

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(PACIFIC)
APO # 234
C/O POSTMASTER, SAN FRANCISCO

INTERROGATION NO. 247 PLACE Tokyo
(Obtain from G-2) Oil and Chemical No. 54. DATE 7 November '45

Division of origin Oil Chemical and Rubber

Subject: Relationship between Private Industry and the I J N
in the Production of Explosives and Propellants.

Reference: USSBS Interrogation # 180.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:
KISHIMOTO, Hajima - Chairman of the Board, Chemical Industry
Control Association; Technical Vice Admiral
I J N (retired 1935).

Where interviewed CICA offices - 7th Floor Mitsukoshi Depart-
ment store.

Interrogator: Lt. Comdr. W. H. EVANS, USNR.

Interpreter: Lt. R. M. BOYD, USNR.

Allied Officers Present: Mr. J. G. Schaafsma (Oil and Chemicals
Division)
Capt. Purl (GHQ)
Lt. Comdr. Cooley (NavTechJap)

Summary:

1. Prior to his retirement in 1935 Admiral Kishimoto held a key position in the I J N production of explosives and propellants, advancing from chief engineer at Hiratsuka Arsenal in 1921 to Superintendent in 1930. From 1936 until 1942 he was employed by the Mitsui Chemical Industries, Ltd. in the capacity of consulting engineer. In December 1942 he went with the CICA as Chairman of the Board.

2. Mr. Kishimoto attended the Production-Allocation Conference meetings starting in 1943 and represented industry in the matter of controlling the allocation of production and raw material in his capacity as Chairman of the CICA. Private industry exercised no control in these meetings, it being the sole function of the CICA representative to inform the Conference of the capabilities of industry.

3. Excepting explosives, propellants and certain items of chemical warfare ordnance, the I J N did not engage in the manufacture of chemical munitions. It was established by Mr. Kishimoto that the I J N did not produce with its own facilities such products as (1) Synthetic Rubber, (2) Tetra Ethyl Lead, (3) Organic Glass (Yuki Garasu).

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

DATE

A C T I V I T Y

- 1908 Graduated Tokyo Imperial University, Industrial Chemistry Department.
- 1908 Accepted a Technical Commission in the I J N. At this time the I J N had no arsenals in the popular sense. Supply of explosives and propellants was made by arrangements with Britain. Actual production by the I J N in Japan was limited to one small plant at Shimose making picric acid. Ammunition for the war with Russia in 1904-1905 was supplied by the British.
- 1909 Under the supervision and management of the British production of propellants were started at Hiratsuka.
- 1915 At the outbreak of hostilities Kishimoto was ordered to England where his mission was to learn the explosives "business".
- 1918 The I J N assumed control of the management and production of explosives and propellants at Hiratsuka.
- 1920 War College.
- 1921 Ordered to Hiratsuka Naval Arsenal.
- 1922 Maizuru Naval Arsenal started production of explosives (picric acid).
- 1923 The I J N bought a private plant at Shimose (Kagaku Seijuosho) and moved the installations to Maizuru.
- 1924 The basic process for the manufacture of propellants at Hiratsuka was changed from the so-called wet or solvent process to the dry or so-called solventless process. The reason for this change was attributed to the fact that the former process, installed by the British, yielded a grain of powder that was not uniform. The wet process, borrowed from the Germans, not only overcame this difficulty but also reduced the drying time required.
- 1929 Promoted to Chief Engineer at Hiratsuka.
- 1930 Promoted to Superintendent at Hiratsuka.
- 1935 Retired with the rank of Vice Admiral.
- 1936 Employed by Mitsui Chemical Industries, Ltd. as consulting engineer.
- 1938 I J N Funaoka Arsenal started production.
- 1942 Employed by the CICA.

RECORDS

With respect to information concerning records covering production, stores and consumption of explosives and propellants by the I J N, Mr. Kishimoto had nothing to add to the picture already developed. (See USSBS Interrogation # 180). He substantiated the claim already made that records for the three I J N Arsenals had been destroyed by General order, but suggested the possibility that the Bureau of Industry might have something in their files on production by private plants operating under contract. It was pointed out that the authorities responsible for formulating plans for production of explosives and propellants must have had access to such figures in order to make quotas and plans. Mr. Kishimoto stated that in his opinion the Planning Board operated without the benefit of such production records and that to the best of his knowledge, copies of the official I J N Arsenals production reports were never made available to authorities outside the strictly military circle. When questioned as to the feasibility of reconstructing production figures from amounts of the various raw materials supplied to the I J N Arsenals from private sources, he replied that it might be possible to arrive at indicative figures provided the exact processes and reactions are known. When asked about the individual best qualified to reproduce records from memory, he thought that Captain Niimi, I J N would be best qualified (See USSBS Interrogation # 180). The CICA and the Bureau of Industry are the sources for records on production figures of raw materials for the I J N Arsenals as well as for the private plants producing under contract.

