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HEADQUARTERS
U.S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(PACIFIC)
C/O POSTMASTER, SAN FRANCISCO

INTERROGATION NO. 89

PLACE: TOKYO
DATE: 9 OCTOBER 1945
TIME: 1400

Division of Origin: Basic Materials Division.

Subject: Iron and Steel Production and Allocation.

Personnel Interrogated and Background of Each:

Admiral TOYODA, Teijiro, Minister of Munitions in the Suzuki Cabinet.

Where Interviewed: Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Interrogator: Lt.(jg) R.I. GAILAND, USNR.

Interpreter: Lt.(jg) I.K. LANSNER, USNR.

Allied Officers Present:

Mr. Paul NITZE, Vice Chairman, U.S.S.B.S.
Lt. Comdr. W. WILDS, USNR, G-2, U.S.S.B.S.
Lieut. D.A. BURR, USNR, Basic Materials Division.
Lieut. S.H. ROBOCK, USNR, Basic Materials Division.
Lieut. R.C. BEYER, USNR, Basic Materials Division.

SUMMARY

Steel was the first material rationed but not the yard stick for the Japanese allocation plan. Steel production was a particular concern of various planning committees in the government from 1938 on. The expansion program for steel fell short because of raw materials shortages. Production fell off from 1944 because of transportation losses. Special allocation of shipping to steel raw materials failed to increase imports.

Distribution:
All Divisions.

At the meeting the charts entitled, "Charts Showing Fluctuation and Forecasts for the Materials Mobilization Plan," prepared by the Munitions Ministry, Total Mobilization Bureau, Mobilization Department, Section 1, and dated October, 1944, were presented by the minister. After an attempt to explain such charts the minister turned them over together with support-ables for reproduction and translation. They may be seen in the Overall Economics Effects Division of U.S.S.B.S.

The meeting was largely taken up with arrangements to make available all the records of the Munitions Ministry for study by the Overall Economics Division of U.S.S.B.S. But the following information was obtained by the interrogation:

Allocation Program.

Admiral TOYODA was asked if carbon steel had been the basic yardstick of their allocations plan. He replied that steel was the first product to be rationed, 1938, but that it became necessary to ration other products in the following order: coal, oil, salt.

Steel Production.

In February, 1938 the Iron and Steel Consolidated Committee was formed to advise the Department of Commerce and Industry with regard to plans for increasing steel production. This committee was succeeded in June, 1938 by the Planning Board (Seisan Ryoku Kakujū Keikaku) which set as the goal for steel expansion 10,000,000 tons a year. This goal was not reached because of a shortage of raw materials.

With reference to the chart of steel production which falls off with the first quarter of 1944, Admiral TOYODA gave as the principal reason lack of transportation resulting in raw materials shortages in the Home Islands. To advise the Munitions Ministry on the special problems of increasing the output of steel in this emergency there was formed in 1943 the Tekko Zosan Kyogikai. This council consisted of approximately 30 members including two representatives of the Army and Navy, the chiefs of bureaus of each ministry, the directors of the Tekko Tosei Kai and representatives of the Japan Coal Company and the Japan Iron Works. The Chairman of the council was the Munitions Minister. Its first step was to obtain an increase in the shipping allocated to raw materials for steel production. This shipping allocation was obtained not by turning over ships to the steel industry but by increasing the priority of steel raw materials in shipping allocations. That is, such raw materials were given a "3" priority in a system which classified into "1", normal shipping traffic, "2", special traffic and "3", most urgent traffic. In addition some of the Army and Navy shipping was turned over to carry steel raw materials. Despite such increased tonnage allocations and the priority given this cargo, imports of steel-making raw materials into the Home Islands decreased because of increased shipping losses.

Shortages.

Asked about shortages of specific metals Admiral TOYODA replied that in many cases shortages depended upon the stock pile situation. About many stock piles he did not know for they were under the control of the Army and Navy - not the Munitions Ministry, "This may seem ridiculous, but it is so."

(a) Aluminum.

The aircraft program was never held up on account of an aluminum shortage. However, a shortage was foreseen. Alumina facilities were evidently not sufficient to meet the requirements, since the exhaustion of bauxite supplies. Shale alumina was satisfactory for aircraft aluminum, in his opinion. Asked if alumina was being produced from clay in Japan proper, he said, "Oh, yes."

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Asked specifically where he didn't know. He stated that the wooden aircraft program was begun in anticipation and not out of immediate need.

(b) Copper.

A shortage was felt toward the end of the war. It was not critical before, however.

(c) Zinc and Lead.

Shortages were not acute. This was dependent on the stock pile situation.

(d) Nickel.

There was a shortage here. But he pointed out with a laugh, that before much nickel went into armor plate, and the absence of shipbuilding relieved the shortage in that respect.

Distribution:

All Divisions.

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