

November 27, 1957

**Letter No. 63 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 between him and Yatsugi and a meeting between Fujiyama and Ambassador Kim, regarding Japan-Korea negotiations.

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REPUBLIC OF KOREA

KOREAN MISSION IN JAPAN

November 27, 1957

No. 63

TO : His Excellency
The President

FROM : Tai Ha Yiu

I made careful note of the telephone instructions which Mr. Park relayed, that of getting some commitment from Fujiyama or any other influential Jap who could be trusted. However, a succession of Japanese holidays prevented me from meeting them sooner.

On the 24th which was a Sunday, I contacted Yatsugi late in the afternoon. I told him that since what took place with him, Tanaka and Kishi were not progressing smoothly, we should do something to save the situation. However, false reports that have been circulating of late concerning the attitude of the Korean government would not solve the problem since our government stand is unchangeable. The Japanese side should therefore be careful and not think or do anything otherwise for it might lead to further delay in settling our problems. I told Yatsugi that because I understand the difficulty of his position and that of Kishi, Tanaka and Fujiyama with the government as well as with the party, I would suggest a plan which I think would be acceptable to the Japanese and which must be accepted. With Kishi presently out of the country, the next man who will be able to do what I am going to ask is Fujiyama. As a very good friend of the Foreign Minister, Yatsugi should talk to Fujiyama and see to it that he hands me a confidential memo. If that understanding is reached with Fujiyama we should meet in secret and exchange the notes. I explained to Yatsugi very carefully as if I was sympathetic with the position in which he and some others were placed.

After thinking it over for some time, Yatsugi stated that if Kishi were in the country we could have Tanaka talk to Kishi and we could be 80 per cent assured of success since Tanaka is very close to Kishi, the two of them being from the same prefecture and it was Tanaka's father who first launched Kishi in politics. Although Yatsugi is on very close terms with Fujiyama, the latter is rather a mild man and Yatsugi was not sure whether the foreign minister would agree to do it. He therefore asked that I give him some time to think the matter over.

On the morning of the 25th at about 9:00 a.m. Yatsugi called me at my office asking me if it was agreeable with me to meet him and Fujiyama at the Happon Restaurant that afternoon. If the time agreed with my schedule he would call me again, however, I should not come to the meeting place in our official care and that it must be kept in strictest secrecy. I agreed to it.

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At 10:00 a.m. that morning, Ambassador Kim called me to his office to tell me that the day before, he met Kano Kyuro and had asked the latter to arrange a meeting with Fujiyama that day and if the time did not counter with any of my previous schedules to accompany him. This placed me in a very awkward position.

Later, I received a call from Itagaki to the effect that Amb. Kim had requested a meeting with Fujiyama and that the Foreign Minister would meet us at 4 p.m.. Itagaki said he would also be present. I relayed the call to the ambassador.

I called Yatsugi and told him the situation. Yatsugi replied that he had not heard of any such meeting but that he would ask Fujiyama and let me know since the foreign minister may have plans to meet me later.

At 2:30 p.m. Yatsugi called to inform me that Amb. Kim had asked for a meeting with Fujiyama through Kano and although the request was made through unofficial channels, he would meet the ambassador together with Minister Yiu. Yatsugi said he told Fujiyama that Minister Yiu's meeting with him must take place only between the two. Fujiyama's reply was that he will meet with Amb. Kim that day and the meeting with me could be arranged for another day as his schedule was already very tight. It had been my intention to arrive at some conclusion as early as possible but there was nothing that could be done.

On our way to Fujiyama's residence, I asked the ambassador what he intended to discuss with Fujiyama. He said that he will propose a new plan which he had drawn up (enclosed). I advised him against it but he said that it must be done now.

Amb. Kim told Fujiyama that the Japanese side was not living up to its promise made in its note given to me by Tanaka. Fujiyama again gave the same explanation about how difficult it was for the Japanese side to accept our proposal. When the ambassador presented his new plan to the Japs, they refused it saying that the Korean side had made additions to Miyake's proposal which were against the spirit of the U.S. Statement. Kim insisted that it must be accepted but the meeting ended without results.

On the morning of the 26th, I received a call from Itagaki to the effect that the plan submitted by the Ambassador was unacceptable. The Foreign Ministry came to the decision after discussing it with Vice Minister Ohno and I should therefore present a new one which would be acceptable to them so as to settle the problems as early as possible. I told Itagaki in very strong terms that the Japanese could not be trusted to keep promises, written or oral. He merely shook his head and insisted that they must have a new plan.

The Japs are continuously requesting for a new proposal and I can only surmise that they know something of the Foreign Ministry's new instructions. I cannot make out why else they are insisting on a new one.

I am trying through Yatsugi to get some written commitment from Fujiyama and it is my impression that I might succeed in this. However, it must be kept in the strictest of secrecy. Yatsugi is repeatedly stating that accepting my suggestion is not a problem, but he is afraid we might blast it out in the open. I have assured that no such thing would occur.

Since the note I received from Tanaka is very important it must not be mislaid. 271)

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(Kano Kyuro was until recently advisor to the Bank of Korea,
Tokyo)

At Yatsugi's request I met him this afternoon (27th) He stated that this morning at about 10:00 a.m. he was called to Ishii who told him that early that morning Amb. Kim came to Ishii and requested his help in seeing to it that the Foreign Ministry accept the proposal made by Miyake last September. Ishii told Yatsugi that he contacted Tanaka who stated that when he met Amb. Kim yesterday afternoon, the latter made the same request and also that Tanaka arrange an appointment for him with Fujiyama.

Yatsugi: "I am telling you as a friend that if the ambassador gives the impression that the Korean side is in a big hurry by meeting Tanaka and Ishii and acting in such wise, it will only be to your own detriment."

Yiu: (I had to make up a story) "I have not heard anything from the ambassador as I have been very busy. How about my own suggestion to you?"

Yatsugi: "I met Fujiyama today and he stated that although he has every willingness to accept your suggestion, he is afraid the Korean side will make it public, in which case, it will greatly hamper his political career and create more enemies for him. He even suggested that he will not make such a commitment directly to you but to make it to me for me to take up with you. I told him that you will not accept such a thing."

Yiu: "That is, of course, out of the question. It must be something which must take place only between me and Fujiyama. It is all right for you to be present and be a witness to the transaction."

Yatsugi: "I have told him that and he has asked that I give him some time. Ishii is presently the deputy prime minister and in Kishi's absence is the acting premier. Since he was the first man to write the letter to your President, how about getting such a memo from him?"

Yiu: "I shall have to think that over."

Yatsugi: "I shall take the responsibility of getting something from either Ishii or Fujiyama in a few days."

Because of the fact that notes have been exchanged with me, Tanaka is very anxious and I am quite sure he will get something done. Also I shall not spare my efforts to get it.

With regard to the report that the Government released two Japanese fishing boats together with the crew, I cannot understand why they were released even if they were seized outside our Line. Frankly speaking, if we still retain some 500 Japs after releasing the 900 who have served their terms, I would not mind so much. If the report of the release of the fishing boats had been made by the Mission we would have done it in a way as to show that we were doing the Japs a big favor.

In concluding this report, I would like to state that at this time when the situation is turning to our disfavor, we should make all efforts and use every trick to get some written commitment from some influential Japs.

Hain Kaji

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