

16 JAN 48

INVESTIGATION OF KOTOBUKI MATERNITY HOME

At the request of Mr. Milton Evans of SCAP Public Welfare, the TKMGD-TD Welfare Officer accompanied him on an investigation of the Kotobuki Maternity Home. Japanese newspaper reports stated that a number of infants had died in this home due to mal-nutrition, that Mr. and Mrs. Ishikawa, managers of the Home, and Mr. Nagasaki, an undertaker, were being detained at the Waseda Police Station.

The investigators were accompanied by Mrs. Crane of SCAP Public Relations, Miss Matheson of SCAP Public Health, Mr. Sato of the Welfare Ministry, Mr. Matsuzaki, Chief of Protection of the Children's Bureau of the Welfare Ministry, Dr. Muramatsu and Mrs. Suzuki also of the Children's Bureau.

The inspection of the hospital showed that the three or four rooms on the first floor were used as living quarters by the Ishikawas as well as the apprentice midwife and the servant. The second floor consisted of four small rooms. Of these a room approximately 4'x8' was used as the nursery. A room approximately 10'x12' was used as a delivery room. The remaining two small rooms were used for convalescent care.

At the time of the inspection there were five infants in the nursery on a small bamboo bed. Four of the infants were crying and appeared to be quite ill while the fifth one who was three months old seemed to be in fair shape. The clothing and bedding was dirty but the room was clean. Two mothers with new born babies were in the delivery room. A mother and baby were in each of the convalescent rooms. The situation in regard to cleanliness was the same in these rooms as was found in the nursery. There were no facilities for water in the upstairs - all water having to be carried from below up extremely steep stairs.

The investigators went to the Waseda Police Station and talked with Chief Ide about the findings of the police. The following information was given:

Mrs. Ishikawa, manager, is a midwife and is chief of the midwives association for Shinjuku-ku. Prior to establishing the Kotobuki Maternity Home, she was a midwife in the community.

The Home was established in April '44 and has been in continuous operation since then. Police statistics show that in 1944, 14 or 15 children were admitted, 1945, 34 or 35 children, 1946, 40 or 41 children, and in 1947, 100 or more children. The increase in 1947 seems to be the result of advertising which was started in July '47. Advertising was done in several Japanese papers, but mainly the Yuomyuri Newspaper was used. A translation of their advertisement shows they advertised for male or female children between

the ages of 1 month and 3 years. The advertisement also stated these children would be cared for at the Kotobuki Maternity Home.

The Home kept intricate records and at the time of the investigation, the police had not completed the checking of these records. However, the records showed that not over 10 or 12 children had been delivered in the Home in 1947, but instead had been brought to the Home at a few weeks or months of age. The majority of the children were illegitimate and the mothers paid the Ishikawas from ¥5000 to ¥6000 to take the babies. The mothers in turn relinquished all rights to the children, and supposedly the Ishikawas were to place the children for adoption. A mother who came to the Home for delivery paid an initial fee of ¥2000. There was an additional fee but records were not available on how much it was. Mothers who went to the Home for confinement were required to furnish their own food. Mrs. Ishikawa is a midwife, an apprentice midwife lived at the Home, and three other midwives in the community were "on call" if needed.

On the night of 12 January '48, a policeman saw Mr. Nagasaki, an undertaker, go to the Home on a bicycle. A small box approximately 2½'x2½'x18" was on the back of the bicycle. The policeman watched and saw Mr. Nagasaki put four infant bodies in this box. This caused the policeman to be suspicious, so he stopped the undertaker. He found the undertaker had a burial certificate in good order issued by the ku office, so there were no grounds on which to detain the undertaker. However, the policeman reported this incident to the Chief of Police, who in turn ordered the policeman to inquire in the neighborhood about the Home. Inquiry revealed that several of the neighbors had been in the Home in the summer of '47 and had felt the children were not being fed or clothed properly. On receiving this information, the Chief of Police issued a warrant to have the four babies picked up at Mr. Nakasaki's establishment and taken to Keio University for autopsies. He also sent the deputy Chief of police along to witness the autopsies. This was necessary as official autopsy reports are not released under a month following an autopsy. The autopsies revealed that all of the children had died from mal-nutrition. In view of this information, the Chief had Mr. and Mrs. Ishikawa and Mr. Nagasaki placed in custody for questioning. A few hours after this happened, a fifth infant died.

Inspection of the records showed that approximately 85 of the 100 infants received by the Home in 1947 died and that furthermore they all died from mal-nutrition within a month after been admitted to the Home. The Ishikawas explanation for the five recent deaths is because they had to use powdered milk starting 1 January '48. They did not understand how to prepare this milk, the babies got dysentery as a result and that was why they died.

They have no explanation for the death of the other 80

other than that they were not registered and therefor it was difficult to obtain rations for them.

The police believe that the Ishikawas saw to it that the babies died as they were in the business to make money. At ¥6000 per child and 100 children in 1947, a gross intake of ¥600,000 was received by them. The undertaker's fee was ¥300 per baby and probably an additional amount of ¥700 for some food and supplies was purchased for each child by the Ishikawas, making a total of ¥1000. This would mean a gross profit of ¥500,000 for 1947 for the Ishikawas.

<sup>Two</sup>  
~~The~~ doctors were used by the Home and these doctors issued the death certificates. The investigation of these doctors had not been completed, therefore their names were withheld by the police.

The five babies remaining at the Home were removed by the police on 16 Jan '48 and taken to the 1st National Hospital. The two mothers with new born infants had been given orders by the Ishikawas' lawyer to leave the Home by 18 Jan '48 and to take their babies, although they had planned to leave them at the Home originally.

It is obvious that the name Kotobuki Maternity Home was merely a "front" and that actually the Home was posing as a child placing agency.

The police hoped to have their investigation completed by 17 January '48 in order to prefer charges against the Ishikawas, Mr. Nagasaki, and the two doctors.