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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WAR DIVISION
ECONOMIC WARFARE SECTION

REPORT ON
AIRCRAFT FACTORY AND POSSIBLE AIRFIELD
NEAR VILLAGE OF NARUO, BETWEEN OSAKA & KOBE, JAPAN

September 15, 1943

Submitted by: Ernest B. Price
Economic Warfare Section
Department of Justice
Denver, Colorado

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Economic Warfare Section
War Division
Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.

Confidential Report
September 15, 1943
Re: Aircraft Factory and Possible
Airfield near Village of Naruo,
between Osaka and Kobe, Japan
Submitted by: Ernest B. Price
Economic Warfare Section
Department of Justice
Denver, Colorado

REPORT ON AIRCRAFT FACTORY AND POSSIBLE AIRFIELD
NEAR VILLAGE OF NARUO, BETWEEN OSAKA AND KOBE, JAPAN

One informant stated that in early 1941 the Japanese had a "large" aircraft factory at a point (shown on attached Exhibit A by the numeral "1") on the west bank of the main mouth of the Mukogawa River right at the river's mouth. The original factory was built around 1933, and was designed to produce hydroplanes. It was subsequently enlarged, and, judging by the fact that an adjoining golf course (Exhibit A, No. 2) had been converted into a landing field, was by 1941 probably producing both sea and land planes. The plant and field are near the village of Naruo (shown as No. 3 on Exhibit A), just to the southeast of the city of Nishinomiya (Exhibit A, No. 4) and to the west of Osaka's important industrial suburb of Amagasaki (Exhibit A., No. 5).

A second informant, who was born in Kobe in 1903 and came to the United States in 1924, and made only one brief business trip back (in 1937-38), stated that he had no recent information regarding airfields in the Kobe-Osaka area, but that in 1924 the nearest airfield to Kobe was "near the village of Naruo." He located this field at the exact point (Exhibit A, No. 2) which the first informant indicated had been a golf course, later converted into an airfield.

The presumption is, therefore, that there had been an early airfield at that point, which had been converted into a golf course, and later re-converted into an airfield to serve the needs of the expanded aircraft factory adjoining.

No airfield is shown at this point in the Japanese Naval Air Charts.

The village of Naruo is served by the Hanshin Electric Line, Osaka to Kobe, via Amagasaki. An important highway, the Hanshin Kokudd Electric, the main Tokkaido Line, and the Hankyo Express Line,--all connecting Osaka with Kobe -- pass close by to the north, also.

Shown on the map, also, by the numeral "6", is the Itami Airfield (also known as "Osaka Daini," or "Osaka No. 2" Airfield), for which see Confidential Report No. D.-238 (3200) of September 15, 1943, on that title, by the same author. Osaka "No. 1" Airfield is shown by the numeral "7".

Sources of Information

Dr. John A. Foote, 495 Downing Street, Denver, Colorado, now with the American Baptist Home Missionary Society, Baptist Headquarters, Colorado Building, Denver, Colorado. Dr. Foote was a missionary in Japan from September 1912 to April 1, 1941, under the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society.

