

HEADQUARTERS
U.S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(PACIFIC)
APO #234
c/o Postmaster, San Francisco

INTERROGATION NO. 137

PLACE: TOKYO
TIME & DATE 24 Oct. 45.

DIVISION OF ORIGIN: MORALE.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Mr. AKABANE, YUTAKA, Vice-Chief Cabinet Information Bureau.

Where interviewed: Home Ministry, Mr. AKABANE'S Office.

Interrogator: Lt. Condr., A.H. LEIGHTON

Interpreter: None.

Allied Officers Present: Major Conrad ARENSBERG.

SUMMARY:

Morale control described - From a meeting of the Board of Information with Army, Navy and other ministry representatives, decisions in regard to propaganda problems would be achieved. Board of Information would then instruct all organs of publication, radio, and the regional chiefs, who in turn instructed the prefectural governors and so on down the line to the lowest branches of the Government. The Board of Information also sent out men to lecture in different parts of Japan. The policy-making meetings of the Board were not regular, but called when the occasion dictated.

The Japanese policy of always promising that the next battle would be victorious and of claiming victories where there were none gradually undermined the confidence of the people. This began at Guadalcanal, but became most marked after Leyte.

During the last year of the war there was considerable friction between the people and the ministry, each blaming the other for defeats. There was no important friction between upper and lower classes, or between the Japanese and the Chinese or Koreans in Japan, though some of the imported labor from both China and Korea gave some trouble. In the last year of the war, there was a good deal of ill-feeling between the residents of rural districts and small towns on the one hand and the evacuated city dwellers on the other. The evacuees crowded the country people, caused prices to soar and did not contribute useful work to life in the country.

The main propaganda lines of the Board of Information were (1) To increase the production of planes, (2) increase the production of food, and (3) to maintain morale (confidence in victory)