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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WAR DIVISION
ECONOMIC WARFARE SECTION

REPORT ON
UNDERGROUND GASOLINE STORAGE AT KAWASAKI, UNDERGROUND
NAVAL RECORDS STORAGE AND OTHER MILITARY OBJECTIVES AT
AND NEAR TOKYO, AND INDUSTRIAL ALCOHOL PLANTS IN FORMOSA, JAPAN

April 12, 1943

Submitted by: Richard L. Porter, Jr.
Economic Warfare Section
Department of Justice
New Orleans, La.

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Economic Warfare Section
War Division
Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.

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April 12, 1943

Re: Underground Gasoline Storage
at Kawasaki, Underground
Naval Records Storage and
Other Military Objectives
at and Near Tokyo, and
Industrial Alcohol Plants
in Formosa, Japan

Submitted by: Richard L. Porter, Jr.
Economic Warfare Section
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UNDERGROUND GASOLINE STORAGE AT KAWASAKI, UNDERGROUND
NAVAL RECORDS STORAGE AND OTHER MILITARY OBJECTIVES AT
AND NEAR TOKYO, AND INDUSTRIAL ALCOHOL PLANTS IN FORMOSA, JAPAN

This report relates to the location and description of underground gasoline storage facilities at Kawasaki, a long tunnel vital to railroad transportation between Tokyo and northern Honshu, a key bridge, anti-aircraft defenses and the location of underground storage vaults for Japanese Naval records at Tokyo, and industrial alcohol plants, rubber production, and electric power facilities on the Island of Formosa, as of 1941. It is based on information obtained through long residence and observation of Americans engaged in publishing a news weekly in Tokyo, until their internment and subsequent return to the United States.

I. Underground Gasoline Storage Facilities at Kawasaki, Japan

Kawasaki, an industrial city of over 100,000 population, is located on the west side of Tokyo Bay, equidistant between Tokyo and Yokohama. For years, its baseball enthusiasts had occupied a field very near the shore and between the shore and the electric railway.

In 1937, the customary use of this field was discontinued, and the public excluded from such area. Shortly thereafter, installation of underground tanks for storage of gasoline and/or oil was observed. The work continued without interruption until 1939, when the entire area comprising the baseball park had been filled with storage tanks. No estimate of the number of tanks was attempted.

Some of these tanks were observed during the act of construction

or installation. All tanks appeared to be uniform in size and were built of steel plate, side walls and top, and on a concrete bottom or base. No estimate of the size or capacity of the several tanks was made, except that the tanks appeared to be larger in diameter than the tank ordinarily observed on petroleum tank farms in the United States. The height was not estimated.

It is believed that the U.S. petroleum tank, which was used as the standard of comparison in estimating the size of the storage tanks at Kawasaki, is the standard 55,000 barrel tank, which is 30 feet high and 114 feet in diameter. The next largest tank in common use in the United States is the standard 80,000 barrel tank, which is 30 feet high and 144 feet in diameter. From these figures, the conclusion may be reached that the Kawasaki tanks are the diameter of the U.S. standard 80,000 barrel tank.

The tops of the tanks are somewhat conical in shape, the center being three or four feet higher than the side walls. After the completion of each tank, it was covered over with earth and then sodded so that the entire field when last seen appeared covered with grass. The low mounds marking the location of each tank have rather large vent pipes rising from the top of each tank, still further fixing the exact location.

No charts or maps were available to enable the exact location of the Kawasaki baseball park to be marked or established. However, this park was located as between the shore line and the electric railway. At this spot, there was a mooring for tankers at a discharge dock, and the tankers discharged direct through noticeably short hoses into the receiving pipes for this storage installation. It was presumed, but not known, that unloading was done by using pumps for discharge from hold to receiving line.

II. Vital Railroad Tunnel North of Tokyo

In an effort to shorten time and distance by rail from the northern part of the Island of Honshu, the Japanese Government Railway constructed a tunnel at the head of Idan Peninsula. This tunnel was described as being the longest railroad tunnel in Japan and is situated a short distance from Nazuma and under the range of hills on the west side of the peninsula between Nazuma and Kozu. The line of railroad which uses the tunnel, services the entire northeastern part of the Island of Honshu. This tunnel was described as the most vital and vulnerable spot on the railroad north of Tokyo. It was said to be open on one side at some places, but throughout most of its length to be entirely under ground.

III. Key Bridge

Prior to the outbreak of hostilities with the United States, the Japanese rushed to completion a key bridge from a point near the Naval arsenal to the now important island known as "Sakashima." This island

has become very valuable to the Japanese war effort, it being completely occupied by iron works and a big airplane factory. The bridge is the only connection between Honshu and Sakashima, and little is known of it except that it is in constant use by heavy traffic.

A description of the size, type or material of the bridge was unavailable. This bridge is not shown on any known maps or charts.

IV. Anti-Aircraft Defenses in Tokyo

The locations of three of the largest anti-aircraft installations in Tokyo were described as follows:

1. Suido Bashi - at or near the baseball stadium

It was understood that there were sixteen anti-aircraft guns in this location, but their arrangement, size and type could not be ascertained.

2. Ueno Park - near Ueno Station

Ueno Park has an area of more than 200 acres and the exact location, number, size and type of the guns installed in this area could not be definitely given other than that the guns were very near the station. However, it was believed that anti-aircraft guns of the heaviest caliber were used in the Ueno section.