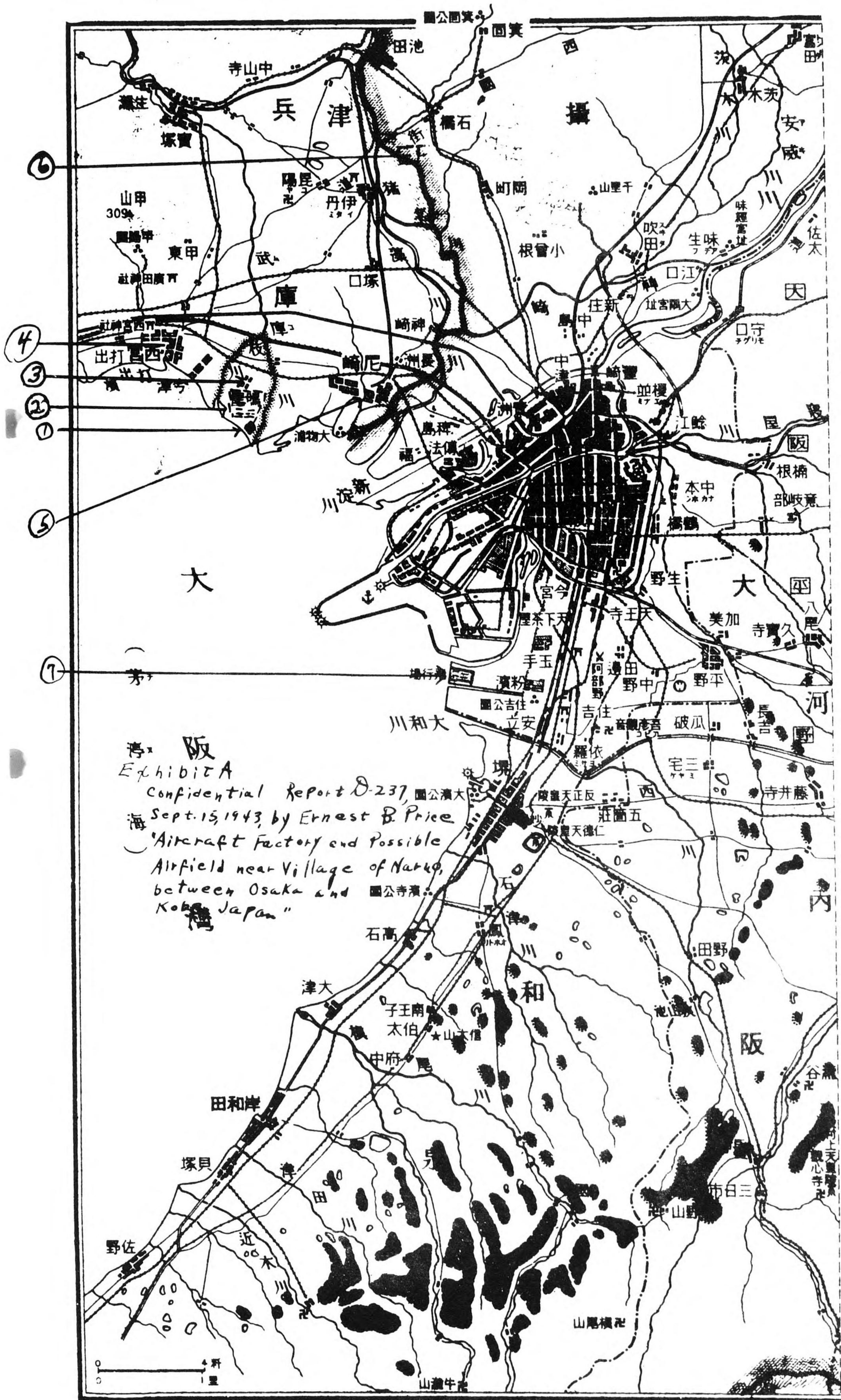
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From April 1913 to April 1, 1941, the date of his final departure from Japan, his headquarters were in Osaka. His missionary activities made him intimately familiar with the city of Osaka. Interviewed at Denver, Colorado, September 11, 1943.

Shotaro Okumura. Mr. Okumura, born in Kobe, Japan, 1903, came to the United States in 1924, subsequently making only one brief trip to Japan in connection with his business, involving a stay of about three months, in 1937-38. At the time of the evacuation of persons of Japanese race from the Pacific Coast, he was operating his own business, Yamacho & Co., 308 Central Building, Seattle, Washington, engaged in export of West Coast lumber to Japan and import from Japan of dry goods, principally textiles. He was interviewed at the Minidoka Relocation Center, Hunt, Idaho, August 19, 1943.

Exhibit A

Map reproduced from page 45 of "New Century Atlas of Japan", (14th Edition, 1931). Scale 1:200,000



海 阪
 Exhibit A
 Confidential Report D-237, 國公大
 Sept. 15, 1943, by Ernest B. Price
 'Aircraft Factory and Possible
 Airfield near Village of Nabe,
 between Osaka and 國公寺濱
 Kobe, Japan'