

Secret

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THE EMPLOYMENT OF WAR PRISONERS
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1. Recent condition of the demand and supply of labor in Japan and the decision on the principles of employing war prisoners.

The labor shortage problem in Japan has become quite acute, becoming more and more serious recently. In order to meet this situation, many people are of the opinion that we had better employ, when necessary, the war prisoners who are now interned at Zentsuji, or at places in the south as a result of our success in the Greater East Asia War.

As a result, the Cabinet Planning Board entrusted by the Army Administrative Department for War Prisoners, held a conference on August 15 regarding the transfer of war prisoners to Japan proper and their employment. At this conference the following principles were discussed and decided to be carried out, in order to transfer war prisoners to Japan and employ them to mitigate the labor shortage and to carry out special important work:

- I. Of the industries in the National Mobilization Plan, war prisoners shall be employed for mining, stevedoring and engineering and construction work for national defense. For the time being, war prisoners shall be employed in stevedoring in important ports.
- II. For the time being, some 3,500 war prisoners shall be sent to Japan. According to results, the number shall be increased later.
- III. The formalities regarding the employment of war prisoners was arranged by Prefectural Governors through the Welfare Ministry.
- IV. In the prefectures, the Prefectural Governor, or the labor management organization appointed by the Governor, may, with the consent of the Army, make plans and take charge of the employment and supervision of war prisoners at the place of labor.
- V. Prisoner of war camps for stevedores to be brought to Japan for the present, following this plan, will be set up as follows:

Tokyo	600 persons	Hirohata	100 persons
Yokohama	600 "	Moji	500 "
Osaka	600 "	Tobata	500 "
Kobe	500 "	Muroran	300 "

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2. Employment of war prisoners in the Zentsuji Internment Camp.

Before the above plan was set up, part of the war prisoners interned in the Zentsuji Internment Camp were already employed as laborers. That is, at this Zentsuji Prisoner of War Camp which was opened on January 14, about 450 American prisoners of war, etc. from Guam, had been interned, of which 150 Americans were sent to Osaka on June 9, interned at the City Gymnasium at Yawatayamatsuno-cho, Minato-ku, Osaka, and had been working as stevedores since June 12. The outline of their working condition is as follows: They work eight hours per day, engaged in simple stevedoring work; as for efficiency in handling light loads, they do not show much difference compared with the Japanese laborers, but in handling heavy loads, or in work requiring skill, their efficiency is very low. As for their wages, the Osaka District Harbor Transportation Stevedoring Control Office collects two yen per person per day from the direct employers of the war prisoners. The money is either handed in to the Army, used for the expenses of the prisoners of war recreation equipment, or for national defense offerings and general expenses.

The comparatively cheap wage has called the attention of men in the trade to the advantage of using the prisoners of war, and is helping to increase the demand for their employment. The employment of war prisoners, as stated above, has resulted in controlling the rise of black market wages of longshoremen, improving the efficiency of work, preventing longshoremen in the regular employ from being scattered, etc.

Also, at the Takamatsu branch of the Nippon Transportation Company, located at 21, 4-Chome, Shinminato-cho, about twenty prisoners of war interned in the Zentsuji Prisoner of War Camp were employed daily from August 22 for about a month in the Takamatsu Station for stevedoring to speed up the transportation of materials in war-time, with satisfactory results.

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Statement of Source and Authenticity

I, SHIBATA, Kosaburo hereby certify that I am officially connected with the Japanese Government in the following capacity: Administrative Officer of the Home Ministry, and that as such official I have custody of the document hereto attached consisting of 81 pages, dated September, 1942, and described as follows: Foreign Affairs Monthly Report

I further certify that the attached record and document is an official document of the Japanese Government, and that it is part of the official archives and files of the following named ministry or department (specifying also the file number or citation, if any, or any other official designation of the regular location of the document in the archives or files): Home Ministry.

Signed at Tokyo on this

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/s/ Kosaburo SHIBATA
Signature of Official

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Witness: Seiichi OKADA /s/

Second Class Administrative Officer
of the Investigation Bureau of the
Home Ministry
Official Capacity

Statement of Official Procurement

I, J. A. Curtis, hereby certify that I am associated with the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, and that the above certification was obtained by me from the above signed official of the Japanese Government in the conduct of my official business.

Signed at Tokyo on this

5th day of November, 1946

/s/ J. A. Curtis 2nd Lt.
NAME

Witness: /s/ Richard H. Larsh

Investigator, IPS
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