

TCMS-SL

2 September 1950

SUBJECT: Visit to Kure

TO: Chief, Chugoku
Civil Affairs Region
Kure, Japan

1. Attached as inclosure # 1 is copy of report of visit to Kure, Japan submitted by the undersigned to the Commanding Officer, Tokyo QM Depot. Request that the report be brought to the attention of Mr Reese Stradley of your headquarters.

2. During my visit to Kure I requested assistance from members of your organization frequently and each request was promptly and cheerfully granted. Lt Col Minichiello, M/Sgt Smitherman, Sgt Doles and Mr Reese Stradley were particularly helpful and their assistance was greatly appreciated. Request that they be so informed.

1 Incl:
Liaison Report - Kure

Robert O. Pfeiffer
ROBERT O. PFEIFFER
Major, QMC
Station Liaison Officer

Economic File 1-46-N

15 Sept 50

ECOM 1474

*Copy for Chugoku
Civil Affairs J. H. Boney
Attn Mr Stradley
OM Sec*

HEADQUARTERS
TOKYO QUARTERMASTER DEPOT
STATION LIAISON OFFICE
APO 1051

TQMS-SL

SEP 2 1950

SUBJECT: Report of Visit to Kure, Japan

TO: Commanding Officer
Tokyo Quartermaster Depot
APO 1051

1. Following is a report of visit to Kure, Japan by the under-
signed liaison officer.

a. Purpose of Visit

(1) To investigate the possibility of obtaining
additional storage space in the Kure area for use by the Tokyo
Quartermaster Depot for Class I (non-perishable) and/or Class II/IV
supplies. (Immediate requirement for all classes).

b. Date of Visit

(1) 27 August 1950 to 29 August 1950, inclusive

c. Liaison Team Personnel

(1) Major Robert D. Peiffer
QMC, Tokyo Quartermaster Depot

d. Personnel Contacted

(1) Lt Colonel Lewis A. Minichiello
Deputy Chief, Chugoku
Civil Affairs Region
Kure, Japan

(2) Mr. Reese G. Stradley
Economics Section
Chugoku Civil Affairs Region
Kure, Japan

(3) Major W. F. Bruce
Deputy Ass't Quartermaster General
(Accommodations)
Hq British Commonwealth
Occupation Force
Kure, Japan

2. Analysis of Visit

a. Preliminary Discussion

(1) The purpose of the visit was outlined to Mr. Stradley on 27 August 1950 and to Lt Colonel Minichiello and Major Bruce on 28 August 1950. Mr. Stradley was consulted in view of his contact with industries in the area. It was explained that a minimum of 300,000 sq feet covered space with good hard-surfaced floors was desired for storage of non-perishable subsistence or as an alternate, 150,000 sq feet of covered storage with the same type floors, for storage of slow-moving Class II & IV supplies would also be considered. An interest was also indicated in a minimum of 300,000 sq feet of open storage area with good hard-standing surface, provided that suitable closed storage space for Class II & IV supplies was not available.

(2) Mr. Stradley stated on 27 August that there was little possibility of obtaining from BCOF any of the space desired since a few days past BCOF had requested information on availability of an additional 50,000 sq feet for their own use. At the same time Mr. Stradley furnished the liaison officer with a list of locations outside the Kure area as possible storage areas (see paragraph 4).

(3) On 28 August the liaison officer contacted Major W. F. Bruce of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force and Major Bruce confirmed Mr. Stradley's opinion. Major Bruce further stated that there was a possibility that their requirements for space might increase beyond their present objective; that a definite answer was not available at this time, but that an answer was expected in the not too distant future.

(4) Major Bruce suggested a tour of the Kure - Hiro area with a view to inspecting certain warehouse and open storage areas now in the custody of the Japanese Government that were not suitable for BCOF purposes but which might be suitable for the purposes of this Depot. The liaison officer accepted the suggestion. Results of the tour are indicated in paragraph 3.

