

19 November 1945

CONSTRUCTION IN JAPAN

Personnel Interviewed:

Mr. E. TAKETOMI - President of Okura Doboku Company Ltd.
Mr. MIURA - Chief Engineer of Okura Doboku Company Ltd.
Mr. ISHII - Civil Engineer with Takenaka Konuten Company.

Interrogator: Lt. Call, & Capt. Rosenblatt

Interpreter: Lt. (jg) Holmes

1. Building Permits During War Time:

Because of war time capitalization law, if capitalization for building was not included in the plan, the Japan Bank which controlled all capital during the war, could refuse to finance the building. Hence the capitalization law enabled the government to restrict building which it did not approve.

Ordinary building permits were applied for to the city officials.

2. Labor Problems During War:

Labor efficiency dropped 50 % from level of 1937. Reasons were the disruption of life caused by bombing, the lack of food, the poor transportation situation. All in all, working conditions became intolerable after the heavy bombings of March 1945.

After the heavy bombing, OKURA (and all other contractors) lost labor, as laborers simply quit their jobs to go home, or leave town with their families.

The military paid such high wages that labor was drawn away from private concerns; food and clothing given laborers by the military were added inducements. In general, the military paid about 10 % above the general market price. Wages had been fixed by law at first, but the lid soon blew off. (Statistics submitted showing that carpenters' wages, for example rose as follows throughout the last 8 years) ;

1937	¥ 3.00 - 3.50 per day
1939	4.50
1941	7.00
1942	10.00
1943	10.000- 15.00
1944	15.00 - 20.00
1945	20.00 - 30.00

There was no hoarding of labor, because none of the large employers of construction labor was ever idle during the war; all worked to full capacity.

Construction In Japan (Cont'd)

3. Building Laws:

Formerly strict, now relaxed. Ordinary construction laws under Home Ministry; some under welfare Ministry. (Boku Kenchiku ho - law on building inspired by air raids).

4. Machinery Always a Bottleneck:

No contractors were able to get construction machinery during the war; in fact, since the Army took mixers and winches etc., from the, most contractors lost equipment steadily throughout the war.

5. Contracts:

Contracts were allotted by wartime Kensetsudan (1945) but not by previous control Association. Military contracts handled by Army and Navy cooperative Associations.

Contracts were a sort of cost-plus affair; actually, a rough estimate was made at first, then renegotiated later. Hence, the contractors were actually able to raise wages to match the military's wages, and hence keep their labor. At least, such a thing was possible, although it seems evident that the military continued to induce labor to leave private employers.

6. Bomb Damage Repair:

Okura was called in to repair the NAKAJIMA MUSASHINO aircraft plant, which was hit by a number of severe raids, beginning in November, 1944. NAKAJIMA had a fair supply of cement on hand, allotted by the government for plant expansion (no allotments were made for bomb damage repair), and at first Okura could repair with concrete construction. Later, however, the supply of cement gave out, and repairs had to be temporary, wooden affairs. Okura kept on the job, however, until the carrier-based attack of August 8, 1945, when repair was given up as hopeless, and it was decided to move everything to dispersal plants which had already been started.

7. Effect of bombing on Industry as a Whole:

Construction, except of underground plants and storehouses, virtually ceased after the March 1945 raids. The Chief reasons were (1) lack of materials (2) lack of transportation (3) lack of labor.

