

November 24, 1955
**Political Report, Minister Yong Shik Kim [Kim
Yong-shik] to Office of the President**

Citation:

"Political Report, Minister Yong Shik Kim [Kim Yong-shik] to Office of the President", November 24, 1955, Wilson Center Digital Archive, B-308-045, The Korean Diplomatic Mission in Japan, Reports from the Korean Mission to the United Nations and Republic of Korea Embassies and Legations, Syngman Rhee Institute, Yonsei University.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/123693>

Summary:

Report on followings: Japanese politics and issue on reparations of Japanese in DPRK

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Syngman Rhee Institute, Yonsei University

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

KOREAN MISSION IN JAPAN

Tokyo, November 24, 1955

TO : Office of the President
FROM : Minister Yong Shik Kim
SUBJECT : Political Report

The items in this week's political report are as follows:

- I. JAP POLITICS.
- II. ISSUE ON REPATRIATION OF JAPANESE NATIONALS IN NORTH KOREA.

I. JAP. POLITICS.

With the unified Liberal-Democratic Party coming into being on November 15, the new (third) Hatoyama Cabinet was formed on the basis of the absolute majority of 300 seats in 467-seat House of Representatives. In order to form the new Cabinet, the 2nd Hatoyama Cabinet resigned en bloc on November 21. And Hatoyama was reelected as prime minister at the opening session of the extra-ordinary Diet on November 22.

Hatoyama, after being appointed Prime Minister for the third time, finished to organize his new Cabinet on November 22. His Cabinet was composed of six incumbent and ten newly appointed. Nine of the 16 Cabinet posts have been given to former Democratic Party members and seven to ex-Liberals. The third Hatoyama Cabinet, thus formed, had its first meeting on November 22 and officially decided to re-nominate Nemoto as Chief Cabinet Secretary.

Of the 16 Cabinet posts, ex-Democrats held on to key posts, with former Liberals getting "leftovers". Other key members -- Finance Minister Hisato Ichimada, International Trade and Industry Minister Tanzan Ishibashi, Director-General Tatsunosuke Takasaki of the Economic Planning Board and Agriculture Minister Ichiro Kono -- will stay on in their posts. The new Cabinet lineup is ut infra:

Prime Minister	Ichiro Hatoyama (incumbent, ex-Democrat)
Foreign Minister, concurrently Deputy Prime Minister	Mamoru Shigemitsu (incumbent, ex-Democrat)

Justice 108

-2-

Justice Minister Ryozo Makino
(new, ex-Democrat)

Finance Minister Hisato Ichimada
(incumbent, ex-Democrat)

Education Minister Ichiro Kiyose
(new, ex-Democrat)

Welfare Minister Eizo Kobayashi
(new, ex-Liberal)

Agriculture-Forestry Minister Ichiro Kono
(incumbent, ex-Democrat)

International Trade and Industry
Minister Tanzan Ishibashi
(incumbent, ex-Democrat)

Transportation Minister Shinji Yoshino
(new, ex-Liberal)

Postal Service Minister Isamu Murakami
(new, ex-Liberal)

Labor Minister Tadao Kuraishi
(new, ex-Liberal)

Construction Minister Motoharu Baba
(new, ex-Liberal)

State Ministers:

Concurrently, head of the National
Public Safety Commission Matsutaro Shoriki
(new, ex-Democrat)

Head of the Economic Planning Board Fatsunosuke Takasaki
(incumbent, ex-Democrat)

Head of the Defense Board Naka Funada
(new, ex-Liberal)

State Minister Tadao Oasa
(incumbent, ex-Democrat)

State Minister Masataka Ohta
(new, ex-Liberal)

Chief Cabinet Secretary Ryutaro Nemoto
(incumbent, ex-Democrat)

Head of the Legislative Bureau Suzo Hayashi
(incumbent, Government official) /09

In

-3-

In the meanwhile, the extra-ordinary session of the Jap Diet which was convened on November 22 went into a 10-day recess from the following day after the nomination of the new Prime Minister and will be in session until December 16.

On the other hand, Socialist Chairman Suzuki declared that his party was seeking a showdown with the conservative camp courageously with determination and faith to protect "democratic and parliamentary politics," branding the Conservative party as still "reactionary." Political observers here, however, said that however hard Suzuki might try to overthrow the conservative government, he could not succeed in this with the present minority in the Diet. It seems that the establishment of a two-party system will serve to stabilize the Jap political situation for the time being.

