

HEADQUARTERS
U. S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(PACIFIC)
APO 234
C/O POSTMASTER, SAN FRANCISCO

INTERROGATION NO: 86

PLACE: Tokyo
DATE : 12 Oct 45

Division of Origin: M. F. C.

SUBJECT: Navy Construction Dept. - Manpower Requirements

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Capt K. KIJIMA - Head of 1st Section of Naval Construction Department.

Where interviewed: Kaigunkan

Interrogator: Lt. A. Bagdon

Interpreter: Lt (jg) Deane

Allied Officers Present: Lt (jg) B. Hirschtritt
Lt Call

SUMMARY:

1. History of Manpower Requirements of Construction Department.
2. Routine for Obtaining Labor
3. Supply of Permanent, Temporary and Military Workers for Naval Construction Work.

INTERROGATION

1. Summary of statements: Prior to 1941, civilians required for naval construction work were hired as casual laborers usually through labor contractors. The increasing tightness of the labor market in 1941 necessitated the reorganization of the Naval Construction Department to give it a more direct hand in hiring labor. Since 1941 all means were used to obtain required workers by using the old contract system as well as direct hiring and conscription.

The Navy, thus secured direct control over its workers as contrasted with the former period in which contractors controlled the labor market.

2. Routine for obtaining workers: Requirements for labor were determined by the Navy Ministry and passed on to the Welfare Ministry. The latter sent orders out to each prefecture for the requisite number of workmen. On the prefectural level, in accordance with the National Mobilization Law, the mobilization section of the Police Department had the task of conscripting labor. The Munitions Ministry, according to Captain KIJIMA merely compiled the statistics of the number of workers involved and had no determining voice since the Navy dealt directly with the Welfare Ministry.

The three main branches of the Navy concerned with hiring civilian labor were the Construction Department, the Shipbuilding Department and Air Headquarters. Of the total number of civilian laborers hired by the Navy, the Construction Department controlled about 20% or less.

Permanent Workmen

In 1941 there were only 11,500 "permanent" workmen-- attached to the Construction Department. This figure approximately doubled by 1942. From 1942 to 1944, the number of "permanent" workers rose sharply from 21,500 to 165,000. The tightening of the labor market resulted in a decline in the rate of hiring. The increase from 1944 to 1945 was only

35,000 bringing the total to 200,000. By the end of the war the number of "permanent" workment totaled only 202,000. Of this final total 119,000 were listed as working at the front (including the Chinkai and Takao areas). The manpower situation was described as desperate for the final months of hostilities and the technical skill of the workers was considered to be extremely low.

Military Workers

In 1944, the manpower situation had become extremely difficult, and it became necessary to use the national militia (Kokumin-hei) for construction work. The number of these drafted "military" workers rose slowly each month from early 1944 to reach a total of 34,000 in February 1945. From February to July 1945, the total more than doubled, climbing to 83,500. Their numbers were considered insufficient, however, to meet the Navy requirements for the construction and repair of airfields, tunnels, etc.

Temporary Workmen

In order to fill the gap in labor supply, the Navy was obliged to call on women, students and other short-time workers. These workers were obtained through the procedure formulated in the National Mobilization Act. Labor in this category was not sent outside the country. By the end of the war, they totaled 17,600, about one third being students.

It was stated that there was no regular system of granting departments priority claims on labor. Questioning revealed that during the greater part of the war, the Construction Department had a low claim on the manpower pool. Not until the damage to installations resulting from air raids became heavy early in 1945, were attempts made to give the Construction Department what may be termed a "high priority" on labor.

Documents received at interview:

- (1.) A brief summary of the labor situation in the Naval Construction Headquarters.

- (2.) Table of number of laborers in Naval Construction Department, August 1945.
- (3.) Graph of increase in Number of workers attached to Naval Construction Battallion, 1944-45.
- (4.) Graph of increase in number of permanent workers attached to Naval Construction Department.

NUMBER OF LABOURERS ATTACHED TO NAVAL
CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT

on 15 August 1945

Location	"Permanent" Workmen	Construction Battallion	Temporary Workmen	Total
Headquarters	3,447	----	51	3,498
Yokosuka	25,060	19,100	3,074	27,234
Kure	14,247	14,100	5,656	34,003
Sasebo	9,132	14,100	1,834	25,066
Maizuru	10,440	7,700	4,644	22,784
Onwato	16,752	4,000	269	21,021
Osaka	4,002	6,000	2,053	12,055
Front	119,276	18,000	----	137,276
TOTAL	202,356	83,500	17,581	303,437

Source: Naval Construction Department