

U.S.S.B.S.
Morale

Interview with Lt. Col. TSUNEYOSHI, Yoshitomo, Kempei-Tai (Military Police)

SUBJECT: Morale
TIME: 1500 - 1730, 19 December 1945
PLACE: Keiji Building, Room 748
INTERVIEWER: Captain R. Guiterman
INTERPRETER: Mr. Taji

BACKGROUND:

Born in Kagoshima in 1904. Went through elementary school and one year of Middle School and then spent three years in the preparatory school for the military academy, after which he went to the Military Academy for four years and became a 2nd Lt. in 1926, commissioned in the Heavy Artillery. In 1931 he was promoted to First Lt. and made head of the Army Arsenal at Kokura, where he remained until 1935. In 1935 he was promoted to Captain as the Company Commander of an artillery unit. He remained in this position for one year, at which time he was transferred to the Kempei-Tai in Chosen, where he spent one year with the Kempei there in the town of Keizantin. Then he was transferred and spent two years in the Chosen Kempei-Tai HQ in Keijo. During these two years he was on duty in the Counter-Intelligence Section of the Kempei. He was promoted to Major and sent to Peiping, which was Kempei HQ for China, and then was transferred back to Chosen as second in command of the General Affairs Section in charge of education and military organization. In October 1941 he was transferred to Tokyo Kempei HQ and was made professor in the Kempei School, there teaching scientific crime detection methods. He remained there for two years and was sent to Burma for counter-espionage work in December 1943. His position there was third in command of the Kempei for Burma. He remained there until April 1945, when he was transferred to Kempei HQ in Hokkaido, and was subsequently transferred back to Tokyo on the 30th of July 1945 as Deputy Chief of the Foreign Affairs Section. He remained there for two weeks, until the surrender.

SUMMARY:

Relation between the Kempei-Tai and civilian morale; technical methods used in monitoring illegal transmitters and receivers in Japan.

INTERVIEW: G - Guiterman, T - Tsuneyoshi

- G - We are very much interested in the relation between the Kempei and civilian morale. Can you explain something about it?
- T - The Kempei was interested only in civilian morale as it affected the war effort. The beginning of large-scale bombing of Japan raised Japanese morale. However, when the bombing became sustained it went lower and lower, and was especially low during the leaflet raids.
- G - Can you explain a little more fully the effect that the leaflet raids had on morale? I am interested in your observation that morale hit its low during that period.
- T - From January to July 1945 American planes dropped leaflets only four or five times in the areas where I was working. When I came to Tokyo, however, I saw many more leaflets on numerous occasions. The height of influence from the leaflets was from the period from

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July 1945 to the end of the war. In my opinion the most effective leaflets of all so far as the depressing effect they had on the Japanese people were the leaflets in which your Army named the towns which were to be bombed next. Especially, when these leaflets were dropped from carrier-based planes.

- Q - Why did carrier-based planes affect the picture?
- T - It showed us more dramatically that the Japanese Navy was completely impotent so far as its ability to keep carriers out of our home waters. We knew that the B-29's and the larger planes were based on Okinawa and Saipan, but when we saw carrier planes we realized that invasion was imminent.
- Q - What was the attitude of the Kempeitai toward the civilian populace reading these leaflets?
- T - People all over Japan were told continually over the radio that it was prohibited for them to read the leaflets and the local police were informed through the Home Ministry to enforce these regulations. The Kempeitai was too small an organization to effectively curtail local reading of the leaflets. The people were told in the newspapers to collect leaflets from the streets or wherever they found them and bring them to the police boxes.
- Q - You mentioned to us your duties as a professor of scientific crime detection methods in Tokyo. I am interested in radio monitoring apparatus. Can you tell us something about that, as I believe it was part of your work.
- T - To the best of my knowledge no radio transmitters operating secretly were discovered in Japan. We strongly suspected that the Russian Embassy maintained a clandestine transmitter, but we never had enough proof on them. It was difficult because we could not investigate the situation fully since the Japanese position with Russia was a rather ticklish one.
- Q - How about the discovery of secret receivers? Can you tell me a little more about that?
- T - We found two in Korea, but so far as I know none in Japan proper. After the war was over, however, we discovered that the Germans had been using a receiver in Yamakura. My superiors frequently called me to task for not finding them because they were sure that they existed. We were also alerted periodically to be on the look-out for American spies who had allegedly been sent to Japan by submarine. We did not catch any, however. We did have very strong evidence in June 1945 that a spy landed in Saghalien. I think that he was a British spy, however, although I'm not sure. On second thought, I believe that a receiver was discovered in Kobe, but I don't remember who was operating it.
- Q - Did you ever monitor the San Francisco broadcasts beamed at Japan?
- T - I never heard them myself, but I do know that some of the newspapers in Tokyo operated receivers. We were told to leave them alone. I have heard the San Francisco radio quoted as having said that the Gumbatsu were bad, but that the Emperor was not. It was pretty common knowledge around Tokyo that San Francisco broadcasted from 7 to 11 PM Tokyo time. When I was in Hokkaido in March 1945 there was a good deal of comment about the Saipan broadcasts.
- Q - What was the nature of this comment? Can you explain more fully?

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- T - I do not remember anything definitely, but I do remember that the people enjoyed the music.
- G - How widespread in your opinion was the effect of these broadcasts?
- T - I believe that they had a considerable effect. Most of the high-ranking government and military leaders listened every day, but the common people had no sets. Even so, a little of the information was bound to leak down to them. Most all Army officers of field grade rank and above knew about the broadcasts.
- G - Did you hear the broadcasts made by Captain Zacharias of the U. S. Navy in July 1945?
- T - I did not hear them myself, but the War Ministry made transcripts of them and sent these transcripts to all officers of regimental commander status or above.
- G - Can you explain more fully what effect these broadcasts had on the officers? Was there much discussion about them?
- T - I believe that the Zacharias broadcasts did have a good deal of effect on the higher ranking officers in that they lost hope in ultimate victory. Numerically, however, these were a small proportion of the Army. I myself heard one of the Zacharias broadcasts now that I think of it. They were in very poor Japanese and they mentioned the Emperor too often. It was in very poor taste to mention the Emperor so much. The pamphlets and leaflets that your forces distributed, however, were very well done and I think they had a good deal of effect.