3. The following buildings and open storage areas were inspected. Buildings and areas are listed in order of desirability and descriptive notes follow. The above statement is not to be construed as a recommendation to acquire the space, but merely as an

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indication of preference by the liaison officer of the cities visited and examined.

a. Building # 1h

(1) This building is immediately adjacent to Hiro station on the main railroad line of Japan National Railroad. Approximately 210,000 sq feet in a U shaped building of brick and corrugated metal construction with cement floors except for a small portion of dirt floor. Five overhead cranes and a rail line in the wings are attractive features. Roof is in good shape. This is an unheated building. Ceilings very high, possibly 40 to 60 feet. Considerable natural light from windows most of which are high enough to provide natural security. One wing used at present by Special Procurement Board on verbal agreement with the Japanese Government. Estimated cost to remove Special Procurement Board supplies is 750,000 yen. The second wing is used by Japan National Railroad. Their equipment is installed and to remove same would result in damage to the floor. Water system is said to be operative. Overhead electric lights are installed. This building is considered to be the best warehouse in the Kure - Hiro area by SCDF and other authorities in Kure.

b. Building # 3

(1) This building is located in the old Japanese Sea-plane Base area, approximately 2 miles from the Hiro station on the main line of the Japan National Railroad. It is approached on a hard sand type road which, at present, is being excavated at several places for purpose of obtaining access to some underground pipes. Approximately 20,000 sq feet of floor space is available. Six pillars located on one side of the warehouse utilize approximately 500 sq feet of the space. Sliding doors on one side of the warehouse are at least 24 feet high and open to approximately 175 feet. Sliding doors at least 30 feet wide and 24 feet high open on the front and rear of the building. A road approximately 20 feet wide passes in front of the building with an additional eight or ten feet of space being available directly in front of the building. Overhead electric lights are installed. The building is presently unheated, but it is believed that at one time the building was heated by a blower system. The roof appears to be in good condition although some repairs (small holes) would be required. Some spikes and pipes are noticeable in the floor although efforts appear to have been made to remove or flatten them. At least two sets of double windows require glass. Overhead cranes are installed. The walls are brick and corrugated metal and in some places the metal has become detached, leaving open space. One side of the building has 7 windows at ground level of which 4 would require bars. Ceiling is estimated to be at least 30 feet at low point. There are a considerable number of window panes missing from the windows that are high on the walls. SCDF authorities indicated that

the accessible road held up satisfactorily under heavy equipment hauling. The building has a cement floor. This building faces the Inland Sea which is but a short distance from the road in front of the building. Approximately fifteen feet of space separates this building from building # 4 and at least 115 feet of space separates it from building # 2 (both buildings will be described later).

c. Building # 2

(1) This building is located in the old Japanese Seaplane Base area, approximately 2 miles from the Hiro station on the main line of the Japan National Railroad. It is approached on a hard sand type road which, at present, is being excavated at several places for purpose of obtaining access to some underground pipes. Approximately 19,000 sq feet of cement floor space is available. An overhead crane is installed. A wire fence, approximately 6 feet high, with poles cemented in the floor partitions about 1/8 of the building from the remainder of the building. The poles and fence could be removed by breaking the cement. Sliding doors installed on one side of the building will open approximately 125 feet. The doors are at least 24 feet high. The doors face a potential hard-standing and driveway area. A balcony approximately 75 feet long and 30 feet wide with cement floor has been constructed on the side of the building opposite the sliding doors. Access to the balcony is obtainable via a set of stairs at each end of the balcony. The stairs are rather steep and are not in too good condition. The balcony is inclosed by wire on one side and the side wall on the other. A gate is in the wire wall in order that supplies may be placed on the balcony by using the overhead crane that is installed. Two small grease pits are in a corner on the ground floor. A small room has been constructed in one corner of the building. The building is basically corrugated metal in construction. A road approximately 20 feet wide approaches the warehouse, but the area facing the sliding doors (on the side) is the hard-standing area referred to in paragraph b (1) above. Overhead electric lights are installed. The building at present contains no heating facilities that are operative, but it is believed that at one time it was heated by a blower system. The roof appears to be in fair condition. Small holes were noted in the side walls. Ceiling is estimated to be at least 30 feet high. The access road held up satisfactorily in the past even when heavy equipment was utilized according to personnel of BCDF. A ramp from the land to the Inland Sea is immediately in front of the building. This ramp was used at high tide as a quasi-barge dock from which supplies received on large ship and barged from ship to the dock were unloaded.

