

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

RESTRICTED

PLACE: Tokyo

DATE: 15 Nov. TIME: 1500

INTERROGATION NO. 361

Division of Origin: CEC

Subject: General Discussion of Contractors Wartime Problems
Shimizu-Gumi

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Mr. SHIMIZU - President of Shimizu-Gumi.
Mr. KURIHARA - Manager of Tokyo Branch.
Mr. UMINO - Head of Design Dept.
Mr. OZASA - Managing Director.
Mr. KIDO - Architect.

Where interviewed: Shimizu-Gumi Tokyo Office.

Interrogator: Lt. Call

Interpreter: Lt. (jg) Holmes

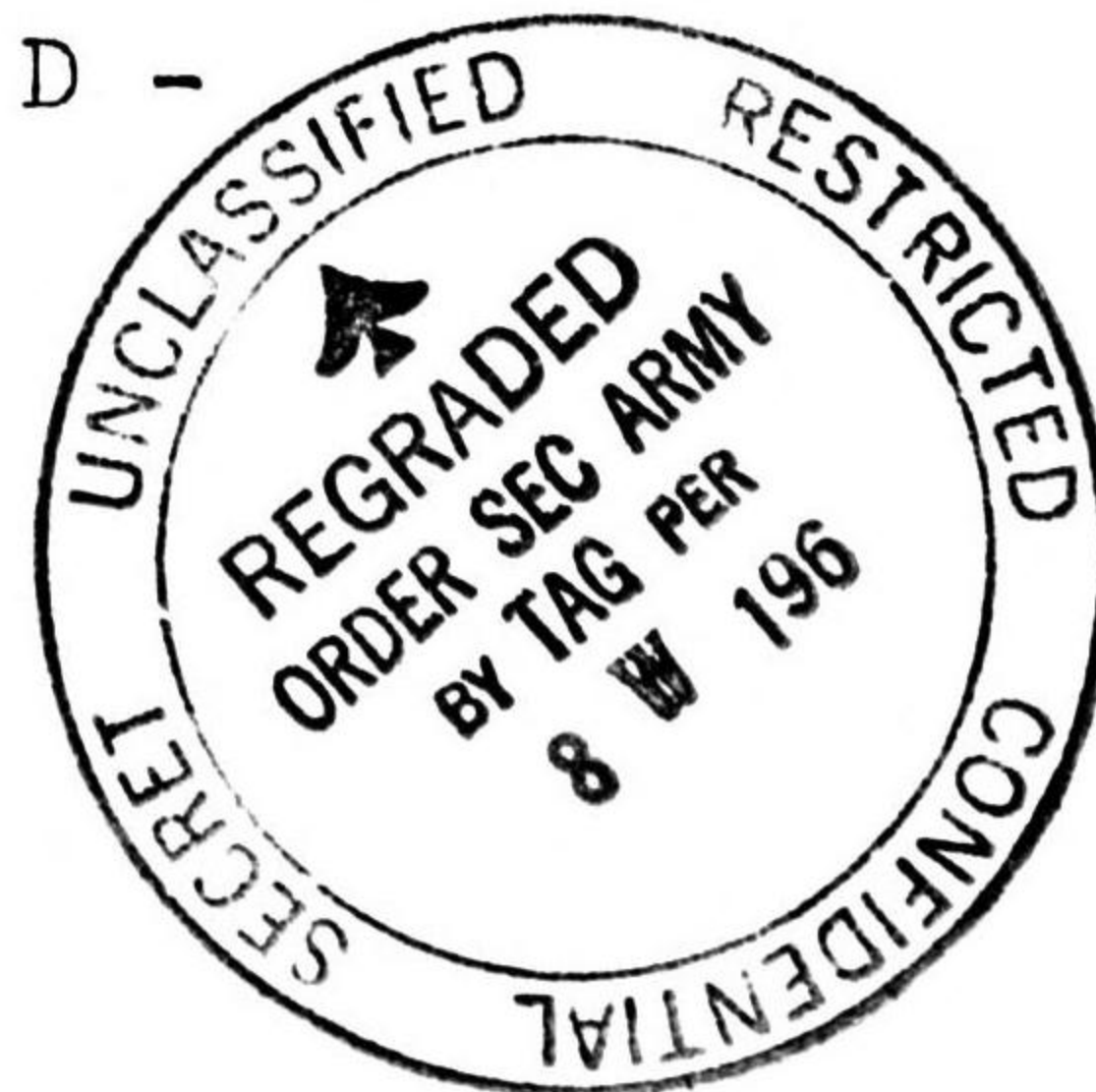
Allied Officers Present: None

Summary:

1. Most of dispersal and underground plants were less than 1/2 complete when war ended.
2. Labor was procured through the Romu Hokoku Kai, a labor control Association.
3. Neither Shimizu-Gumi nor anyone else did much about repair of bomb damage.
4. Explanation of general methods of procuring building materials, including a note on chiselling.
5. Dispersal program could not have been completed with materials on hand even had war not ended in August.

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

1. Statistics on volume and types of construction from 1937 to 1945 will be ready Monday (Navy arsenals etc., included in "Military".)

2. Dispersal Program: Shimizu Gumi was very active in the dispersal and underground plant construction program, which was hastened after March 1945. Most of the underground and dispersal plants were less than 1/2 complete when the war ended. Labor and materials were bottlenecks.

