

- Q What was the function of the Mobilization Bureau?
- A The function of the General Mobilization Bureau was to control all material and man-power in Japan. They would ration material to be used in certain industries and allot man-power and material to the important industries. Although this General Mobilization Bureau had as one of its functions the control over man-power, during the war in Japan, this authority was more or less taken over by the Army. In the War Ministry they had a mobilization section which had great power.
- Q You don't expect us to believe that your section had nothing to do at all with Chinese labor, do you?
- A I would say that I did not have any direct dealings concerning this China labor problem. When this request came up, I did the liaison work with the other ministries.
- Q I know that you did not have anything to do with this, or rather I didn't say that you did, but I am trying to get information and you know more than you have been telling us, isn't that right?
- A Yes, I understand your situation, but concerning this problem, I do not know more than what I said. I can add two or three more points.
- Q You have not given us any information at all, but you said your Bureau was connected with liaison. Now if it was connected with liaison, you must know something about it.
- A It was just liaison in connection with our section and what was done exclusive of our section, and I do not know any details of what plans were made.
- Q Did you ever attend any liaison meetings with other sections concerning Chinese labor?
- A I have never attended any such meeting.
- Q Who in your section did?
- A I do not think there were any more who are in position to represent a liaison conference from the section.
- Q What do you mean when you say your section had to do with liaison, if no one in your section attended liaison meetings?
- A When I said liaison in the beginning, I did not mean that we had conferences. This liaison was calling up the other ministries concerned who would be able to take this Chinese labor problem up and maybe I did the liaison on the telephone calling up some section, or some subordinate may have done it, but it was just making connections so that this problem of importing Chinese labor would be taken up.
- Q How was the problem brought to you in the first place?
- A As I have said, although I do not remember the exact details, the request on these problems either came from the Mobilization Section of the Bureau, or the Coal Bureau, and I made the contact for him.
- Q Request for what?
- A The request was the desire that these sections or bureaus concerned would like to have connections made with the other ministries who would be able to take up the Chinese labor problem.
- Q You mean you handled requests for labor from the other bureaus?
- A Yes, I just took up the matter and arranged for making of connections between these people concerned on the Chinese problem with other ministries who had connection with Chinese labor. That would be the end of my section's duty.

Q To whom did you transfer these requests?

A These requests would be forwarded to the section that would be connected with Chinese labor of the War Ministry, the GEA Ministry and the Welfare Ministry.

Q What sections were these?

A These requests would be forwarded to the General Affairs Section, just like my section in our Ministry of the GEA and Welfare Ministries, and the Military Affairs Section of the War Ministry. Since I did not do the actual thing, it would be the normal procedure, and I am sure that these sections were contacted.

Q Did they have a labor bureau in the Munitions Ministry?

A I think there was a section or some personnel assigned within the General Mobilization Bureau, but it could not have been a big section or department.

Q Well, who in the ministry handled the wages, allowances and management of the laborers under the jurisdiction of the Munitions Ministry?

A There were no such sections in the Munitions Ministry; they would come under the Welfare Ministry.

Q I know this much; I know that the Munitions Ministry handled the wages, allowances, management and other administrative work of the Chinese laborers who worked in the industries under the jurisdiction of the Munitions Ministry. I want to know what sections in the Munitions Ministry would have handled that?

A I cannot think that there was such a system, but if there was such a system carried out, it would be with the bureau in which these laborers were used. For instance, the Coal Bureau would have a section to look after the Chinese laborers under their jurisdiction, but I still think that without the consent of the Welfare Ministry this would have been impossible.

Q I also know that the method in securing these laborers was for the industries to make application to the Ministries concerned and the Ministries made application to the Home Ministry or the Welfare Ministry for the allotment of these laborers. Now what section of the Munitions Ministry would handle that?

A Since none of those requests came through to my section, I do not know, but I believe it would go to the Mobilization Section of the General Mobilization Bureau.