3. Between the Diet Building and the Premier's residence

The anti-aircraft installation at this place was situated facing the German Embassy, and the proximity of the guns to the Embassy was proven by the fact that there was a constant breaking of glass in the Embassy windows due to the concussion from the anti-aircraft guns in frequent practice maneuvers.

Foreigners have generally been denied access to areas in the immediate vicinity of these installations for some time before the Japanese attack on the United States. No information, therefore, was obtainable as to the size, type, or location of ammunition houses, if any, at these gun emplacements.

V. Underground Storage for Naval Records

During the latter part of 1941, the Japanese Government closed and barricaded the first street south of the Navy Office. This street is between the Navy Office and the old Diet Building. From various Japanese sources, it was learned that a heavily reinforced shelter was constructed under the street and that such shelter or vault was to provide safe storage for all the valuable records of the Japanese Navy. It was positively asserted that the storage place was for the protection of records, not people, against invasion or bombing.

VI. Industrial Alcohol Plants

Informants had not been able to gather information relative to industrial alcohol plants on the main island of Japan. They had heard of the operation of some of these plants, but were unable to locate or describe them.

On a recent trip to Formosa, Mrs. Wills had seen a great many alcohol plants located on this island. She was able to give few details, except that practically all of Japanese sugar was produced on Formosa Island, and that practically the entire output of the sugar mills of Formosa was immediately diverted to the manufacture of industrial alcohol. It was positively stated that the inhabitants of Japan had had no sugar for quite a long time. It was also stated that when the Japanese captured the sugar stores in the Philippines that the entire amount was immediately transported to Formosa and converted into industrial alcohol.

VII. Cultivation of Rubber on Formosa Island

Great quantities of rubber were in cultivation on the island of Formosa in 1941. These trees had been planted several years before and were in production in 1941. Large acreages formerly devoted to bananas and sugar have been converted to rubber cultivation.

Most of the rubber produced on Formosa Island is grown on the east coast between Tokas and Tianon on the flat coastal plain. Few white men are known to have been permitted to make trips into the east Formosa area after the production of rubber for the Japanese Government had been begun. Plants for the use of raw rubber were situated on the East Coast.

VIII. Power Plant on Formosa Island

It was understood that the power plant on Lake Candidos (Jitsugit-sutau) manufactures most of the electric power used in industrial plants on the Island of Formosa. Neither of the informants has seen this installation or has any knowledge of its size, capacity, etc. They stated, however, that the banking firm of Dillon Reed & Company of New York handled the financing of this project and that such banking firm should be able to supply detailed information concerning same.

IX. ADDITIONAL LEADS

Informants suggested that much valuable and vital information could be secured concerning Japanese industries from Mr. James Rabbitt, c/o Engineers' Club, New York City, and Mr. M. B. Thresher, c/o Lt. C. N. Spinks of the Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Rabbitt was sent to Japan a number of years before the war by the International Nickel Company. His visit was made for the purpose of instructing Japanese industries in the different methods and use of

nickel and in such capacity he gained admission into practically all of the larger Japanese plants and industries. It was reported that Mr. Rabbitt, because of the position he occupied as representative of the International Nickel Company, frequently sat in meetings of the Japanese General Staff discussing matters of economic importance in connection with the metals industries. Mr. Rabbitt is a metallurgist and engineer of the highest type and is believed to have more accurate information about the metallurgical industries of Japan than any man now in the United States. In September 1942, Mr. Rabbitt stated that his information had not been given to a representative of the Intelligence section of the Government. It is not known whether such information has been subsequently transmitted.

Mr. M. B. Thresher taught economics in Japan for a number of years. In addition thereto, he wrote a series of articles on the "Six Big Companies" and was economic expert and writer for the "Japan News Week," and also a writer for the "Japanese Advertising Review." Mr. Thresher is regarded as having a vast fund of first-hand knowledge of recent economic conditions in Japan.

Both Rabbitt and Thresher returned to the United States on the exchange ship "Gripsholm."

Sources

The information contained in this report is based on an interview with Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Wills, who now reside at 1919 South Grand Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri. Mr. Wills lived at Tokyo, Japan for 14 years, during the latter part of which period he was engaged in the publication of the "Japan News Week" at Tokyo. He made frequent trips over Japan in search of material for his magazine and gained first-hand knowledge of many economic and other conditions existing in Japan.

Mrs. Wills was a missionary in Formosa for a number of years and is very familiar with conditions on that island. Thereafter, she became associated with the "Japan News Week" and served as managing editor for a considerable period. It was stated that she had prepared an unauthorized article for "Time" magazine, which resulted in her being sentenced to jail for 18 months by the Japanese Government. However, she served no part of such sentence. Mr. and Mrs. Wills were kept in internment from the outbreak of the war until their return to the United States on the exchange ship "Gripsholm."

When interviewed at New Orleans, they had practically no material or written data with them. However, they indicated their willingness and desire to cooperate with the Division in any further manner possible and suggested that they had valuable data in their library at St. Louis, which would most likely form the basis for reports on other Japanese industrial plants. However, they were forced to cut short the interview due to their departure from New Orleans before the extent of their available data could be fully developed.