

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION
U. S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY

ABS/glb

14 October 1945

SUBJECT: Visit to Head Office of Karatau Iron Works
212 Marunouchi-Kojimachi-ku, (ward) Tokyo.

PERSON INTERROGATED: Bookkeeper.

INTERPRETER: Lt. (JG) R. Pineau

INTERROGATOR: 2d Lt. Alen B. Smith

INTERROGATION

Karatau Iron Works is a corporation founded in 1907 with a single plant located in Karatau, Saga-ken. The capital stock is ¥5,000,000, the President Toshisuki Takeo, holds the controlling number of shares. There are 95 shareholders in all.

Equipment on hand at the end of September 1945 was:

Land: 13.2 acres
Machine tools: 283
Shops: 148,000 Sq feet.
Warehouses: 48,000 sq feet
Other buildings: 17,000 sq feet

Inventory of machine tools has been approximately the same figure, 283 machine tools, since 1935.

	<u>PRODUCTION IN YEN</u>	<u>NUMBER OF WORKERS</u>
1935	3,108,160	689
1936	3,278,790	756
1937	3,629,304	972
1938	4,509,709	1,047
1939	4,154,201	1,174
1940	8,338,318	1,122
1941	5,781,843	1,347
1942	6,300,311	1,396
1943	7,579,950	1,453
1944	8,048,597	1,220
1945		500

It was stated that the apparent doubling of production in 1940 was due to the rise in prices caused by lower purchase value of the yen. There was no great increase in production in units. The statistics as to units produced is available only at the plant.

Up until 1939 the working day was 9 hours. After 1939

Interrogation at Karatau Iron Works cont'd.

the working day was 11 hours. Productive workers numbered between 500 and 600 from 1935 to the present time. The increase in numbers of employees from 1937 to 1944 was largely a hiring of unskilled laborers and apprentices used to shift stocks, rearrange plant layout etc. The reason they were needed is that there was a demand for "mixed" production which required frequent rearrangement of machines.

The firm was producing almost 100% for the Army but obtained no assistance from the Army in obtaining raw materials and workers. The principle machines furnished to the Army were Gear Hobbers, Milling Machines, and Bevel Gear Generators.

Ball Bearings and Electric motors for machines were furnished by subcontractors. The yearly cost of raw materials and the subcontracted items mentioned above amounted to approximately 10% of the figures for yearly production in yen.

The Karatau plant never encountered any difficulties with transportation. Their most serious problems were the ever increasing shortages of all types of raw materials, particularly steel, and of skilled labor. There was plenty of unskilled labor available but it could not take the place of skilled laborers.

The plant was never bombed and is at present undamaged and in production. It is producing machine tools and storing them in hope of a future demand.