Q Representatives of the various ministries had meetings from time to time regarding the various problems arising from the Chinese labor plan, and the Munitions Ministry was reported at these conferences. Now, who would be the one in the Munitions Ministry to represent the Munitions Ministry at these conferences?

A If there were representatives from the Munitions Ministry, he would have been from the Labor Department of the Mobilization Section of the General Mobilization Bureau.

Q And who was that?

A I have no idea who it was.

Q Who were the Chiefs of the other bureaus in the Munitions Ministry at that time?

A I know very few people in the Ministry because I was a Navy man. There are three or four names that I recognize who were connected with this section, but I am vague on some. The names are: Chief of the Machine Bureau, <sup>MINOBE, Yoji</sup> Chief of the General Mobilization Bureau who was my superior - SHIINA, Etsuburo; and there was another big section equivalent to a

bureau called the Scrap Metal Reprocessing Headquarters, whose Chief was NAMBA, Keichi; and I think he later became Chief of the Coal Section and of the Fuel Bureau. The man before NAMBA in this Coal Section was YAMAGUCHI, Rokuhei. The Chief of the Petroleum Section of the Fuel Bureau was YAMAGUCHI, Mazumi, for awhile at least, I remember. Further, I may be wrong, as to the exact position they held in the bureaus of the Munitions Ministry.

Q Did you know KISHI's private secretary?

A I cannot recall the name at present. I remember that it was a man.

Q Did you know Minister AOKI?

A I never did meet him.

Q Did you know his secretary, Count WATANABE?

A I do not know him.

Q How many laborers were imported for the industries under the jurisdiction of the Munitions Ministry?

A I have no idea of the numbers.

Q Do you know how they were treated?

A I do not know anything concerning treatment of the laborers. I just recall that when this talk was brought up, one of the problems for discussion was, "Could Japan properly feed these Chinese laborers when Japan herself did not have enough food for her own people." I recall there was an argument on this question.

Q Where did you hear this discussion?

A It was from somebody that had access to one of these conferences and he talked to me about it while having a chat.

Q Somebody from the Munitions Ministry?

A I heard this from somebody in one of these chats, but I do not remember who it was.

INTERROGATION OF  
MORISHIGE, Tateo

Interrogator: Philip F. Cheles  
Interpreter: John Ehara  
Stenographer: Ellen S. Hecht

Name: Tateo Morishige

Address: Tokyo to, Minato-ku, Azabu,  
Sakurada-cho, 97

Telephone: Akasaka (48) - 2021

Occupation: President of the UETSU Mine Co.

GOVERNMENT SERVICE

April 1925: Probationary government official  
at Kwantong Territorial Government.

April 1926: Became regular government official  
at above office.

June 1929: Secretary in the Administra-  
tion Bureau of the Overseas  
Affairs Ministry.

July 1934: Chief of ~~the~~ Planning <sup>Section</sup> ~~Bureau~~ of  
the Administration Bureau in  
Overseas Affairs Ministry

April 1935: Chief of the East Asia Affairs  
Section, Overseas Affairs  
Bureau, Overseas Affairs Ministry.

April 1936: Immigration Bureau Chief in  
Manchuria.

December 1938: Accountant Section Chief of  
the Overseas Affairs Ministry.

November 1940: Chief of the Administration Depart-  
ment of the Kwantong Bureau.

January 1942: South Sea Affairs Bureau Chief  
of the Overseas Affairs Ministry.

November 1942: ~~Councillor~~ <sup>勸</sup> ~~Consular~~ of the GEA Ministry

October 1943: ~~Councillor~~ <sup>勸</sup> ~~Consular~~ of the Philippine Embassy

January 1945: ~~Councillor~~ <sup>勸</sup> ~~Consular~~ of the GEA Ministry

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August 1945: Chief of the Administration Bureau  
of the GEA Ministry.

June 1946: End of my duty with the govern-  
ment office.

August 1946: Purged.

Questions by Mr. Cheles:

Q What school did you graduate from?

