

December 18, 1957

**Letter No. 69 from Tai Ha Yiu [Yu Tae-ha] of the
Korean Mission in Japan to President Syngman Rhee**

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Summary:

Yu summarizes a meeting with Prime Minister Kishi and Yatsugi regarding Japan's reparations for Vietnam and Indonesia.

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REPUBLIC OF KOREA

KOREAN MISSION IN JAPAN

December 18, 1957

No. 69

TO : His Excellency
The President

FROM : Tai Ha Yiu

I met Prime Minister Kishi and Yatsugi last evening at the former's private residence. After the usual exchange of greetings at which time Kishi inquired of his Excellency's health, he commented that the reason for the present state of relations between the two countries is that there is lack of confidence and trust in each other. He added that he can well understand the feelings of the Korean people.

Kishi: "I have been kept informed by Yatsugi of your frequent meetings. I have every confidence and trust in Yatsugi and have given him the authority to discuss our problems with you. However, the plan under which we are presently holding our talks must be the final one, for if any change is to be made we will be placed in such a position that we will never get anything done. I want the Korean side to trust me.

"Before I left for the Southeast Asian trip, everybody told me how very difficult the Indonesian reparations problem was and that I could never settle it. But I did it during a mere 20 minute talk. This came about because Sukarno and I had mutual understanding of and with each other's problems. The Japanese side has to compensate for its past wrongs.

"The Vietnamese reparations issue is still pending, but Uemura is now in Saigon and holding talks with the President of Vietnam. I expect our problem to be settled by the end of this year or by latest the first part of next January. If this is achieved, the only country with which we have yet to come to terms is our nearest neighbor, Korea. It is imperative that the two sides do away with fears and suspicions. I want you to come to agreement on our problems with Yatsugi here.

"With regard to my note I will address it to President Rhee. I have asked Yatsugi to draw up the draft and to discuss the contents with you."

Yiu: "Your vice foreign minister is hoping we will not succeed. In addition to Ohno, Tanaka, of late, has been acting rather strangely. I had trusted him so much."

Kishi: "In order to settle our big problems we must close our eyes and ears to petty matters."

Yiu: "When we fail in our talks with other countries, we do not get the same shock as we do when some such thing happens with Japan. This must be so because of our past unpleasant history. Unless Japan shows her sincerity in some way, Korea will never change her feelings."

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The Japanese newspapers are daily commenting that Kishi will not be able to stay long in office. With this in mind, I told Kishi that he must do everything possible to bring our problems to settlement at this time when he is the prime minister so that our past ills may be remedied.

Before closing the meeting, Kishi told Yatsugi to draw up the draft of his letter to the President.

Gaihanjin