3. A list of Shimizu-Gumi's projects of this kind, with ¥ value, materials, labor etc., will be submitted Monday.

3. Labor: Labor was procured through the Romu Hokoku Kai, a labor control Association, which allotted skilled laborers to the contractors as needed.

If the Romu H.K. could't supply the skilled labor (When labor was scarce, near end of war), it would draft slave laborers from China & Korea.

4. Bomb Damage Repair: Shimizu Gumi did none; no one did much. No government inspired policy mobilizing construction industry.

5. Sub Contracting: In Japan, the sub-contractor merely furnishes the Labor; the principal contractor takes all responsibility and supplies the foremen, etc.

6. Raw Materials, Control Associations, etc.

(a) The contractors' trade and control associations never amounted too much; got neither materials, machinery, nor labor for the builders.

(b) If the contractor was working for the Army or Navy, there were 2 organizations to help him:
 (1) Army Construction cooperative Assoc'n.
 (2) Navy " " " "

Through these organizations, which were formed by Army and Navy request (staffed by Contractors), materials, contracts etc., were allotted.

For example, in the Navy Construction Cooperative Association, there was a section to match each naval base; when for instance, work was ordered at YOKOSUKA, the YOKOSUKA section of the Cooperative Association assigned the contract. However, the base administration itself saw that the materials were on hand for the contractor's use. Hence, the Cooperative Association was a short of clearing house for contracts.

