

MATSUKI TOYAMA 19 Oct 98 Toyama

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STATEMENT OF TOYAMA, Matsuki

Interrogator: Mr. Philip Cheles
Interpreter: Mr. John Ehara
Stenographer: Miss Marian A. Linhart
Date: 19 October 1948
Place: War Ministry Building, Tokyo

- Q What is your name and present address?
A TOYAMA, Matsuki. My address is Tokyo-to, Bunkyo-ku, Dairoku-tenmachi No. 54. My office telephone is YODOBASHI 253.
- Q When and where were you born?
A I was born 2 January 1899 at Kochi-ken, Nagaoka-gun, Miwamura No. 569.
- Q Are you married?
A Yes.
- Q Have you any children?
A Yes, four.
- Q What is your present occupation?
A I am in the Inspection Section of the Finance Division in the Finance Ministry.
- Q Will you give me a brief resume of your education?
A I went to Kansai University at Osaka.
- Q When did you graduate and what course did you take?
A I graduated in March, 1932. I studied law.
- Q When did you enter Government service?
A In November, 1921, and continued in Government service while attending the University.
- Q I would like you to please give me in chronological order your Government service.
A From November, 1921 until October, 1937 I served at the Kobe Customs House; from October, 1937 until December, 1938 I served at the Taxation Bureau in the Finance Ministry; from December, 1938 until November, 1942 I served at the Asia Development Board; from December, 1942 until the end of the war I served in the GEA Ministry.
- Q What was your responsibility in the GEA Ministry?
A First I was in the Finance Section of the China Affairs Bureau; then I was in the General Affairs Section of the General Affairs Bureau; then I was in the Economic Section of the General Affairs Bureau in the GEA Ministry.
- Q Then you had a very complete knowledge of the workings of the GEA Ministry, did you not?
A No, I do not know in detail because my position was low. At that time I was a third class Government official. I was never in a position of great responsibility.
- Q Who were your superiors?
A When I was in the Finance Section of the China Affairs Bureau, Juncho AKIMOTO was the Section Chief; the Section Chief of the General Affairs Section was ; and Chief of the Economic Section in the General Affairs Bureau was Kiichi AICHI.
- Q While you were connected with the China Affairs Bureau, what were your duties?
A In the Finance Section my duties were concerned with taxation and trade. In the General Affairs Section my duties were miscellaneous jobs concerning things in general. In the Economic Section of the General Affairs Bureau in the GEA Ministry my duties were to procure Chinese laborers in China

for the purpose of placing them in factories to work for the Japanese and to procure Japanese High School and College graduates in positions in China. Also to procure Chinese labor in China for labor in Japan.

Q How exactly did you obtain this labor in China - what was your job in getting the labor?

A My duty was to make the contact with the Transportation Ministry, Welfare Ministry and Home Ministry in regard to when the Chinese were leaving and how many there were.

Q Whom did you contact to procure this Chinese labor?

A Procuring the laborers was not my duty.

Q Whose duty was it to procure the labor?

A I believe the Ambassador in Peking.

Q Who instructed the Ambassador on how to procure Chinese laborers?

A I believe the procurement of the Chinese laborers was decided by the Cabinet meeting and the order was sent from the GEA Ministry.

Q Do you know how these Chinese were procured - through what channels - in China?

A I do not know in detail, but I heard that the Embassy in Peking made arrangements with the North China Labor Association.

Q You had nothing to do with the actual procurement of these Chinese laborers?

A No.

Q Did you know that during the war when these Chinese laborers were being procured they were being forced to come to Japan and were worked as slaves under miserable conditions and were treated as prisoners of war?

A Concerning the procurement of Chinese laborers, I heard that certain districts in China were given an allotment for a certain percentage of workers. That is the only form of force that I have knowledge of. However, I did not hear that these laborers were used as slaves in Japan.

Q You told me yesterday that you had been ordered to inspect the detention camps where these Chinese laborers were held.

A When I went on an inspection tour my duty was not only to see the living conditions of the Chinese laborers but...

Q Will you tell me what was your reason for going to those camps?

A I went to see the living quarters and health conditions and also the labor conditions.

Q Therefore, you did actually see Chinese working in these camps?

A Yes.

Q Were these Chinese laborers permitted outside the camp at any time?

A Yes.

Q Did they have Japanese guards placed over them?

A At the entrance there were guards, but aside from that there were none.

Q Why were the guards placed at the entrance?

A I think guards were to watch who goes in or out.

Q Will you enumerate the camps that you visited and tell me when you visited them?

A About August, 1944 I went to see the camp in Tokyo; in November 1944 I went to the camp in Miike, Fukuoka; and in December, 1944 I went to Hakodate, Hokkaido. I actually went to see the camp in Tokyo, but my visits to Miike and Hakodate were just stop-overs.

Q Did you ever visit Hanaoka and Chusan camps?

A No.