A I was graduated from the Tokyo Imperial University  
in 1925 and majored in law. In November 1942 you  
became consular of the GEA Ministry and remained  
in that capacity until October 1943. Is that  
correct? Yes that is correct.

Q Do you recall at that time that the Planning Board  
held a Ministers' Conference and decided to experi-  
ment with labor which would be recruited in China  
and brought to Japan?

A During that time I did not know of any plan to bring  
Chinese laborers into Japan.

Q When did you first hear of this?

A When I became the Consular at the GEA Ministry  
in January 1945, I was informed of this plan.

Q In what way were you connected with the Chinese labor  
situation in January 1945?

A I think about the end of January Vice Minister of  
the GEA Ministry, Shimpei Takeuchi, informed me  
that Chinese labor which had been recruited in  
China was being used in different industries and  
mines in Japan and he also informed me that the  
following ministries were concerned in handling  
the Chinese laborers: Welfare, Home, Agricultural,  
Commerce and Industry, GEA, Finance and the War  
Ministry. He requested me to be at any conference  
which these ministries held regularly and to act as  
liaison officer between GEA and the other ministries  
mentioned.

Q Was this an official position that you were appointed  
to by the Vice Minister?

A Yes. A temporary bureau was established to handle  
the Chinese labor situation and I was the chief of  
that bureau.

Q Previous to January 1945 did you have any knowledge  
whatsoever that Chinese labor recruited in China was  
being used in Japan?

A No.

Q You continued in this same capacity from January 1945  
until the end of the war? Is that correct?

A Yes. That is correct. In addition to being chief  
of the Labor Bureau in the GEA Ministry I had other

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duties which consisted of training young government officers in the GEA Ministry.

Q Mr. Morishige do you know what methods were used in recruiting Chinese laborers in Japan?

A When I first became chief of the bureau in the GEA Section Vice Minister Takeuchi told me that these laborers were being procured from China by voluntary methods and some consisted of prisoners of war, civil prisoners and other Chinese, who contracted to work in Japan for a specified number of years. <sup>released</sup> ~~released~~ <sup>released</sup> ~~released~~

Q Did you ever hear that a great number of Chinese were forced against their will to come to Japan to work?

A Absolutely no. I heard only that they were contracted for.

Q Did you ever hear that a great number of these laborers were ten and twelve year old children and that some were old men of fifty years and above and that a great number of them were diseased when they were procured?

A When I first became connected with the Labor Bureau in January 1945, I did not know the ages of the laborers nor the conditions under which they were procured. However I wanted to discover the conditions as they existed in the mines, construction camps and ship building companies where these Chinese laborers were imported. Therefore in March 1945 I made an official inspection tour of Omuta mine, Moji harbor, Oeyama nickel mine and the ship building company in Hyogo-ken and construction company in Shizuoka-ken. It was there that I noticed that some of the laborers were youths of about sixteen and old men.

Q During this inspection trip did you at any time receive any reports of the food shortage, long hours of overworking, clothing shortage, and of the beatings and torturing of Chinese laborers by their Japanese guards?

A When I was on these inspection trips, I always advised those responsible for rations, clothing, and housing to supply these laborers adequately, but if not possible to do the best they could. I discovered that the laborers who were employed in the mines were better off than those who were employed in road and house construction. I spoke to the Chinese laborers myself asking them questions about their treatment and care. They all replied that they had no complaints and that if any of them became ill, they were immediately taken care of.

Q Mr. Morishige how then do you account for the high death rate in all these labor camps accelerated to such a great extent that in July 1945 there occurred one hundred deaths in one camp. If you tell me that these laborers who became ill were well taken care of, how do you account for the high death rate?

