

December 4, 1957

**Letter No. 66 from Tai Ha Yiu [Yu Tae-ha] of the
Korean Mission in Japan to President Syngman Rhee**

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Summary:

Yu briefs President Rhee about a meeting with Tanaka, deputy chief cabinet secretary of Japan, regarding notes exchanged during Korea-Japan talks.

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REPUBLIC OF KOREA

KOREAN MISSION IN JAPAN

December 4, 1957

No. 66TO : His Excellency
The President

FROM : Tai Ha Yiu

I met Tanaka, deputy chief cabinet secretary at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd. This meeting was requested on my part, Yatsugi being out of town.

Tanaka began the conversation by saying that Vice Minister Ohno came to him to state that he met Amb. Kim at the Kaiyukaikan who requested that the Japanese side accept his amended Miyake proposal. It was a very brief meeting, according to Ohno.

I told Tanaka that as he must have heard from Yatsugi, our notes exchanged on Nov. 15 must be the basis for our talks. As to the ambassador's plan, when I met Itagaki he told me that the Japanese side could not accept it. I also told Tanaka that the ambassador and I are in full concord with each other and that instead of going into details the three of us must bring, what we had set out to do, to a satisfactory conclusion and as early as possible for the good of both sides. However, it was hard to convince him. It was decided that we would meet again on the 3rd.

On the morning of the 3rd, I asked the ambassador if he met Ohno. The ambassador stated that Ohno asked him if what he (Kim) had proposed was the one that I had proposed. The ambassador said he replied that the minister will follow his (Kim's) plan. Amb. Kim then asked me if I had some other proposal, to which I replied in the negative except that I had been trying to make the Japs accept what we had agreed to on Nov. 15.

The ambassador informed me that about 6:00 p.m. last evening, the Foreign Minister called him to the effect that the amended Miyake proposal which the ambassador had proposed to the Japs was good and that he should follow it up. Minister Cho also said that the President had instructed him to do so. The ambassador stated that his plan is now the plan of the government and that we should take it as such.

If what the ambassador said is true, then I would like to know what Mr. Park's telephone message was about. At any rate, if we continue in this wise, that is, two men having two different plans, it will only place us in embarrassing and difficult positions with the crafty Japs and we will not succeed either way.

I had a brief meeting with Tanaka on the 3rd. He told me that he met Ishii and the latter was anxious to know if there is any evidence from the Korean side that they will remain satisfied with their present plan because Amb. Kim came to him each time with a different proposal. Also, whether my proposal would not be harmful

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to Japan adding that if the Japanese side makes one single unwise move, the situation would become so complicated that it would be difficult to disentangle the knot.

Tanaka's meeting with Ishii resulted in the decision to await Kishi's return.

Tanaka believes it best to discuss the matter with Kishi because of his close relations with the prime minister and because Kishi would be better to deal with than Ishii. As to Ishii, although they are officially closely associated, it is Yatsugi who is closer to Ishii unofficially. However, Yatsugi is out of town and will not return until the 6th.

Today, Tanaka said, he sent a detailed letter on Korea-Japan talks to Kishi through someone going to Manila so that the prime minister will have a full account of what took place and he will have made up his mind before his return. Tanaka asked that we wait for Kishi to return and to keep our activities confidential from the Foreign Office as the problems must be dealt with politically.

According to Tanaka, Kano Kyuro and Narahashi Wataru are going around saying that they are secretly making preparations to send a good will mission to Korea if the preliminary talks come to a satisfactory conclusion. Tanaka said he had intended to ask me about it. Narahashi is not a member of the Kishi group and is a former progressive. Such backdoor activities will only tend to confuse and delay matters, Tanaka said.

After hearing what he had to say, I stated that we are more than anxious to avoid having to keep the Koreans detained at the Omura camp any longer and to settle the problem by the end of the year. However, since formalities and procedures will take a long time even if agreement were to be reached, the Japanese must take into consideration the time involved and settle the problem as early as possible. I told him that if the Japanese side continues to take its present attitude, I could only interpret it as insincerity, for the Japanese side had ample time to make up its mind from the time I presented my proposal to Kishi through Yatsugi on the 6th of November and the notes that were exchanged on the 15th. I stated that I had already made a full report to our government and I could not wait any longer but that I feel the time had come for the Nov.15 notes to be made public.

Tanaka: "If I were the only one involved, I would not mind, but with our talks come to this final stage we must do something to obtain the release of the fishermen detained in Korea. Eighty per cent of them come from Yamaguchi and most of them are from our hometown of Habu, Yamaguchi. Because of this and other connections, Kishi and I have tried and are still trying hard to settle our problems. But as you know, the prime minister of Japan is not in a position to act of his own will. I would also like to remind you that the Korean side itself has not been going through one single route. I do not like to say this but neither Kishi nor I want to settle our problems to the vast disadvantage of our country.

"Not only the detainee issue but in every phase of our situation the absence of normal relations between the two countries is proving a big loss to us. The government is presently doing everything it can to settle the reparations problems and to establish friendly

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relations with these countries. However, the establishment of trade relations is far more important to Japan. Japan is placed in a position where she must settle her problems with sincerity although she may not be able to satisfy the other side. Mackerel caught in Korean waters from October to February amount^{ed} to about 120,000 tons and were worth ¥6 billion and with all the other fishes combined they were worth ¥10 billion in the past. Under the situation presently existing between the two countries the catch is only about 10 per cent. If normal relations are established the situation would be better than it is now."

Yiu: "Are you implying that you plan to start that all over again?"

Tanaka: "That was not what I meant."

I expect to arrive at some conclusion after Kishi's return. I had wanted to get something before his return so that I would have something worthwhile to report but I seem to have failed in this. There are many conditions in our disfavor and it is not very easy.

Tanaka