With regard to the basic administrative policy of the new Cabinet, Hatoyama issued a statement after formation of the Cabinet, expressing his determination to achieve three major targets. The objectives are (1) revision of the Constitution, (2) re-organization of the administrative structure and (3) revision of the tax system. Hatoyama said he would do his utmost endeavours to revise the Constitution for "benefitting the independent status of Japan." He declared that a complete revamping of the administrative organization must be carried out to "conform with the present national condition." Touching on the tax problem, Hatoyama said he wished to make a fundamental reformation of the tax system in order to "lighten the people's economic burden." Hatoyama, however, expressed his doubts on whether the revision of the Constitution is possible within a short period of time, saying that it would require support by two-thirds majority of both Houses of the Diet.

Referring to the new Cabinet's foreign policy, he said:

- (1) that the Government will continue to make efforts to settle issues with Russia so that the state of war with her may be terminated as soon as possible,
- (2) that the Government believes that it will not be long before the Philippine reparations issue will be settled satisfactorily to both sides, and
- (3) that his Government will make efforts to normalize relations with the Republic of Korea.

In regard to issues pending between Korea and Japan, Hatoyama said as follows at a press conference on November 22:

Q. "How will you do with problems pending between Korea and Japan?"

A. "Everybody is anxious to see the relations between the two countries normalized. And we have also wished that the relations be normalized. But our counterpart (Korea) has not responded to settle the issues by ordinary ways and means and so we have

been

1/c

-4-

been patient ever since."

- Q. "It is said that Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Korean Armed Forces issued a statement that Japanese fishing vessels violating the "Rhee Line" will be fired at and "if necessary" sunk. If this statement were true, don't you think that Japan also should take a firm stand on this matter?"
- A. "I am inclined to feel that such time is drawing nearer. I think that we must make efforts to normalize the relations with the Republic of Korea by all means and that the settlement of all the pending issues will bring about the normalization of the relations."
- Q. "What do you mean by "such time is drawing nearer?" Do you mean that Japan will take strong measures against the Republic of Korea?"
- A. "No, I do not mean that way. I mean that we would like to settle, as soon as possible, the issues including property claims."

In the meantime, the unified Socialist Party of Japan issued the following statement in connection with the statement issued by the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Korean Armed Forces on November 17:

"The Japan Socialist Party is strongly against the alleged statement by the Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff since it is likely to provoke a war if it is actually put into enforcement..... This Party desires that the Japanese Government take positive measures to resume the Korea-Japan Conference and, in order to settle the controversial fishing issue, try to hold an international conference where Japan, the Republic of Korea, the United States, Red China, Russia and North Korea are represented.

But the holding of the so-called international conference on the fishery issue would be out of the question, because the Jap Government and the Liberal-Democratic Party with an absolute majority do not pay any attention to the idea as suggested by the Socialists.

II. ISSUE ON REPATRIATION OF JAPANESE NATIONALS IN NORTH KOREA.

see November 26 '53
see Stan. and Kim

As was reported previously, arguments on the issue were centered on whether any member of the so-called Japan-Chosun Association may be included in the Japanese Red Cross Team going to North Korea to receive Japanese nationals there desiring to return to Japan. The International Red Cross Commission in Geneva had advised both Japan and North Korean Red Cross Headquarters that the issue should be settled on the basis of the traditional spirit of International Red Cross, implying that no member of the Japan-Chosun Association

should

///

-5-

should be included in the team.

The Japan Red Cross was very much encouraged by the advise made by the International Red Cross, But on November 3, the North Korean Red Cross sent a cable to the Japan Red Cross, saying:

"that the Japan-Chosun Association has been the actual promoter of the settlement of repatriation issue, and it is not at variance with the traditional spirit of International Red Cross that members of the Association will be accompanied by those of the Japan Red Cross who are visiting Pyongyang to receive Japanese nationals desiring to return to Japan."

In other words, the North Korean Red Cross still claims that some of the Japan-Chosun Association should be included in the so-called Repatriation Promotion Team. Under the circumstances, the Japan Red Cross, on November 4, made another inquiry to the International Red Cross in Geneva regarding how to adjust the views of the Japanese and North Korean Red Cross Headquarters. The Japan Red Cross sent the following cable to Geneva:

"As you will be aware according to the telegram sent by the North Korean Red Cross under the date of November 3, the both parties are concordant with each other on the observance of the traditional spirit of International Red Cross. However, both sides take completely different views in the practical application of this spirit to the issue in question. Therefore, the Japan Red Cross requests the International Red Cross to make advice of the controversial issue."