d. Building # 3

(1) This building of approximately 15,000 sq ft is located in the same general vicinity of the old Seaplane Base but

closer to the Hiro station of the Japan National Railroad than buildings # 2 and 3 already described. The building appears to be a combination of 3 buildings of corrugated metal construction. The roof is in fair-to-good condition. There are many window panes missing and there are numerous small holes in the side of the building. The ceiling is approximately 30 feet high. Two rows of pillars are spaced through the building. The pillars are 15 feet apart in the row and the two rows are 45 feet apart. There are 3 doors of adequate size in the front and 3 in the rear of the building. There are 12 holes approximately 3 feet wide x 3 feet long, several inches in depth in the cement floor where machinery had been removed. There is no adequate road in the rear of the building although access to the building from the front is possible. Overhead electric lights are installed. This building is unheated. The access road to this building is presently excavated at several points near the building. The excavations are temporary in nature only.

e. Building # 4

(1) This building is located in the old Japanese seaplane base area and is the first of three grouped closely in that area. It is a corrugated metal type building with cement floors, overhead cranes, installed electric lights and although unheated there is evidence that at one time the building was heated by a blower system. Approximately 6400 sq feet storage space are available in the center of the building and approximately 5000 sq feet on one side. The other side contains a balcony whose floor is not substantial and the stairs by which access to the balcony is obtained are rather steep and in poor to fair condition. There is a pit approximately 3 feet wide and 2 feet deep in one corner of the center portion of the building. Space under the balcony contains pillars and small rooms and is suitable for storage of small items only. There are many small holes in the side walls and several large ones where windows and stove pipes have been removed. Sliding doors approximately 24 feet high, opening approximately 45 feet are installed in the front of the building as well as a door approximately 24 feet high which slides open approximately 14 feet. This building faces the Inland sea and a road approximately 20 feet wide, with 10 to 15 additional feet in front of the building, providing access. The road appears to be constructed of a tightly packed sandy soil. BCOF authorities state that no problems were encountered with the road. A road approximately 20 feet in width passes by on side and the rear of this building as well as the rear of buildings # 2 and # 3. Some temporary excavations have been made on this road in the rear of the buildings.

f. Building # 9

(1) This building is located in Hiro in close proximity to the 210000 sq feet building (# 14) and the BCOF laundry. It is surrounded by a high fence and is immediately adjacent to a hard surfaced road. Building contains approximately 11250 sq feet, cement

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floor, overhead crane and is corrugated metal type construction. Access to inside of building was not possible; however by peering through holes in the wall it was noted that, although the numerous windows in the building indicated a building of 4 to 6 floors, actually there is only one floor (ground floor). The ceiling of this building is very high. The roof appeared to be in good condition although there are many small holes in the side walls.

G. Hard standing

(1) Hard-standing space noted was rated as poor to fair condition. Approximately 40,000 sq feet of hard-standing space was noted immediately adjacent in the rear and between buildings # 4, 3 and 2. The greater portion had a cement base, however in many places the cement is badly damaged and small trees, bushes, grass, etc., are growing between cracks in the cement. Considerable portion of the area also is different level and would require minor grading.

(2) A large area of potential hard-standing space was also noted bordering the Inland Sea approximately one mile from the Hiro station and in the general vicinity of buildings # 2, 3, 4 and 9. The area could very easily total several hundred thousand feet. Buildings had been constructed in the area but due to bombing during World War II they were destroyed. The cement floors are badly cracked and the same general condition of bushes, necessity for minor grading exists. In addition, the area is littered with nails and many small piles of scrap metal and one large mass of steel girders. Personnel questioned indicated that the wind in the area is not particularly strong but that heavy mist settles over the area during the winter.

4. Two additional buildings were inspected by the liaison officer as possible depot storage area, one of them upon the suggestion of the Civil Affairs Region. That building was a concrete barrack type building consisting of two U shaped connected wings containing 3 floors per wing for a total of 12 floors. Custody of the building was not finally determined, but it is believed to be under BOOF control. Each floor contains an estimated 9,000 gross sq feet of space or a total of 54,000 gross sq feet per each U shaped wing. The effective sq feet would be reduced considerably in the first of the two wings since plaster partitions had been erected, partitioning the space into numerous rooms of varied size. In addition, latrines, kitchen, theatre, mess hall and other recreational facilities installed in the first wing further reduced the effective storage space. By removal of the partitions a good portion of the 54,000 sq feet would become available; however, it was also noticed that the elevator had been removed from the shaft in the first wing. The second of the two three-story wings is connected to the first one; however, it was never rehabilitated since it was bombed during World War II and as a consequence, there are no roofs on the wing, practically all windows have been destroyed and masses of tangled steel are visible (the

