

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

INTERROGATION NO. 223

PLACE: Tokyo
DATE: 2 Nov 1945

DIVISION OF ORIGIN: Medical Division

SUBJECT: Foods and Dietary Habits of the Japanese; Effects
of the War and Bombing in the Incidence of Malnutri-
tion.

Personnel Interrogated and Background of each:

Professor Koichu SUGIMOTO, Director, National Institute
of Nutrition.

Where Interviewed: At Professor SUGIMOTO's Office.

Interrogators: Major Robert S. Goodheart, USPHS
Major Henry J. Rugo
Major Corlette, Health and Welfare Div., GHQ.

Interpreter: T/5 M. Bessho.

Allied Officers Present: None.

Summary:

Professor SUGIMOTO has no information on the incidence of deficiency diseases. However, he stated that information might be obtained from the Congress of Science, which exists in the Ministry of Education. This Congress has a committee on deficiency diseases. The members of the committee include:

Dr. SAKAGUCHI, Professor of Internal Medicine, Tokyo Imperial
University
Professor KURIYAMA, Professor of Pediatrics, Tokyo Imperial
University
Professor OMORI, Professor of Internal Medicine, Keio Univ.
Professor Fuse, Professor of Internal Medicine, Osaka Im-
perial University.
Professor KINOSHITA, Professor of Pathology, Osaka Imperial
University
Professor INOUE, Professor of Internal Medicine, Kyoto Univ.
Professor IIZUKA, Professor of Internal Medicine, Kyoto
Imperial University.

INTERROGATION

According to Dr. SUGIMOTO, about 50% of hospitalized military personnel were suffering from malnutrition at the time of surrender. The evidences of malnutrition observed were edema, emaciation, nervousness, diarrhea, atrophy of skin with greenish white discoloration, cold hands and feet, protruding stomach, ataxia, apathy and general sluggishness, anemia, labored breathing, slurred speech, slow pulse, reduced systolic blood pressure, mask-like face. Most of the cases with malnutrition were associated with malaria and dysentery. Some of the patients with malnutrition had no associated disease.

Specific deficiency diseases such as beri beri and pellagra were of insignificant occurrence, general malnutrition being the prevalent condition.

Edema occurred with normal plasma protein levels. However, Dr. SUGIMOTO believes that a deficiency of certain amino acids may have been at fault. Dr. KINOSHITA of Osaka University was stated to have successfully treated the edema with tryptophan, lysine and cystine. The best results were obtained with lysine. According to Dr. SUGIMOTO gelatin (20 grams a day) has also been used successfully in the treatment of this edema. He believes that it is quite likely that the edema is caused by a multiplicity of factors, calory deprivation being one of these.

Dr. SUGIMOTO stated that Vitamin B-6 has been successfully used in the treatment of skin allergy and other skin diseases. He stated that the term Vitamin B-6 is commonly used in Japan for both pyridoxine (adermin) and pantothenic acid. He stated that the clinical effects of each of these substances were the same.

In tables of composition of Japanese goods and army and navy rations, quantities for vitamin B 2 are generally given. According to Dr. SUGIMOTO the vitamin B 2 referred to is riboflavin. The Japanese have not made sufficient studies of the niacin content of foods to compute the quantities of this substance in the Japanese diet. Frequently figures are given for the vitamin B 2 complex, which, according to Dr. SUGIMOTO, includes both riboflavin and niacin.

Dr. SUGIMOTO further stated that the Japanese government at no time had any regulation restricting the extent to which rice is polished. Such a regulation would be impossible of enforcement, because most of the farmers polish their own rice before marketing. The Japanese government has made recommendations on the extent to which rice should be polished. The first of these recommendations was that rice should be 60% polished. This means that 70% of the bran and germ is removed. The latest war-time recommendation was that only 10% of the bran and germ should be removed in polishing. Actually, rice of all degrees of polishing has been used by both the Japanese civilians and the military services throughout the war.

Dr. SUGIMOTO supplied the interrogators with tables of the average composition of the Japanese diet for the period prior to the war. No figures are available for the war period. He also supplied tables of the composition of various Japanese foods. A 1931 supplement to these tables is missing.

The Cabinet Bureau of Statistics (Mr. KAWASHIMA) Chief, published in 1940 a study of the dietary habits of 8,000 families, representing a sample of all Japan. Dr. SUGIMOTO arranged to supply two copies of this study to the interrogators. Dr. KATO from Dr. SUGIMOTO's staff, will obtain these and give them to Major Corlette by Tuesday, 6 November 1945. Dr. SUGIMOTO has agreed to supply the interrogators with an English translation of their classification of occupations, according to caloric requirements by Tuesday, 6 November 1945.