The Japan Red Cross, at the same time, decided to dispatch a Japanese vessel to Russian port to receive Japanese nationals detained in Russia. And the Japan Red Cross thought that it might be possible to receive Japanese in North Korea by means of having the Japanese vessel bound for Russia directly call at a North Korean port to be designated by the North Korean Red Cross, instead of sending the Repatriation Promotion Team pending the settlement of the issue on the composition of the Team. Thus, on November 11, the Japan Red Cross sent North Korea a telegram as follows:

"A Japanese repatriation boat is leaving for Russia to take Japanese detainees there. And if agreeable, we are going to have the boat call at a port to be designated by your side in order to receive Japanese nationals desiring to return to Japan, without touching upon the question on the composition of the Repatriation Promotion Team.

"In view of the necessity for making necessary arrangement to dispatch a vessel and to decide upon the route of it voyage in consultation with the International Red Cross, your reply in this regard by November 15 at the latest would be highly appreciated."

On November 16, the North Korean Red Cross sent a cable to the Japan Red Cross, replying to the Japanese proposal made on

November

112

-6-

November 11 by a cable. The North Korean Communists refused the Japanese proposal, stating that the North Korean Red Cross regrets that it could not find in the Japanese cable dated November 11 any affirmative answer to North Korea's request that at least one member of the Japanese-Chosun Association be included in the Repatriation Promotion Team. The Korean Communists' cable further stated that the sooner will the Japanese representative be dispatched, the sooner will the Japanese repatriation be materialized, implying that Japan is bound to send the Repatriation Promotion Team to be composed of members of both the Japan Red Cross and the Japan-Chosun Association.

In the meantime, the Japan Red Cross received, on November 19, a telegram from the International Red Cross, answering to its inquiry of how to settle the issue on composition of the Repatriation Team. According to a news report appearing on the Yomiuri on November 19, the Japan Red Cross was informed by the International Red Cross that the Government of the Republic of Korea will guarantee the safeconducts of the Japan Red Cross boats in its transporting Japanese nationals in North Korea to Japan.

The Japan Red Cross had a staff meeting on November 19 upon the receipt of the telegram sent by the International Red Cross. And it is said that discussions were centered on how to adjust the delicate problems, in other words, to meet the Republic of Korea Government's condition that the steamer should be purely a Red Cross vessel and to meet the North Korean condition that at least one member of the Japan-Chosun Association be included in the Repatriation Negotiation Team. And it is reported that the Japan Red Cross arrived at a conclusion that the only way for the Red Cross to follow will be to ask for North Koreans' understanding by means of having one of the representatives of the Japan Red Cross nominated as the representative of the Japan-Chosun Association on a "private" basis.

In the meanwhile, the Japan-Chosun Association made a counter-proposal to the Japan Red Cross:

- (1) that representatives of the Japan Red Cross and the Japan-Chosun Association be dispatched to Pyongyang not by the Red Cross vessel, but by air route --- via Hongkong and Peiping --- and
- (2) that one member of the Association be nominated as a temporary employee of the Japan Red Cross not on the regular staff.

The above two proposals from the Red Cross and the Association were transmitted to the Japanese Foreign Ministry for its final approval. And it is said that the Japanese Foreign Office is rather reluctant to accept the two proposals, insisting on its original stand that only representatives of the Japan Red Cross be dispatched to North Korea just to receive Japanese there.

Now, the views of the three organizations in regard to the composition of the Repatriation Team will be summarized as follows:

1.

113

-7-

1. The Japan-Chosun Association

A member of the Association should be included in the Team upon assignment as a temporary employee of the Japan Red Cross not on the regular staff.

2. The Japan Red Cross

One of the representatives of the Red Cross to be dispatched to North Korea may be nominated by the Association as the Association's representative on a temporary and private basis.

3. The Japanese Foreign Office

No member of the Japan-Chosun Association should be included in the Team.

Now, even though the views of the parties concerned are approaching to some extent, there still exists a considerable distance between them. On the other hand, families of Japanese nationals in North Korea are submitting petitions to the Japanese Foreign Office, requesting an early repatriation of Japanese nationals. And it is doubtful how long the Japanese Foreign Office can maintain its original stand on this issue. And further development in this regard will be promptly reported to the Government.

By my state Secy

Copy to: Foreign Minister

114