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HEADQUARTERS
U.S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(PACIFIC)
APO 234
C/O POSTMASTER, SAN FRANCISCO

INTERROGATION NO: 393

PLACE: Tokyo
DATE: 20 Nov 1945

Division of Origin: Capital Equipment and Construction

Subject: Construction - General Information

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Mr. I. KAJIMA	Director
Mr. S. KAJIMA	Vice President
Mr. J. TSUKAJA	Chief of Treasury Department
Mr. R. TAKEUCHI	Managing Director

Where interviewed: Meiji Bldg, Rm 361.

Interrogator: Lt Call

Interpreter: Lt (jg) Holmes

Allied Officers Present: None

SUMMARY

1. Business trends throughout war
2. Materials
3. Machinery
4. Labor
5. Building Costs
6. Underground Construction
7. Repair of bomb damage
8. Building Air Raid Shelters.

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I N T E R R O G A T I O N -

1. Firm does about 50% civil engineering and 50% general construction: Statistics on Y value of volume of construction attached. Includes work in China, Korea, Formosa, amounting to 40% of firm's total business.

2. The firm was extremely busy until the very last months of the war. Like all other large contractors, they had more business than they could handle. After the March, 1945 raids, however, construction in the Tokyo area came to a virtual halt. In the last few months, the demand, heretofore so pressing, declined, as the government realized that the industry was becoming helpless because of declining capacity.

Capacity declined because of lack of labor materials, and depreciation of machinery, which could not be replaced. Actually, most firms lost machinery to the military, during the war.

3. The firm's business took a big jump in 1941, because of the sudden demand for factories and war production. In that year the firm increased its own capacity by hiring more men and buying more machines; hence the rise in volume of business.

Most military work done by the firm was in construction of camps, barracks, and airfield installations. In the early years of the war, the Army Air Forces built some of their own fields, using their own construction units, but later, most airfield construction was turned over to civilian outfits.

4. Materials: hardest to get were steel, cement, roofing. As early as 1941, it was difficult to get materials, and by 1943 the situation was acute. The shortage in the early years was cushioned somewhat by stockpiles accumulated by contractors in pre-war years on the open market. Most of the work done in late 1944 and 1945 was uncompleted, chiefly because of material and labor shortages.

5. Machinery: Very scarce during war, almost impossible to get. Occasionally a contractor could borrow machinery from the military or the prefectural authorities, but in general, it was more likely that the military would take machines from the contractor.

6. Labor: Costs rose as reported by Okura Gumi 19 November 1945.

Efficiency in wartime dropped 50% because of loss of skilled labor to Armed Forces, and later, because of low morale induced by bombings. After November of 1944, morale went down steadily, as there was insufficient food and clothing, and homes were destroyed. Absenteeism became so acute in March 45 that nearly all work had to stop in the Tokyo Area.

7. Building Costs:

Estimated rise of concrete per tsubo:

1937	Y	300
1938		400
1939		600
1940		Sudden increase (figure unknown).

After 1940, the firm did little concrete work; shortage of cement caused it to shift to wooden construction. This shift was general; only high priority projects, such as aircraft plants, were allotted cement.

Only a rough estimate could be made on wood:

1937	Y	80 per tsubo
1944		800 " "

8. Underground Construction: The firm did little; only about 10% of 1944 - 45 volume of business. Many others, however, were doing almost nothing but underground construction at this time.

9. The Repair of bomb damage: None of the contractors did any repairing to speak of. What they did was sporadic and exceptional: Kajima repaired the subway on the Ginza when it was damaged by bombing. In general, the national effort was towards dispersal, not repair.

10. Building Air Raid Shelters: None of the large contractors built public air raid shelters; these were usually built by volunteer amateur groups. Contractors did build shelters for factories, now and then.