

U.S.S.D.S.
Morale

Interview with Capt. FUJIHARA, Toshiaki, Kempei Headquarters, Police Affairs Section, Security Department.

SUBJECT: Morale
TIME: PM of December 20th and December 21st, 1945
PLACE: Meiji Building
INTERVIEWERS: Capt. R. Guitersan, Lt. A. Soden,
INTERPRETER: None
ALSO PRESENT: Col. Kenneth MacKenzie, A.C.

BACKGROUND:

Born in Shizuoka, in Shimadamachi, Kamo-gun, Ogata Mura #83. 23 years old. Went to Middle School. 1936 Preparatory Military Academy; 1937 Konoze 4th Regiment; 1938 Military Academy; 1940 became a 2nd Lt.; 1941 First Lt.; 1943-44 - August - Kempei School; 1944 became a Captain. From August 1944 to Feb. 1945, Tokyo Kempei, Kudan Detachment; February 1945 to March 27th, Tokyo Kempei, Harashino Detachment commanding officer; March 27th to April 20th Kempei HQ, General Affairs Department; April 20th to June 15th, Kempei HQ Police Affairs Department -- special work was security against air raids, collecting damage information and making appraisal of damages; June 15th to August 15th, Kempei Police Affairs Section for Control of Military. He participated against the occupation of the Palace the 14th and 15th of August. On August 22nd he became Commanding Officer of the Honjo Kempei Detachment and assisted in their demobilisation. From then to November 30th he was in the Eastern Army HQ. On November 30th was discharged.

INTERVIEW: G - Guitersan, S - Soden, M - MacKenzie, F - Fujihara

- G - Will you please explain as fully as possible your duties and the duties of the Police Affairs Section regarding air raid damage and investigation of it?
- F - Although the Home Ministry had direct jurisdiction over air raids, the Kempei-Tai interested itself in it too so that they could mobilize and aid the fighting power of the nation.
- G - Our interest today deals primarily with the morale of the Japanese people during and after the air raids. Can you tell us a little more about that?
- F - The periods of air raids were roughly divided into three parts, the first period from the 11th of November, 1944, to the 10th of March 1945; second period from the 10th of March to the 25th of May; the third period from the 25th of May to the 15th of August. (Before the 11th of November the Japanese people thought that the American air raids would be similar to the early Deolittle raid -- that they would be minor and sporadic. Even the high-ranking military officials believed that even though the U.S. had occupied Saipan they would not be able to bomb Japan from there. The Japanese high command and the people themselves were not ~~EXACTLY~~ at all aware of the capabilities of the B-29. The War Ministry had, however, warned us of the possibility of air raids.
- G - Did you see any movies or news reel views of bombing in the European theater?

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- F - I can't remember ever having seen any news reels or movies showing bombing damage in Europe, but occasionally the newspapers ran pictures of them. Although the people had heard of the raids on Berlin and other major German cities, the fact that they had no visual conception of the actual damage kept them from really living in fear of air raids. Last year in the Asahi and minor newspapers pictures were run in the Sunday photo supplement showing European bomb damage. At the start of the November raids the American planes seemed to be confining their bombing primarily to military objectives so that at the time the people were still not so frightened at air raids. At this time the targets were primarily airplane factories and factories producing airplane parts and equipment.
- G - Did such bombing cause absenteeism among the employees?
- F - Naturally, the people's instinct was to save their own lives. The people often stayed away on the days that they feared a raid, or quite work for the rest of the day after a raid. However, despite absences on the whole the people seemed to push harder to get the planes off the assembly line as the raids became more severe. It was natural, because they believed that the faster they produced planes the more direct would be their protection. As soon as the factories became substantially destroyed, however, naturally production dropped off.
- G - Did the Kempei-Tai take any sort of action with regard to people who spread rumors or spread sentiments of fear among factory workers?
- F - Normally it was not the duty of the Kempei to make the people go back to work, except in cases where the Kempei-Tai was charged with the direct operation or protection of a particular plant. There their activities were primarily the prevention of loafing on the job.
- G - Can you tell us a little bit more about instances where the Kempei had charge of industrial plants?
- F - In Musashi-shino, a section of Tokyo, for example, a Kempei squad was charged with complete jurisdiction over the Musashi-shino Plant of the Nakajima Aircraft Company plant.
- G - Can you explain the Kempei's duties with regard to this plant?
- F - Since the plant was essential to the war effort we had the duty of "aiding the production of the plant". We took whatever steps we thought necessary to keep production high.
- M - In the downtown area of Tokyo I have noticed that there were many small home factories. Did the Kempei check these and control their output?
- F - No. For example, on the Honjo Squad in Tokyo there were only 20 Kempei officers and enlisted men and thousands of home factories. We just did not have enough men to supervise so many.
- G - Can you explain in a little more detail the Kempei's role in the phases of thought control?
- F - With regard to reporting rumors and unpatriotic speech, the Kempei ~~did~~ did have these

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duties. However, we operated only indirectly. If a report was transmitted to us or if one of the Kempei overheard someone talking on the street, they were picked up and investigated. We did not, however, have any organized thought control personnel because this was the function of the Home Ministry.