floors of the building were concrete reinforced with steel). The elevator remains in the shaft in this wing, however it appears to be damaged to the extent that considerable repairs would be required. No partitions have been erected in the second wing. Outside fire escapes are provided for both wings of the building and a limited amount of hard-standing space would be available at the rear of the building. The building is located in close proximity to the Hiro train station. The access road appears adequate and parking space could be made available in front of the building if a thorough police of the area was initiated. Building # 1 in the BCOP Dock Area was also inspected by the liaison officer and he determined that favorable and unfavorable features were present. During discussion with Mr. Stradley it was learned that the building will be utilized by the Japanese Government in September or October, therefore no further action was initiated on this building. The following possible storage sites were suggested by Mr. Stradley. In view of their location, the liaison officer did not visit them:

a. Okyama - About 1/2 way between Kure and Osaka. Eight buildings ranging in size from 8,000 to 25,000 sq ft. Japanese owned - commercial firm. No information on hard standing.

b. Camp Crouch - Southern Honshu. Approximately 500,000 sq feet of hard standing (open storage). This camp had been under jurisdiction of the 24th Inf Div.

c. Kure Navy Arsenal - Believed to be Japanese Government possession. Would require extensive repairs estimated cost of 1,000,000 yen each (no information on number of buildings).

d. Camp Fiester area - On the Hiro side of Shinonoseki (Omaki) Railroad siding and barracks for a battalion. Approximately 300,000 sq feet hard standing. Probably on ocean front and terraced. Formerly under jurisdiction of 24th Inf Div.

e. Katachi - Between Kure and Hiroshima. About 1 1/2 miles from Kure port and 1/2 miles from Hiroshima. Approximately 500,000 sq feet of hard standing; 6 warehouses of 10,000 sq feet each. This area in custody of Japanese Government. Special Procurement Board using part of the warehouses.

5. Summary:

a. The following summarization is presented for your consideration:

(1) An estimated maximum of 76,650 sq feet of unoccupied space (buildings 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9) could probably be obtained in the immediate future by requesting Japan Logistical Command to obtain same

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from the Japanese Government through the procurement demand procedures. Approximately 54,000 sq feet of space could probably be obtained in the immediate future by requesting release from BCOF or the Japanese Government (the wing of the barrack building that has a roof) utilizing the procurement demand procedures.

(a) The space so obtained would not be ready for immediate occupancy; repairs necessary to protect supplies from damage by inclement weather and loss through pilferage would have to be made. In the case of the barrack wing no elevator service would be available to lift supplies to the second and third floors. Electric facilities would have to be thoroughly checked prior to use.

(b) No information is available when the road net in the warehouse area would be readily passable (temporary excavations now being made).

(c) Other renovations would be required in order to obtain the maximum use of the storage space, particularly in the barrack building where partitions and other equipment would have to be removed.

(2) An additional 54,000 sq feet of unoccupied space (the second wing of the barrack building) could, in all probability, be obtained from BCOF or the Japanese Government, but the time and expense required to repair the building (construct roof, install windows, insert elevator, etc.) would appear to be prohibitive.

(3) Acquisition of the most satisfactory space (210,000 sq ft covered in building 14) does not appear feasible in view of expense involved in the movement of SPB supplies and the time element which would be involved in negotiating for space occupied by Japan National Railroad.

(4) The hard-standing space, although evidently available in sufficient quantity and possessing certain desirable qualities, nevertheless would require extensive cleanup in the larger areas and its desirability is reduced due to its location (directly bordering the Inland Sea for the most part) thereby being subjected to blanketing by heavy winter mists. It is further believed that security of open storage in such location may be difficult due to access of small water craft to the immediate area.

(5) The unoccupied covered space is in smaller increments than that desired by this Depot.

b. Assumptions included in the above summarization are predicated upon the fact that space requirement is too urgent to permit the delays that would be encountered in placing unoccupied space in

condition for immediate use and negotiating for the use of the desirable space now occupied by other agencies. Under such circumstances the liaison officer is of the belief that the space in Kure is not adequate for the immediate needs of the Depot.

ROBERT D. FEIFFER
Major, QMC
Liaison Officer