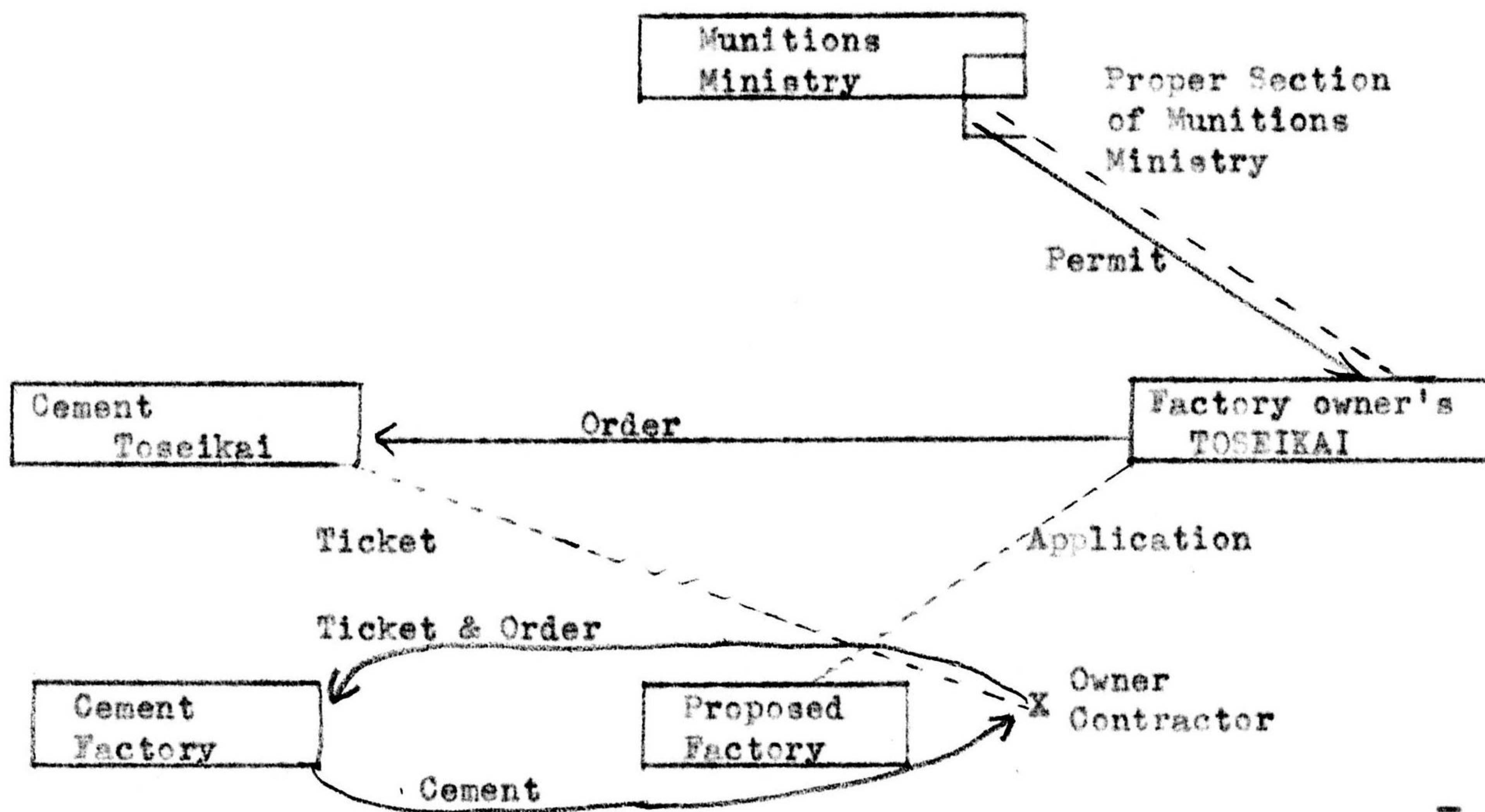
8. Materials:

Cement was very hard to get beginning in 1942. Structural steel almost unobtainable after 1942. The big contractors operated for a time on pre-war stocks bought in open market, before restrictions were imposed.

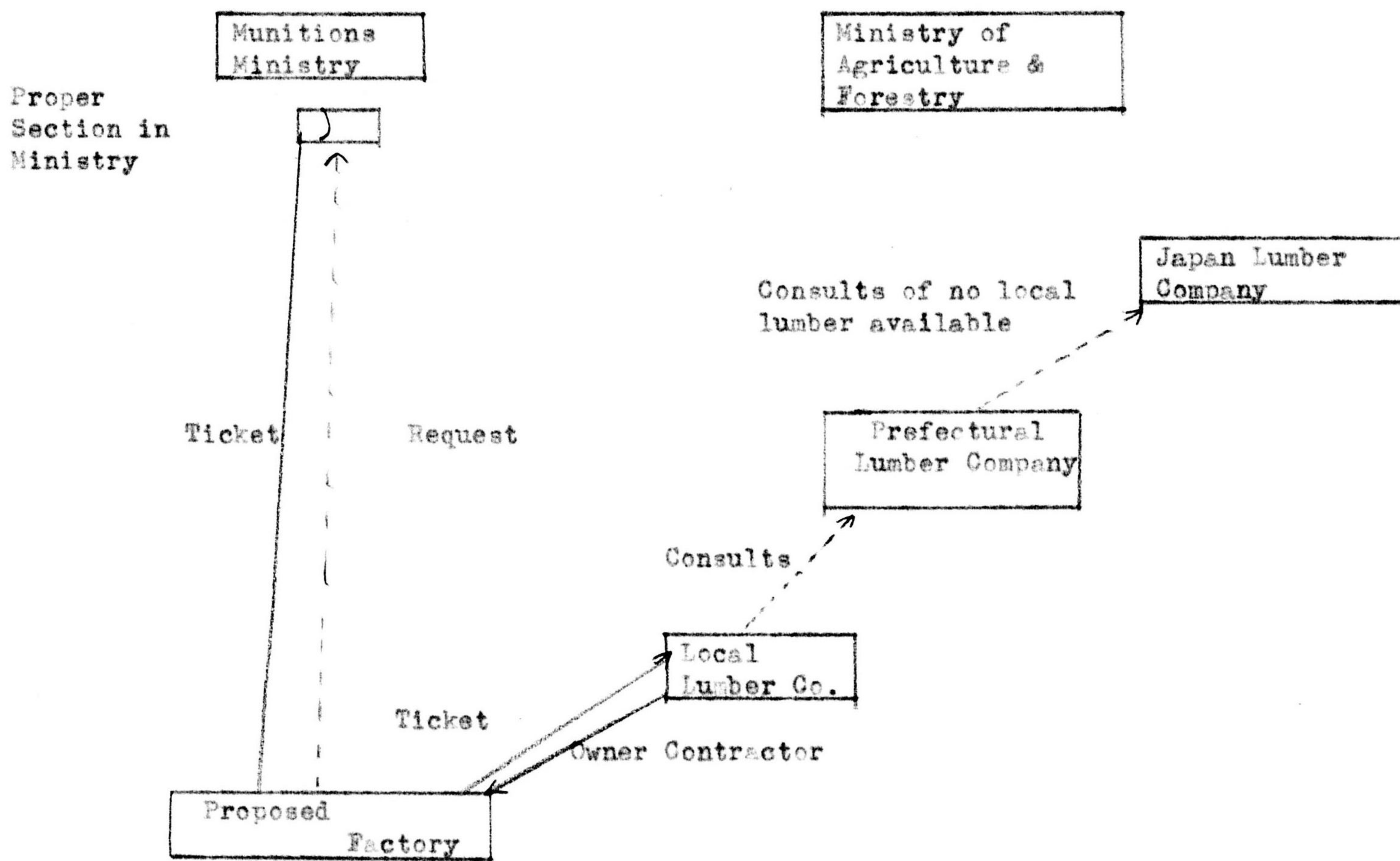
The following charts were submitted on the method of obtaining cement and lumber. (Charts on following page)