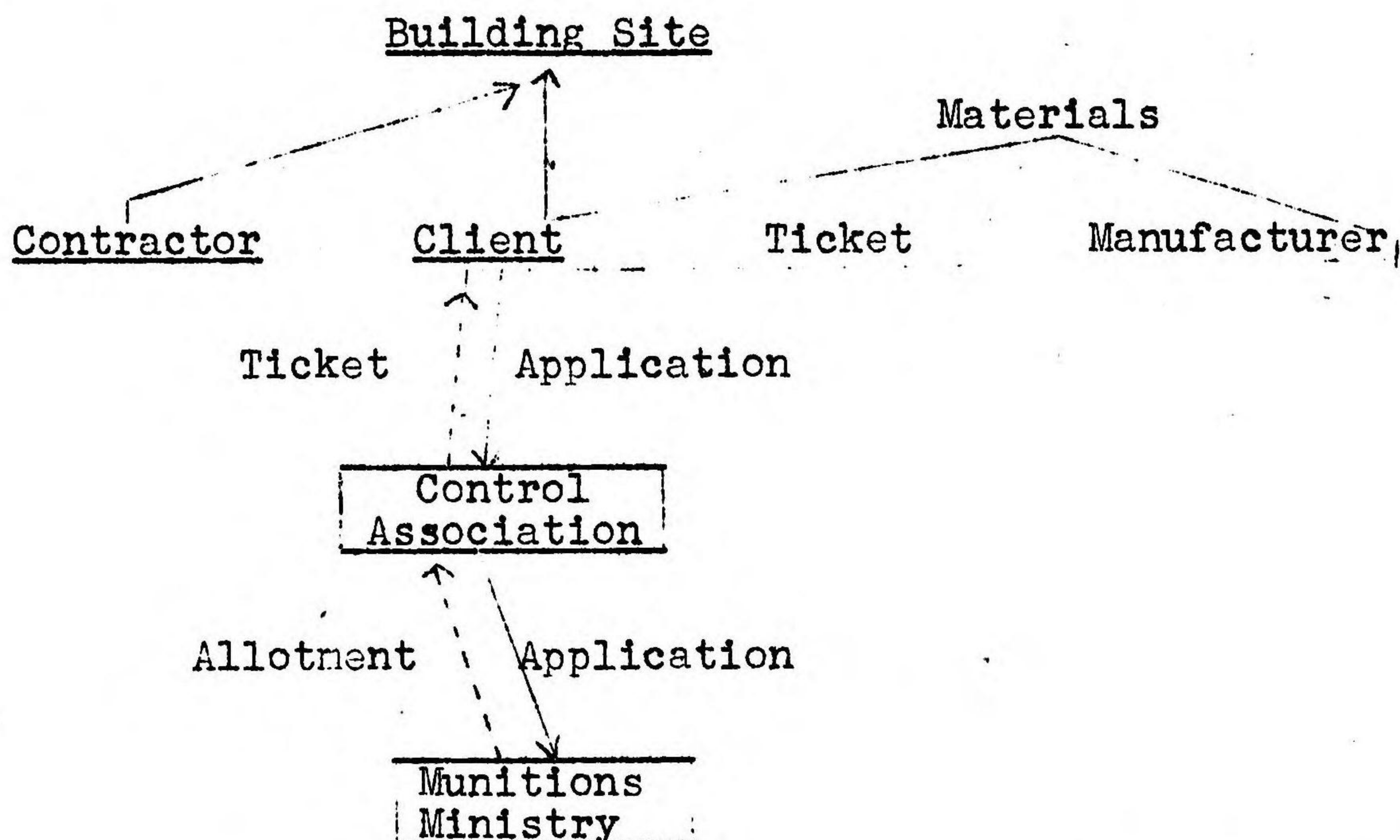
The Army worked on the same principle, the orders for construction emanating from Army construction or Air H.Q. and clearing through the Cooperative Association. In the case of the Army, however, the orders had to pass through the various divisional commands as well before the contracts were allotted.

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In the case of factories (of all kinds) and public buildings, the owner of the proposed structure applies to the control association, which in turn consults with the Munitions Ministry. The Ministry then passes the allotment down to the control association, which gives the applicant a ticket with which applicant can get his material direct from the manufacturer or through a broker. The contractor does nothing about materials; it is up to the client to get them.



As for residence -- almost none were built during the war. Emergency housing projects were small scale affairs, built by small contractors who had hoarded the materials. None of the big companies was involved in emergency housing work; and very little was done by anyone save informal neighborhood groups and private individuals. There was no allotment of materials for such work, in spite of government publicity to the contrary.

The ticket system took 1 or 2 months at first, but later took much longer, as the materials situation grew tighter.

Contractors and producing companies both built up small reserve supplies of building materials by chiselling a little on requisitions. If a machine tool plants, for example, requested materials for plant expansion, it would put in for more than it intended to use, and keep the remainder in reserve for repair of damage or other emergency. Occasionally, a client would turn over his building material tickets to the contractor, who would then skimp a little in using the materials, and save the rest for emergency use.

In June of 1945, the building material supply situation was so tight that the planned dispersal and underground construction program could not have been completed had the war continued beyond August 15. Cement and structural steel were virtually unobtainable, and there was only a little lumber available.

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