

Re-Examination of the Siemens Affairs: An Analysis of Documents of the Trials for a "Case of Bribery by High Officials of the Japanese Navy"

By BUNJI NAGURA

The purpose of this paper is to re-examine the Siemens Affairs by analysing documents of the trials for a case of bribery by high officials of the Japanese Navy. The Siemens Affairs comprised a major international bribery case involving a warship and munitions. There were two incidents. One was the "Siemens-Richter incident", which came to light in the latter of January, 1914, immediately after the detection by the Reuter dispatch. The other was the larger "Vickers-Kongo incident" (of bribery by high Naval officials involved in the ordering of the large battleship Kongo), which was clarified after the investigation. The written judgement and published documents of the trials of the Siemens Affairs have been used. This paper examines the documents of the public trial by the Tokyo District Court, which had been closed. These trial documents are classified in two groups. Some are "written apologies for the naval-bribery affairs", while the others are "documents of problems on the warship". The main contents of the former are questions to persons involved in the Reuters News Agency and the Siemens Company in relation to the "Siemens-Richter case", while the contents of the latter comprise various hearing documents on the "Vickers-Kongo case", mainly from naval officers and the directors of Mitsui Bussan. We find that the content of the testimonies is diverse, especially in the latter case. We can find that the role of Yamamoto Jotaro, one of three managing directors of Mitsui Bussan, was important, as was that of Matsuo Tsurutaro, one of the directors involved in ordering the battleship Kongo from Vickers.