomatic Negotiation Between Japan and the United States—the process leading to the outbreak of the War seen through archives”**

**Sugihara Seishiro**

**January 11, 2022**

Regarding the Special Internet Exhibit, “Diplomatic Negotiation Between Japan and the United States—the process leading to the outbreak of the War seen through archives,” shown since 2005 on Japan National Archives website, I, Sugihara Seishiro, laid out my objections to the Japan National Archives. I hereby present my final report regarding this issue.

On December 8, 2019, I sent an open letter regarding the “Special Internet Exhibit,” “Diplomatic Negotiation Between Japan and the United States—the process leading to the outbreak of the War seen through archives” to the Japan National Archives and stated my questions and requests concerning the Special Internet Exhibit.

I asked why 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) was not mentioned in the Exhibit’s references.

My book was translated into English, Chinese and Korean and points out critical historical facts regarding negotiations between Japan and the United States which are not touched upon in most scholarly books. For example, it is a historical fact that Japan decoded and read, to certain extent, American diplomatic telegrams. My book also focuses on the matter of responsibility over the delay during that crucial time of Japan handing over its “ultimatum” to the United States, which other books rarely mention. Thus, I felt that my book is indispensable as a “reference.” So, I asked the Japan National Archives, in an open letter to them, why my book was not included in the Exhibit’s “references” and furthermore, requested that my book be included.

Later, it turned out that the responsibility for producing this Special Exhibit rested with the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records. Consequently, an exchange of open letters between the Japan National Archives, the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records and me has been made public

through the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact. Through these open letters, I came to realize that my book was not included in 2005 as a reference because the book clearly demonstrated the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsibility in this matter, which other scholarly books have yet to conclude. In other words, the selection of references was made based on a masochistic view of history prompted by Japan's Foreign Ministry after the War. As branches of the government, this is not acceptable or even defensible on the part of the Japan National Archives and the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records.

I asked Mr. Harada, then a member of the House of Representatives, to arrange for a meeting between Mr. Hatano Sumio, Director at the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records, and myself at the Japan Center's office on June 4, 2020. In fact, Director Hatano was not directly responsible for producing the "references" at the time (in 2005), but Mr. Hatano immediately stated that since they were planning to renew the "references" in the near future and that they would like to include my book in the references this time. Furthermore, to prove how my book is well worth being listed in the references, I presented "Questions to Be Answered," concerning the concealment of responsibility over the delay of the 'Ultimatum' during the postwar years, what impact the evasion of responsibility had and who are to blame for the concealment of responsibility. Later, Director Hatano, in his personal capacity as a scholar, sent me extremely sincere and detailed responses.

Originally, I intended to make public the "Questions to Be Answered" and Director Hatano's reply to show the reasonable basis of my protest. However, I came to think that if I had done this better, then this issue would simply end up being a personal matter, without any benefit to society at large. Upon reflection, during my discussion with Director Hatano, I came up with an idea of publishing a book instead, criticizing Yoshida Shigeru in the form of a dialogue.

It has been nearly a year and a half. On December 20, 2021, on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of the War between Japan and the United States, I published a book *A Disease Called Yoshida Shigeru—Will Japan Return to the World?* (Jiyu-Sha). Its sequel, *Sequel: A Disease Called Yoshida Shigeru—Will Japan Return to the World?* (Jiyu-Sha) is slated for publication on January 23, 2022. These two books are far richer in content than the afore-mentioned "Questions to Be Answered" and letters exchanged. I sincerely hope that those who are interested in my case against the Japan National Archives and the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records will read these books.

Initially, I intended to ask for responses to the "Questions to Be Answered" and to show them to the public while at the same time demanding an apology from the Japan National Archives and the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records. However, my book, *Study on Japan's Diplomacy after the*

*Opening of the War between Japan and the United States*, was included in the “references” on December 2020. My two new books discussing and criticizing Yoshida Shigeru were recently and soon to be published are far more significant as social tools than my personal questions and response letter. Therefore, I withdrew my “Questions to Be Answered,” the need for a response and stopped asking for an apology from the Japan National Archives and the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records.

I was able to reach a satisfactory and meaningful conclusion, greatly owing to Mr. Hatano Sumio, Director at Japan Center for Asian Historical Records. With much gratitude to Mr. Hatano, I would like to conclude my final report on this issue.

I also extend my heart-felt gratitude to Mr. Harada Yoshiaki, who made tremendous efforts in realizing a fruitful resolution, recognizing this issue as an important national matter, though not much help to him politically. Also, many thanks to Mr. Moteki Hiromichi of the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact, who contributed so much to opening the exchange of our letters and attending my meeting with Director Hatano on June 4, 2020.

Last but not least, I sincerely thank Mr. Date Kunishige and Mr. Tadashi Hama, who contributed reviews of my book to the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact during my protest.

January 24, 2022

Sugihara Seishiro