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UNITED STATES STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
MORALE DIVISION
(Pacific)

Interview with FUNADA, Atsuyasu, official in the Secretariat of the Board of Information (Suggested by Mr. Tsukahara, Toshiro, in interview of December 12, 1945)

SUBJECT: Japanese public opinion during the war.

INTERVIEWER: Capt. Wm. Magistretti

PLACE: Rantei Restaurant

TIME: 11:30 - 1:30, 12 December 1945

BACKGROUND:

Mr. Funada is a former Foreign Office Official. Visited in the U.S. in 1940. An official in the Secretariat of the Board of Information, all during the war and up to the present time.

SUMMARY: Topics.

1. Public Opinion during the war.
2. Future Political Changes in Japan.

INTERVIEW:

M - I understand that you have been with the Board of Information during the war, and would appreciate very much a summary of changes in public opinion.

F - People were surprised at the war, and encouraged by the victories. Prior to the outbreak they had been angry at the ABCD powers and felt that although Japan wanted to settle the war with China the Anglo-Saxon powers were preventing it. They thought that Asia should be for the Asiatics. During the interval from the Fall of Singapore to Guadalcanal, they had great hopes for a new Asia and for no more slavery. However, at about the time of Guadalcanal, anti-Tojo feeling began to arise. Then, as the battle conditions got worse they felt that there was no hope. They became suspicious of the Imperial Headquarters announcements. The military and the government tried to wipe this out, but was not too successful. There was a gradual separation between the military and the people, particularly at the time of Saipan. People began to feel that the Army and Navy were of no avail. All the internal and external conditions began to get worse and with the Suzuki Cabinet people recognized the emergence of a peace Cabinet. However, the die-hards among the military still held out. The hopes of the die-hards were dashed to pieces by

participation in the war of Russia and the atomic bomb. Both of these gave good material to the peace group. The people did not believe the government announcements and lost faith in them because of the air raids. The participation of Russia gave the public a great shock as the people had heretofore felt that they could save face by making peace with America through Russia and further felt that a friendly neutral as well as an ally had more or less stabbed them in the back. This accounts for the anti-Communist feeling in present-day Japan.

M - What political changes will take place in the future?

F - A temporary government will emerge. The progressive Party will probably work for a democratic country if it gets a majority. However, the people, in particular the younger group, do not have great hope for it. While it is a Progressive Party it is still based on the same old crowd. The Communist group is not very strong because they have no real leaders like Nosaka and because of their feelings against the Emperor. However, there is a real environment conducive to Communism. There will probably be a Ugaki Cabinet or some type of a coalition government.

M - What is desirable for the future of Japan?

F - It is impossible for Japan to fight in the future and this, in fact, is good for the future of Japan. Japan needs a new road to follow. At the present time she has no hopes. There is a great opportunity for America to make a good friend of Japan. Should Russia come in, people would feel that the future is hopeless. However, at the present time American radio and paper censorship is four or five times worse than censorship under the Tojo Government and is, in actuality, preventing expression of free speech over the radio by the various political contestants.