Q Then how can you be sure that these Chinese laborers were not being used as slaves if you did not visit these camps?

A I do not know about Chusan, but I heard that at the camp at Hanaoka there was quite a lot of discontent between the laborers and overseers.

Q While you were in the China Affairs Bureau, do you recall hearing that a great percentage of the Chinese that were brought in forcibly from China had died because of lack of proper food and care and also because of mistreatment by Japanese guards?

A While I served at the China Affairs Bureau, I did not hear about it - except the Hanaoka case.

Q What did you hear about the Hanaoka case?

A At Hanaoka the laborers protested to the employers about the working conditions and the mistreatment, and the laborers planned to escape from the camp, and later that plan was exposed and a riot occurred.

Q I thought you told me they had no guards there. You said they were free to come and go as they pleased.

A Yes, but this problem happened in Hanaoka and I do not know about Hanaoka. I just heard about this incident.

Q Tell me in your own words how this plan to procure Chinese labor came about and how they did procure it.

A From what I heard, first it was planned by the Planning Board and then it was decided by the Cabinet meeting.

Q You say you had charge of the importing of these Chinese into Japan, is that correct?

A I have not stated that, and I did not have any responsibility in transporting them.

Q What was your job?

A I just transmitted the telegrams which came from the Peking Embassy to the concerned ministries.

Q Were the contents of the telegrams available to you? Did you read them?

A Yes, I read them.

Q To the best of your recollection, what was the text of the telegrams?

A The contents of the messages were the date of departure at the Chinese harbor, name of the ship, number of laborers and also the estimated time of arrival in Japan.

Q Approximately how many Chinese were transported on one vessel?

A The number of laborers transported on ships varied. The numbers were from 140 to 250.

Q Did they ever exceed more than that aboard one ship?

A I do not remember definitely, but there might have been only one case where about 300 laborers were brought.

Q What to mace did these vessels have?

A I do not know.

Q Did you ever hear that the holds of these ships were crowded with Chinese when they brought to Japan?

A Actually, I did not think about those things, but come to think of it now, possibly the ships were over crowded.

- Q Did you know that on some of these trips some of the Chinese died upon their arrival in Japan because of the conditions aboard the ships?
- A I heard that one or two had died, but I did not hear that a great number died.
- Q How did you happen to hear that a few of these Chinese had died? Was there an official report made to you?
- A I heard from the employers.
- Q In the different camps, or Government service?
- A Employers of the laborers.
- Q Did the employers tell you what the cause of death was?
- A No.
- Q Did you ever hear how the Chinese were recruited in China - what methods were used in inducing them to come to Japan?
- A No, I do not know.
- Q Did you ever hear that the Labor Association had exaggerated the amount they would be paid, and told them they would go to Formosa instead of Japan?
- A I do not know.
- Q In your position with the General Affairs Bureau, was it ever discussed in your presence about how particularly to obtain Chinese laborers in China?
- A No.
- Q Who was responsible for distributing these laborers upon their arrival in Japan?
- A The distribution of the laborers was decided by the Labor Bureau in the Welfare Ministry.
- Q Did you have anything at all to do with the distribution?
- A No.
- Q Did you ever talk with any of the representatives of the factories to which these Chinese laborers had been sent?
- A No, however, they might have come to the Labor Bureau in the Welfare Ministry.
- Q When was it that you heard that the methods used in collecting these Chinese laborers were not all they were supposed to be?
- A I think I heard that about October, 1944.
- Q From whom?
- A I heard a rumor, but I do not know from whom.
- Q Was it through an official source that you heard it?
- A No.
- Q Tell me all you heard about it.
- A I think I heard that since the required number of laborers were not procured force was used in procuring the required number of laborers in each district. It is my belief that the Japanese Army was behind it.
- Q Do you know if anything was ever done to correct the measures used?
- A I think I either talked to AICHI or SUGIHARA about the force being used for procuring the laborers, and there might have been a protest filed against the measures used. The officials in China who were procuring labor were warned not to use force.

- Q You say you think this is what was done. Can't you be more positive than an assumption that it was done? Don't you know whether it was done or not?
- A I do not know definitely, so I might as well say I don't know.
- Q But you did talk to Mr. AICHI or Mr. SUGIHARA about this?
- A It seems that I talked to one of them. I am not definite on that either.
- Q Was that the only time you had ever heard about Chinese being forcibly recruited in China?
- A That is the only time I heard.
- Q Following this protest that was lodged in the Embassy at Peking, did the conditions of forcing Chinese labor change?
- A That I don't know.
- Q Since I talked to you yesterday, have you consulted with anybody concerning this matter that we have discussed?
- A Absolutely not.
- Q Were you able to find any diaries or official papers that were in your possession during the time you were in the General Affairs Bureau and were connected with Chinese labor?
- A No, I have not, and I never kept a diary.
- Q Will you be available for further interviews in the future?
- A Yes, however I won't be in Tokyo during the first week in November.