

**December 22, 1955**

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

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**Summary:**

Meeting between Counselor Yiu Tai Ha [Yu Tae-ha] and Tooro Nakagawa regarding detainees of both countries, and Kim's conversation with Yiu on the matter

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## REPUBLIC OF KOREA

KOREAN MISSION IN JAPAN

Tokyo, December 22, 1955

Excellency:

Last Monday, Dec. 19, Counselor Yiu met Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asian Affairs Bureau Director Nakagawa and talked about the detainee issue. According to the report given by Mr. Yiu Nakagawa presented a draft proposal of the Japanese Government, saying that Japan would release the pre-war Korean detainees from Omura on condition that our side accept deportation of those either with records of three or more previous convictions or who were convicted of such vicious crimes as murder, burglary, etc., in addition to the return to Japan of those Japanese fishermen who completed their prison terms. It means that Japan wants us to make some concession in this regard.

As soon as I saw the said draft proposal, I told Yiu that we had been approaching the US sources here and successful in convincing them of Japan's duplicity in dealing with us and that they were inclined to be sympathetic with our side. Therefore, I said, we should stick to our original stand and the Japanese side will yield to us. After this explanation I instructed Mr. Yiu to tell the Japanese Foreign Office immediately that any such proposal short of unconditional release of the pre-war Korean resident detainees was not acceptable.

Yiu also said that at the above meeting with Nakagawa he had proposed for the first time on the deportation of certain political refugees from Japan. According to his report Nakagawa replied that the Japanese Government would not discuss this matter until the current detainee problem was settled. If we accept any Koreans who entered Japan before the end of World War II, our stand at the time of

discussion/

His Excellency  
President Syngman Rhee



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discussion on the problem on the status and treatment of the Korean residents, will be weakened. Therefore, we must stick to our original stand of seeking unconditional release of all the pre-war Korean detainees.

Nakagawa also stated that his Government would give permission for three Japan Red Cross men to visit north Korea to negotiate on repatriation of Japanese nationals there. (This case which has been pending for some time, has recently been settled, when the (Communist) Korea-Japan Association conceded to have one of its representatives go to north Korea under the name of the Japan Red Cross.) This group will fly to their destination--Pyongyang--via Hongkong and Peking.

I told Mr. Yiu that we should object to any attempt of the Japanese to send representatives to north Korea for negotiations with the puppets there, because in the absence of such objection it might be interpreted as our tacit approval of their attempt. And also in case the Japanese Government issue passports for travel to north Korea, it might adversely affect our position vis-a-vis Japan in the future.

II. Counselor Yiu met Nakagawa again this week on Thursday (Dec. 22). He reported to me that Nakagawa had recognized the fact that the former Japanese Justice Minister Hanamura made commitment, saying that he should not have made such commitment alone. Yiu also reported that Nakagawa, however, stated that the Japanese Government would try to live up to the commitment and suggested to release part of the pre-war detainees first with the rest to be discussed between the two sides.

Though this suggestion differed greatly from the draft proposal handed over to Mr. Yiu on Monday, there was no reason why we should accept such conditional release, because the US Embassy sources have turned favorably toward us in this regard, and besides, the Japanese would be obliged to yield to our side under strong pressure from influential fishing industry. Therefore, I told Yiu that we should not alter our stand, when the situation was favorable for us. It is considered that if we stick to our original plan and press Japan harder, exposing her duplicity, we can successfully seek the release of the entire group of pre-war Korean detainees. (I received a report from the Fukuoka Office that US Consulate in Fukuoka was studying the condition of the Omura Camp.)

Further, /

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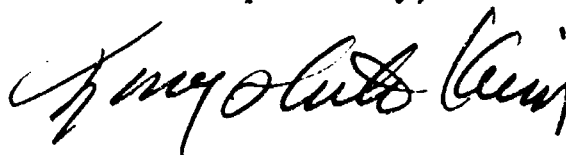
Further, two officials of the Japanese Immigration Bureau (Justice Ministry) visited Consul-General Choi of this office yesterday (Dec. 21) and asked him that our side accept deportation of illegal entrants now under detention in Japan, because most of the detention camp of Japan were crowded to capacity. Mr. Choi took this opportunity to reiterate our insistence that Japan should first release all the pre-war Korean detainees, if she wanted Korea to accept such deportation.

III. Our Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced on the scheduled resumption of trade with Japan beginning next year on the basis of reciprocity. Separately, this office received cable instructions in this regard from the Foreign Ministry. This measure will doubtless correct the existing one-sided trade situation between the two countries, and benefit our country, if properly carried out. At the same time it is felt that the announcement on the trade resumption at this time was not altogether timely in view of the fact that the present situation could have placed us in a bargaining position toward Japan.

However, since it was announced, I emphasized to the press that Korea had always been sincere in relation to trade with Japan. This office has been reminding the US Embassy sources here of Japan's insincerity in regard to trade with us, including the customsban on our shipment of laver which has not yet been settled.

With sentiments of loyalty and esteem, I remain,

Most respectfully,



Enclosure: Report