Construction In Japan (Cont'd)

Cement:



Lumber:



In general, the contractor estimates the amount of materials needed, and the owner of proposed factory applies for them; occasionally, the contractor gets lumber himself.

Construction In Japan (Cont'd)

9. Construction of Public Air Raid Shelters:

Generally constructed by city authorities, using small contractors and local patriotic organizations. The big construction companies were not involved in public shelter program.

10. Throughout the war all the large contractors had more work than they could handle. Demand was up as never before (military and industrial construction), but the capacity of the contractors to handle it was constantly dropping, since labor and materials were growing scarce, and machinery was wearing out. As the war went on, jobs took longer and longer to complete, since machines and skilled labor were hard to get.

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

INTERROGATION No. _____
(Obtained from G-2)

PLACE Tokyo
DATE 19th Nov 45 Time 1500

Division of Origin CEC

Subject: Construction in Japan

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

- Mr. E, TAKETOMI - President of Okura Doboku Co. Ltd.
- Mr. MIRURA - Chief Engineer of Okura Doboku Co. Ltd.
- Mr. ISHII - Civil Engineer with Takenaka Komuten Co.

Where interviewed Meiji Bldg Rm # 361

Interrogator Lt. Call & Capt. Rosenblatt

Interpreter Lt. (jg) Holmes

Allied Officers Present None

SUMMARY:-

Labor efficiency dropped 50 % for the 1937 level by the end of the war and working conditions became intolerable after the heavy bombings of March 1945 when the workmen simply quit their jobs to go home or to leave town with their families.

not for distribution
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HEADQUARTERS
U.S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(PACIFIC)

ROUTING SLIP

29 Oct 45

FROM: CEC

TO

Chairman.....	Aircraft.....
Vice Chairman.....	Oil & Chem.
Deputy Chairman.....	Mil. Supplies.....
Executive.....	Capt. Equipment & Con- struction.....
G-1.....	Urban Areas.....
G-2..... ✓	Basic Materials.....
G-3.....	Manpower, Food & Civil- ian Supplies.....
G-4.....	Shpg. & Rail Trans.
Adjutant.....	Electric Power.....
Air.....	Morale.....
Ground.....	Medical.....
Naval.....	Civilian Defense.....
Weapons Effec.
Overall Economic Ef- fects Staff.....

FOR

Approval.....	Distr. Desired.....
Comment or Conc.	Signature.....
Information..... ✓	Dispatch.....
Initials.....	Attachment of Refer- ence.....
Issuance of Orders.....	File.....
Necessary Action.....
Note and Return.....

DESCRIPTION OF ALLOCATION OF MATERIALS FOR MACHINERY DURING
THE WAR AND FUNCTIONS OF THE PRODUCTION MACHINERY CONTROL ASSOCIATION.

PREPARED BY

MR. TAKESABURO SATO, PRESIDENT OF THE PRODUCTION MACHINERY
CONTROL ASSOCIATION

FOR

THE CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION DIVISION - UNITED STATES
STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY

25 October 1945