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MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE CAPTURED PERSONNEL & MATERIAL BRANCH

WME

Date of Report: 1 May 1945.
Dates of Interrogations: 28 Mar-5 Apr 1945.
Serial No. and Rank: 41J-1150, Civilian (Navy).
Unit: Naval Construction Unit.
Date & Place of Capture: 4 August 1944, Tinian.

1557

LEE, Bok Do
By: Lt. Wilson

PREAMBLE

PW was born in 1925 in Shogen Gun, Keisho-nando, Korea. After completing primary school, he left for Osaka, Japan, where he had 5 years of middle school education. From 1940 until the time of his conscription (Apr 44) he traveled extensively in northern Honshu and Karafuto.

Prisoner is of average intelligence and, being anti-Japanese, volunteers information freely. His statements are considered fairly reliable.

CAPTURE

Three days previous to capture PW was hiding in a cave with about 20 Japanese soldiers. A lieutenant took command and sat at the mouth of the cave with his sword stuck in the ground, forbidding any one to leave. PW saw this lieutenant kill 3 Korean women and 2 small children who were headed for the American lines. PW was certain that he would have been killed if it had been known that he was Korean.

The night before his capture, he was sent out with 2 Japanese in search of water. He was able to escape from the Japanese and the next morning gave himself up to the American troops.

LOCALITIES

Chinnai Coal Mine: Located on Chinnai Yama, 15 miles east of Chinnai, Karafuto. PW worked here from 17 April to 11 May 1941 as an unskilled laborer, receiving ¥ 7.00 a day. Coal was obtained from the surface and by tunneling into Chinnai Yama. It was hauled from the mine area by a small railroad to lighters and then carried to 8,000-ton freighters outside the harbor. Prisoner does not know where it was shipped, but claims that the coal was used in the production of synthetic oils and gasoline.

There were about 5,000 employees at the mine, one-third of whom were women. Many of these women were brought in from Aomori and Akita. Because of the extreme cold, they usually returned to Japan from Oct to Apr. 200 Korean conscripted laborers also were working here.

Yamashida Coal Mine Co: Located about 7 miles east of Otsu, Karafuto. This mine was about twice as large as the one at Chinnai. Coal, carried by train to Otsu where it was loaded onto freighters, was probably used in synthetic oil production (May 41).

Ochiai Airfield: Located at Ochiai, Karafuto. 2 or 3 Koreans were working on this field in May 1941. Exact location and details not known.

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SECRET

1 May 1945.

Manul, Karafuto: Much timber was shipped from here to lumber and paper mills in southern Karafuto. White birch, used for paper, and larch, used for shipbuilding, were cut from the forests around Takarazawa.

Maoka, Karafuto: PW's Obsn: April 1941. A paper factory was located directly east of the RR station. Prisoner heard that there was a large synthetic oil plant located in or near this city (no information). 8,000 to 10,000-ton freighters made a round trips from here to Otaru, Hokkaido, about once each week. Type of freight not known.

Muroran, Hokkaido: Large ship repair yards were located here. These were used for ships (8,000-10,000-tons) which were too large for the repair facilities at Hakodate (hearsay)(No details).

Coal Fields: The greatest concentration of coal fields in operation in the Japanese Islands was located between Bibai and Yubari, Ishikari Shi Cho. (1941 - hearsay).

Powder Magazines: Located on Kinkasan Island, Miyagi Ken. In 1941 from 200 to 400 Korean laborers were working here on an extensive explosive storage project. (Hearsay). No details.

Other Powder Magazines: Located south of the highway running NW from Ogawara, Karita-Gun, to Togatta, Karita Gun, Miyagi Ken. In the summer of 1941, revetments for storage of high explosives were being constructed with Korean labor, and an area of about 1,500 m by 8,000 m. was being utilized for this. (No details). PW cannot pin-point this location. He visited here in 1941.

Tungsten and Molybdenum Mines: Located at Okawame Mura, Kunoe Gun, Iwate Ken. This large mine went into full operation in Apr 43. No details. PW visited here in 1943.

Oil Storage Tanks: In Mar 43 PW heard from a Japanese traveler that a large number of oil storage tanks, located at Ominato, Aomori Ken, had been moved to another locality. This was a precaution against possible bombings. No further information.

