

November 18, 1957

**Letter No. 60 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 on his support for the original proposal and a meeting with Tanaka and Yatsugi regarding Japan-Korea talk about the proposal.

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REPUBLIC OF KOREA

KOREAN MISSION IN JAPAN

November 18, 1957

No. 60TO : His Excellency
The President

FROM : Tai Ha Yiu

Mr. Park called me at the hospital on the morning of the 15th. I took this opportunity to tell him that if the recent cable instruction from the Foreign Ministry to the effect that we should ignore all our other amendment proposals with respect to article 4 of the draft agreed minutes and conduct negotiations with the term "with all its sincerity" is true, I would resign as my conscience would not allow me to negotiate with the Japs with such a proposal.

I have time and again recommended to KMD as well as to the foreign minister and vice minister that we should continue our negotiations with the Japs on the basis of our original proposal and if we should fail to bring this about I would present our alternative plan to the Japs just a few days before Kishi's departure for Southeast Asia. I was told to go ahead with it. Notwithstanding, the Foreign Ministry again cabled new instructions just at the time when informal talks were taking place in full speed. I have not the slightest doubt that the Foreign Ministry acted on pressure and assurance from Dowling and that the Ambassador will do everything possible to carry out his promise. However, it must be borne in mind that in settling our problems with Japan, Dowling or even the U.S. government will not be able to break the Japs for they will never do everything that the Americans ask them to. I had wanted to make the Japs accept our term "does not affect Korea's claims in any way" in some way although I knew how difficult it was to get the Japs to accept it. The Japs are very anxious to have their fishermen back from Korea, but because of a term which to them is undesirable, they are still trying for a more flexible one. This is why I have so often stated that we must get something in our favor in writing from the Japs which will always remain on record. All our verbal arguments will get us no where, but a little piece of paper will. This is something the Japs are reluctant to do while we on our side want it. Even if the preliminary negotiations lead to resumption of formal talks, without it, I do not think they will progress smoothly. If the formal conference fails and breaks off and a new one reopens, it would still be of benefit to us to have something on paper.

I am at a loss how to make our Foreign Ministry understand. I do not think we are obliged to give in to the Americans just because they say a few reassuring words to us. I do not mean to say that Dowling is not to be trusted, but we must do something for ourselves.

I left the hospital on the 15th for fear that the Japs would get hold of the new instructions and immediately contacted Yatsugi and deputy chief cabinet secretary Tanaka and met them at the Prince Hotel.

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I told the two men that we must arrive at some conclusion that day in regard to my latest proposal. I did not want to show that I was anxious but I felt that I should get something from them even informally or else the new cable instructions which Ambassador Kim received would get into their ears and I thought it would be worthwhile to reach some understanding with them before Kishi left on his tour.

Tanaka stated that he and Yatsugi had talked to Fujiyama and Kishi of my proposal, and although it is not known what the administrative level in the Foreign Ministry would say to it, it is acceptable to the high level. He added that Itagaki, the Asian Affairs bureau chief was given a full explanation to the effect that since arguing on whether the Korean proposal was strong or not will not settle the problem, the high level had decided to accept it. Itagaki is in full understanding of it, Tanaka said.

I then suggested that we should note on paper that both sides had agreed to accept the latest Korean proposal. Tanaka took pen and paper and wrote in effect that 1. there is to be no change in the note verbale or the joint communique with respect to property claims as originally drafted in June. However, the new Korean proposal on property claims will be accepted in the agreed minutes. 2. return of art objects. In accordance with international practice, they will be returned to Korea. As to the other art objects discussion and settlement will be made at the formal talks. 3. All mention of "under deportation orders" will be removed from the draft memorandums. (*enclosed*)

The above was signed by the three of us. I agreed to it since my aim was to work as fast as possible. As soon as this was done, Tanaka stated that he would report to Kishi what we had just done, and I, on returning to the Office, reported it to the Ambassador who expressed satisfaction with it.

I was quite elated at getting this done. However, at 5:50 p.m. that day as I was about to leave the office, Yatsugi called saying that he had something very important to say to me and would I see him at 8:30 p.m. that evening together with Tanaka. I was somewhat tired having just got out of the hospital, but since Yatsugi insisted, I agreed.

Yatsugi: "For more than a year and half, I have tried in close cooperation with you and to the best of my ability to settle our very difficult problems without regard to the criticism that was being heaped on me. However, something that just came up leads me to believe that you have not been frank with me and this hurts me very much."

Yiu: "What do you mean by that?"

Tanaka: "There is a mean to what Yatsugi is saying. After our meeting at the Prince Hotel, we went directly to Kishi to report what we did. On hearing that the deputy prime minister had asked for me I went to him immediately and this is what Ishii said to me:

'Ambassador Kim came to see me this morning and told me that with regard to article 4 of the agreed minutes (draft on property claims) the Korean side will make considerable concessions. That is, that the Korean side will agree to settle the property claims problem on the basis of a proposal which is very close to the terms of the agreed minutes drafted on June 13. However, the Japanese side must accept the Korean amendments on other problems. I wanted to tell this to Kishi but since he is very

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busy I am telling you instead.'

"Ambassador Kim did not present a definite plan but there is a vast difference from what you proposed and his was a more flexible one. We feel that you made fools of us and we might be subject to ridicule if others know what we have done."

Yatsugi: "Because of the importance we attach to your proposal we did not discuss it with anybody except with Itagaki and a few others."

It put me off balance to be told off by the Japs in such a way. I had not known that Kim had visited Ishii. However, I did not believe that Kim made mention to Ishii the cable instruction from the Foreign Ministry. I therefore smiled and said that what I had proposed and what the ambassador had said to Ishii were one and the same and that there was no other proposal.

The next morning (16th) I learned from the ambassador's driver that he had visited Ishii. A few hours later I went to the ambassador's office and asked him if he met Ishii. He replied that with me ill in the hospital and the talks remaining at a standstill, he felt he should do something and therefore went to Ishii. I asked him if he discussed the Foreign Ministry's cable instructions with Ishii. He said that he did not but it was a repetition of what Yatsugi and Tanaka told me the other evening. I told him that he and I should meet the two men and convince them that what the ambassador said to Ishii was no other than what I had proposed to them after my return (our alternative proposal). That afternoon we met the two men but I could not tell whether or not they were convinced.

Tanaka stated that he showed to Kishi and Fujiyama what we had signed the other evening, but he was not sure how the administrative level would accept it. However, he believes that something will be achieved. He added that Ohno, the vice foreign minister is still strongly against our proposal.

On the morning of the 18th, Yatsugi called for a meeting and since the ambassador wanted to join, I took him along. According to Yatsugi, Kishi met Fujiyama and advised the latter to come to some agreement with the Korean side during his absence. Yatsugi is sure that Fujiyama is as resolved as Kishi to settle the problems.

At our staff meeting held this morning to discuss the Foreign Ministry's cable instructions, it was the unanimous opinion that they were weaker than the proposal made by Miyake on September 20. I am enclosing copies of Miyake's tentative suggestion and the cable instructions as well as our observation of the drafts for article 4 of the draft agreed minutes.

This report covers my activities from Nov.15 - 18.

Enclosures a/s

Yori Kuzin