ALLOCATION OF RAW MATERIAL

Allocation of raw material for I J N Arsenals and for private plants producing explosives and propellants under contract with the I J N was controlled by a three cornered group called the Production-Allocation Conference (Seisan Haito Kaigi). Six representatives formed the membership of the Board. The representatives and their affiliations are tabulated as follows:

1. Munitions Ministry Representative
2. I J N Technical Department (Kansai Hombu) Representative.
3. Tokyo # 2 Arsenal Representative.
4. War Ministry Representative.
5. Air General Affairs Headquarters Representative.
6. CICA Representative.

These representatives from the Army, Navy and government met quarterly and made raw material allocation plans on a quarterly basis. Production quotas for the ensuing period were also made at these meetings. The aviation representative was an I J N Air Officer during the early meetings but later representation was shifted to the Air General Headquarters (Koku Hombu). Private industry participated in the Conference only to a minor extent. This amounted to making estimates of the quantities of the various raw materials that would be available. Mr. Kishimoto advised that these Conferences were going on when he was assigned the detail of representing private industry through the CICA. (December 1942).

The mechanics of allocation control commencing with the basic chemical raw materials is illustrated in the following example. The total amount of salt available to all users was calculated on the basis of domestic production estimates together with imports. The Army and the Navy figured their requirements for all uses and what was left over was made available to private industry. Allocations decisions up to this point were made by the Munitions Ministry. About half of all available salt from domestic production and imports went to the Alkali Industry. Caustic Soda, one of the important end products of the alkali industry, is used in the manufacture of

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explosives and propellants and its allocation was handled by the conference. Here again the Army and Navy stated their requirements at the Conference and anything remaining would be made available to private industry for production for civilian uses. The actual amount of Caustic Soda earmarked for the I J N Arsenals was calculated from a base figure supplied by the CICA representative. The sole function of the CICA representative was to submit a report of the quantities of available materials that were required for munitions.

This system of control was complicated by the fact that certain private concerns, equipped to manufacture war material, made private deals with the military representatives "on the side" and in this manner received a cut from the lump sum of raw material earmarked for the military. This was over and above their share of the allocation to private industry. Such private, undercover negotiations so complicated the control picture that the CICA could not operate to the satisfaction of all private members and a serious situation resulted.

There were many ramifications to the general subject of allocation control mentioned by Mr. Kishimoto during the interrogation. However, due to the importance of this subject, and in order to confine the scope of the interview to the subject at hand, it was decided to request Mr. Kishimoto to discuss this subject with other interested directors of the CICA and prepare a report covering all the various phases of the allocation and production control organizations. This report will be forthcoming in a few days.

MISCELLANEOUS

With the exception of one relatively small operation at Maizuru the I J N did not attempt to manufacture explosives prior to 1935 on account of the difficulty encountered with the basic process. Engineering difficulty hampered the production of a product of uniform specifications.

Private plants, however, managed to produce explosives in sufficient quantities until 1935 when the I J N developed their own processes to the point where they satisfied the demands at least partially. Private concerns producing explosives for the I J N before this date were:

1. Mitsui Kagaku Kaisha - Picric Acid.
2. Yura Senryo - Picric Acid.
3. Kagaku Seijuosho - Picric Acid.

REMARKS

Mr. Kishimoto was extremely cooperative, offering on a number of occasions to determine the answers to questions which he was not prepared to discuss at the moment. He appeared intelligent but did not have what might be called a memory for figures, having to resort to a notebook for dates etc. on numerous occasions. There is no apparent reason to discredit any of the information given in this report since the answers to the questions as given by Mr. Kishimoto are believed to be his convictions. Despite this seemingly favorable aspect, the interrogation failed to produce the background material hoped for since Mr. Kishimoto is not believed to have been close enough to the late military clique to have warranted their confidence in matters dealing with overall planning for the war.