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

INTERROGATION NO: 328

PLACE: TOKYO
DATE: 12 Nov 45

Division of Origin: Capital Equipment and Construction.

Subject: Bomb Damage Repairs to Factories.

Personnel interrogated and background of each:

Mr. WATARABE - Formerly commissioner of Air Defense Section
of the Munitions Ministry.

Mr. ISHIMOCHI - Formerly with the above office.

Mr. NAGASAWA - Formerly with the above office.

Where interviewed: Room 361, Meiji Building.

Interrogator: Captain ROSENBLATT, Sgt Robinson.

Interpreter: Mr. NAKANE (Japanese Civilian)

Summary:

Bomb damage repair to Japanese factories was virtually negligible ifsofar as government aid and supervision was concerned. What little repair was accomplished was largely the result of individual action of the plants affected, using materials which they had hoarded during the war or which they obtained by barter or through the black market.

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I N T E R R O G A T I O N

Although some preparations had been made beginning in November 1943 by the Munitions Ministry for the repair of factories in anticipation of bomb damage, when the air raids began on the home Islands of Japan in the summer of 1944 there was only a small amount of government supervised repairs actually accomplished. Later, as the bomb damage increased, production of munitions in factories damaged by air raids was transferred to plants which were idle or operating at low capacity because of shortage of materials. Bomb damage repair was further neglected because of the greater emphasis placed on plant dispersal and even this was considerably limited by materials shortages.

The Air Defense Section of the Munitions Ministry attempted to obtain materials to help reconstruct important war plants damaged by air attack; but the Mobilization Board of the Ministry refused nearly all these requests. The only significant repair job they accomplished was on the Yawata Works of the Japan Iron Manufacturing Company. This was done apparently after the first B-29 raid on this target and because this was one of the important plants of one of their basic industries.

The Air Defense Section was established in November 1943 under the Administrative Department which in turn was under the Mobilization Bureau of the Munitions Ministry. This original organization occurred at the same time as the establishment of the Air Defense Section in the Ministry of Home Affairs to control civilian defense. (See Interrogation No. 115, dtd, 14 October 1945) In December 1944 the Air Defense Section was divided into two sub-sections, one continuing to deal with bomb damage repair and the other with plant dispersal which had become a problem as a result of the bombing. With the intensification of the bombing in subsequent months, a second reorganization was made in April 1945 which set up three sub-sections, one dealing with adjustment, a second with planning, and the third with construction.

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