Allied POW: In July 42, when prisoner worked for 15 days in an iron and tungsten mine at Osaruzawa, Katsuno Gun, Akita Ken, he saw about 2,000 American POW working there. They were divided into groups of 30 to 50, each group under the direction of an unarmed interpreter-foreman. There was no guard. Prisoner, though not permitted to speak to them, frequently left cigarettes where the Americans were working. He does not know where they were billeted.

About 3,000 allied POW were working in the coal fields west of Taira-Shi, Fukushima Ken. Prisoner saw 30 of them working under an unarmed interpreter foreman.

In Aug 43, about 2,000 American POW were employed in the lead mines in Funatsu Machi, Yoshiki Gun, Gifu Ken. (Hearsay).

Kurobe River Hydro-Electric Project: Located on Kurobe River, Toyama Ken (Note AOP, Toyama 90.11, Pages 26-27). PW's Obsn: 1941.

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SECRET

SECRET

1 May 1945.

An 80-cm gauge electric train connected Unatsuki with the various plants and dams of this project. Between No. 3 plant (Target No. 1608) and its dam, the track was tunneled for 1 km into a mountain. From that point, the train was conveyed upwards for 1,000 ft by an elevator which was capable of carrying 4 cars. It was about 16 km from the top of this elevator to the No. 3 plant dam. (I.N.: Probably to Kurobe No. 4 dam).

Prisoner was told by the senior surveyor for the power line, that all the power from this project was used in the Osaka industrial area.

Osaka Machine Tool Co. Ltd (Osaka Seiko KK): Located in the NE part of Osaka City (34°42'34" N - 135°32'33" E).

Prisoner worked there as a general laborer in 1940-41. There were one large structure and a number of smaller buildings in the plant area. The large building (with saw-tooth type roof) was divided into 6 sections. Taps, dies and accessories were made in one of these sections. P W does not know what was made in the other section, but believes that other types of machine tools were being manufactured. An estimated 5,000 employees were there in 1941.

COMMUNICATIONS

Karafuto: The RR on the west coast extended from Honto to Kushunnai. Though a RR bed has been constructed from Kushunnai to a point north of Chinnai (date May 1941) no tracks or bridges had been put in.

A second-class dirt road ran from Chinnai to Kushunnai. Because of snow and ice, it was not passable during the winter, often remaining unused until about June.

A dirt road from Kushunnai to Manui was able to accommodate year-round traffic. It was used extensively for hauling timber to Manui.

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SECRET

1 May 1945.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1940 - Jan: Employed in Osaka Seikohi KK.
- 1941 - Feb: Traveled and worked in Northern Honshu and Karafuto.
- 1944 - 24 Apr: Conscripted into Naval Construction Unit.
- 11 May: Boarded Santos Maru at Yokohama. 3 transports and 5 destroyers were in the convoy.
- 19 May: Arrived Saipan.
- 29 May: Transferred to Tinian.
- 4 Aug: Captured.

His statements are considered fairly reliable.

REMARKS

Three days previous to capture PW was hiding in a cave with about 20 Japanese soldiers. A lieutenant took command and set at the mouth of the cave with his back to the entrance, forbidding any one to leave. PW saw this lieutenant kill 3 Japanese who had 2 small children who were handed over to the American forces. PW was certain that he would have been killed if it had been known that he was there.

The night before his capture, he was sent out with 2 Japanese in search of water. He was able to escape from the Japanese and the next morning saw him off up to the Japanese troops.

REMARKS

Yamashita Field Mine: Located on Okinawa Island, 15 miles west of Naha. PW worked here from 17 April to 11 May 1945 as an unskilled laborer, receiving \$7.00 a day. Work was obtained from the surface and by tunneling into Okinawa Island. It was worked from the mine area by a small railroad to lighten and then carried to 2,000-ton freighters outside the harbor. PW was sent out there where it was mined, but claims that the work was hard in the presence of sporadic air and ground.

There were about 8,000 employees at the mine, one-third of whom were women. Many of them were brought in from Japan and Korea. Because of the extreme heat, they usually returned to Japan from Oct to Jan. PW claims several unskilled laborers also were working there.

Yamashita Field Mine: Located about 7 miles west of Naha, Okinawa. This mine was about twice as large as the one at Chingai, and was worked by 10,000 men. PW claims that it was located into freighters, was probably that in 1945.

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