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- A As far as the death rate is concerned, I heard that it was due to the fact that a great number of these laborers when recruited in China were already ill. Because it was necessary to fill a certain quota of laborers in Japan, all types of laborers including the sick were brought to Japan. I also heard that around March 1945 there occurred a number of deaths at Fukuoka labor camp. This I heard was a result of acute pneumonia.
- Q Was it true Mr. Morishige that the Japanese government was using Chinese labor to step up the war effort?
- A During the war a serious labor shortage occurred in Japan due to the drafting of Japanese into the military service, and therefore it became necessary to replace this labor shortage by recruiting Chinese in China and bringing them to Japan.
- Q Did you at any time in your official capacity sit in at a conference in which the recruiting of Chinese labor was discussed?
- A Absolutely not.
- Q Your main responsibilities in this labor bureau were concerned with the drafting of Chinese labor and their distribution in Japan?
- A When I was assigned to the Labor Bureau, I was told that my responsibilities were to see that the many Chinese labor camps and workers were provided with an adequate supply of food, clothing and housing.
- Q Did you have anything at all to do in planning the recruiting of Chinese labor in China or in their distribution?
- A No, but I recall on one occasion when an official from the Japanese Embassy in Peiping visited Japan, I requested him to notify the embassy in Peiping to recruit healthy laborers and not the old, sick and infirm.
- Q As chief of the Labor Bureau in Tokyo, how many times have you received reports from the Chinese labor camps in Japan that the old, sick and the infirm were being used as slave labor and that they were being beaten and tortured by their Japanese guards sometimes causing death?
- A I heard only one report submitted to me while in this section concerning Chinese labor. Sometime in July 1945 at the Hanoaka mine some Chinese killed one of the camp managers because of mistreatment. That is the only time that I recall hearing of mistreatment of Chinese laborers.
- Q Now Mr. Morishige isn't it a fact that after this incident occurred that there was a large conference held in which the section chief of each ministry as well as the Minister, Vice Minister and yourself were present?
- A A conference was held at which the chiefs of the different ministries were present and I read the report to them concerning the riot at Hanoaka.

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It was decided at that time that the Home Ministry would assume the responsibility of correcting such measures and to prevent their repetition. Later I also reported this at another conference of the GEA Bureau officials.

Q Previous to this occasion do you absolutely deny that it was within your knowledge that the old, sick and the infirm Chinese laborers were denied hospital treatment, that they were being overworked under severe conditions, that they were ill fed, ill clothed, and beaten and tortured by their Japanese guards?

A When I assumed my position in the Labor Bureau in January, I was informed that in some camps there was a greater food shortage than in others. This was one of the reasons I made an inspection trip of the labor camps. At these labor camps I discovered that the Japanese supervisors were doing their duties as required of them and I could find no evidence of irregularities such as you described. Perhaps there was a food shortage greater than there should be and perhaps some Japanese ~~were~~ taking a cut of this food. However, I do deny emphatically having any knowledge whatsoever of beatings and torturing and of the ill being refused hospital treatment. 本

Q Can you inform me if the Japanese who were responsible for the conditions existing at the Hanoaka mine were in any way punished or even reprimanded?

A I believe that the Hanoaka mine case was under investigation when the war ended.

Q Who was your supervisor?

A Akiyoshi Tajiri, from April 1945. Previous to that it was Vice Minister Shimpei Takeuchi.

Q How long was Takeuchi a Vice Minister?

A Since I was in the Philippines I am not certain, but I believe that he was appointed in September 1944 and served until April 1945.

Q Were you at the Philippine Embassy until January 1945?

A I returned to Japan in December 1944 but was appointed in January 1945.

Q During November 1942 you were <sup>Councillor</sup> ~~consular~~ of the GEA Ministry were you not? 本

A Yes.

Q At that time it was decided at a Vice Ministers' conference to conscript Chinese labor in China. Do you recall that?

A Absolutely no. I never heard of the plan at all.

Q What were your duties as a consular at the GEA Ministry at that time?

A My main responsibilities during that period were importing cotton from China and increasing its output in the South Seas area. I had nothing whatsoever to do with the planning or policies of conscripting Chinese labor in China or their distribution in Japan nor had I heard anything about such a plan. It was not until January 1945 when I was appointed as Chief of the Labor Bureau at the GEA Ministry did I hear of Chinese laborers being used in Japan. 本

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