

**October 5, 1955**

**Letter, Kim Yong-shik of the Korean Mission in Japan  
to President Syngman Rhee**

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**Summary:**

Kim's gratitude to Rhee on the hospitality shown at Kim's visit to Chinhae and report on trade issues between Japan and ROK

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## REPUBLIC OF KOREA

KOREAN MISSION IN JAPAN

Tokyo, October 5, 1955

Excellency:

I beg to express my most profound gratitude for the hospitality extended to me by Your Excellency and Madame Rhee during my recent visit to Chinhae. I am happy to report to Your Excellency that I now returned to my post and resumed my duties here.

I returned to Seoul from Chinhae on September 28 and immediately prepared the resume of the background and guiding principle, as expounded to me by Your Excellency while in Chinhae, and also the general situation report on which I reported personally. I handed them over to Mr. Park in the Office of the President and believe they have already reached Your Excellency.

It was a particularly honor and privilege for me to have had additional opportunity to get personal guidance from Your Excellency. I am determined to renew my efforts in performance of official duties here.

While in Seoul, I briefed Acting Foreign Minister Cho on the general situation in Japan. I also talked with Commerce and Industry Minister regarding the trade situation between Japan and our country. Later, I met representative Korean businessmen and told them that Korea should cease to depend on Japan commercially and also try to keep Japan's economic expansion in check. Such aim can be attained possibly by cultivating new sources and markets for trade outside Japan, I said.

Before my departure from Seoul I was informed by the Foreign Ministry of the receipt of a cable from the League of International Red Cross concerning a request from Japan Red Cross, asking cooperation of our country in relation to 50 Japanese repatriates from North Korea. ~~Japan Red Cross~~ also seems desirous of sending representatives to

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His Excellency  
President Syngman Rhee

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see the situation of the detention camp at Pusan where Japanese fishermen are now held, according to the cable. I told Acting Foreign Minister Cho in detail on our policy toward this matter, as instructed by Your Excellency some time ago. I think the Acting Foreign Minister reported to Your Excellency on this matter separately.

I was informed by our Foreign Ministry official that the Foreign Ministry was notified by the US Embassy that the latter wanted to suspend the talks on the treaty on navigation and commerce. I did not have enough time to check how the US State Department has come to take such an action.

Upon my arrival in Tokyo I met the press at the airport whom I distinctly told that Japan should show sincerity by withdrawing the alleged property claim, otherwise it was difficult to expect an early settlement of the problems pending between the two countries. (Please refer to the translation of the newspaper article, as enclosed.)

After my return here I also found that Japan is now contemplating the release of our people at the Omura camp in hopes for an early release by our side of Japanese fishermen at Pusan. It seems that the Japanese Foreign Office is enthusiastic about the plan, while the Justice Ministry is not in favor. When I met officials of the Japanese Government at a party given by Ambassador Allison Tuesday evening (in honor of US Undersecretary of State Hoover and ICA Director Hollister), they said they wanted to have a few more days before they could reach the final decision on the release of our people from the Omura camp.

Incidentally, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Hoover, Jr. and Mr. and Mrs. Hollister are scheduled to leave for Seoul tomorrow (Oct. 6) afternoon (as to the exact time of departure, etc. a cable will be sent separately). When I met them at the party together, they were unanimous in saying that they were looking forward to visiting Korea and meeting people there.

Amb. Allison enquired me how Your Excellency was feeling recently. It seemed he still has not given up hopes on the settlement of the problems between Japan and Korea. At the same party Foreign Minister Shigemitsu also walked toward me, saying that "We should see each other more often." I do not believe this was anything more than his diplomatic gesture. The general impression is that the Japanese Government is contemplating to make some kind of overture to our side for the pending problem -- the detainees' question, because they are well aware that the Government will be put in a difficult

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position unless some prospects for the settlement are seen before the reopening of the Diet session scheduled for November.

Some confidential information reaching me recently shows that the Japanese side is anxious to conclude its negotiations with the Soviet Union for normalization of the relations between the two countries. Japan's Chief Delegate, Shunichi Matsumoto, is now back from London for consultation with his Government. The Japanese Government seems to believe that the only way to prolong the life of the Hatoyama Cabinet is to conclude the current Russo-Japanese talks successfully.

On the other hand the reparations talks between Japan and the Philippines have again been stalemated recently and the Japanese Government apparently decided not to send its representative of ambassadorial rank to Manila for further negotiations. The Japanese side believed until quite recently that the prospects for the settlement of this problem were quite good. The Hatoyama Government is now experiencing difficulty getting consent of the Liberals to the \$800-million reparations formula, which is necessary for its successful passage in the Diet.

I met Mr. Charles Hargrove, Correspondent for the London Times, this morning. I gave him thorough briefing on the background of the Korea-Japan relations and the nature of the pending problems, especially, concerning the insincere attitude of the Japanese Government by making absurd property claim, which is a violation of the San Francisco Peace Treaty.

With sentiments of loyalty and esteem, I remain,

Most respectfully,

*Byung Huh Kim*

Enclosure: Newspaper translation