S - Let's get back to U. S. propaganda and its effects on the people. Can you tell us some more about that?

F - Regarding the first period, U. S. planes bombed principally airplane plants. Therefore airplane production went down, and the government ordered dispersion of such plants as much as possible. The general public did not know the extent of the damage incurred and so they did not worry particularly. There were no daily raids until March. There was no great effect felt from U.S. propaganda leaflets or short wave broadcasts because the reading or listening to such was prohibited. Some localities could hear the Saipan propaganda broadcasts due to favorable geographic conditions. At first the U.S. propaganda leaflets were not well made and were directed almost exclusively against the military. This was not particularly effective because most people did not believe them and turned them in to the police.

The second period (from March to May) was the period of wholesale city bombing by the B-29's. This hastened the end of the war and wiped out especially the small factories which were making airplane parts. This had a great effect on the financial structure and especially was felt very much by the Zaibatsu. The people seemed hostile to the U.S. plane crews, etc. In the first phases of the propaganda Americans used combat propaganda against Japan proper. This did not exactly meet the situation. Later they changed to an effort to break down productive powers, such as: "Don't go to the factories", or Gunbatsu leaflets, but the people did not know anything about the Gunbatsu, so there was no effect. When they dropped the Rakusan News we were embarrassed somewhat because they were the facts. They also published some things which were not favorable to America and which corresponded with Imperial HQ announcements, so people thought there might be some truth to them. In the first period the upper classes only had anti-war feelings, but not too much, as nearly every family had some relative in the Army or Navy. In the second period more of these appeared. The thought was that it would be all right to be defeated in war. Let's give up. It is better to be defeated.

In the third period the bombing of medium and small cities began. Transportation facilities were cut. The sea lanes were cut. People's morale was affected through this type of blockade and they felt they couldn't carry on. The people in general knew that they didn't have ships, when they saw the planes return without bombing them. They saw the reconnaissance planes come and wondered why the Navy wasn't at work. The short wave broadcasts told them they didn't have any Navy. They began to wonder if that was true. They wondered if it wouldn't be better to allow them to listen from the beginning on. After the atomic bomb the people knew that they couldn't fight the U.S. American propaganda was very powerful because it was coordinated with military operations. They told where they would bomb and followed out these announcements. This caused us a great deal of trouble. People wouldn't bring the pamphlets in. However, even under these circumstances people did not think they were defeated, nor did they expect the Emperor to make the announcement he did.

S - Why were the Military Police so feared?

F - Just one part of the population feared the Military Police. They were those who had been investigated by the MP and these included quite a few upper class people. The

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general public opinion was not so. During the third period the great masses of people felt the effects of bombing directly or indirectly. The country people did not receive those coming in from the cities very well. There was friction over the city people raising the prices of food and living differently from the country people.

Q - Was there an opposition of opinion between the upper and lower classes?

F - The upper class people were very selfish and the lower class people just wanted to eat. However, the Japanese middle class was very wide. This was destroyed by fire and they became lower class people, so the upper and lower classes came to desire an end of the war. They came to be anti-government.

Q - Do you think there was any danger of revolt as the war continued?

F - There was no danger of revolt as long as the war continued. The farmers would give up their crops and everyone would cooperate for the war effort. However, once this objective was lost, they would not supply the rice.

Q - If Japan had won, which class would have benefitted?

F - All classes would have benefited.

Q - What about Kempei Liaison with the Home Ministry?

F - We did not have any liaison. The Home Ministry was weak so they did not have any, even though the war was being lost. The Home Ministry was so weak that it did nothing about the air raids, so we had to do it ourselves.

Q - Why did the Kempei have such a reputation?

F - The Kempei was made up of old soldiers, and they handled people like soldiers. Many of them joined the Kempei when they came back from the front and, therefore, they were inclined to treat the people rough.

Q - Do you think the Emperor is necessary for the welfare of the Japanese nation?

F - Undoubtedly the Emperor is necessary, and without the Emperor the Japanese nation would probably turn to Bolshevism.