

June 17, 1977

Letter from Yun Posun to Prime Minister Fukuda

Citation:

"Letter from Yun Posun to Prime Minister Fukuda", June 17, 1977, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Personal papers of Yun Posun.

<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/121210>

Summary:

Yun Posun alleges that Japan has sought to benefit economically and politically from Park Chung Hee's repressive regime, and encourages Prime Minister Fukuda to withdraw his support for Park.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

8 Ankuk Dong,
Chongro-ku,
Seoul, 110,
Korea,
June 17th, 1977.

Mr. Fukuda, Takeo,
Prime Minister of Japan,
Tokyo, Japan.

Mr. Prime Minister:

In recent years the Korean people have deeply suffered under an extremely bitter form of facism called the "Yushin System". The two major pillars which support the Park Regime, and thus the Yushin System, in order "to keep the free world", are without question, the United States and Japan. In the United States policy towards Korea there has recently appeared a change. Since the establishment of the Yushin System each successive American Administration has expressed its "regret" over the repression of human rights by the Park Regime. This kind of attitude by the American Government shows a distinct contrast with the policy of continuous support of the Park Regime, without criticism or conditions, by your Liberal Democratic Party--which always speaks of "keeping a free society".

When we observe the process of the relationship between Korea and Japan since 1965 when the "normalization" of Korea-Japan relations came about, we regretfully cannot help doubting that the Liberal Democratic Party's policy towards Korea was manipulated by the industrial-military alliance--which pursues an economic policy of expansion abroad and rearmament at home, and by the corrupt power of the extreme right--which speaks for the industrial-military alliance. This policy ignored the opinion of the majority of your people, who eagerly seek peace, democracy, and a welfare economy. When we think of the past track and the present political stand of the people who handled Korean-Japan relations, both on the surface and in the background, while making "black adhesions" with the Park Regime, this doubt becomes greater. The basic goal they have pursued through the adhesions with the Park Regime is, as illustrated by the so-called "Yatsuki Tentative Plan" and the so-called "Mitsuya Plan of Operation", to again incorporate Korea into the economic and political power block of Japan. This would make Korea a new base for expansion abroad, just like under Japanese Imperialism when Korea was used as the base for advancing into the mainland. This process would strengthen the extreme rightists in Japan.

...page 2.

1

(2)

Prime Minister Fukuda

June 17th, 1977.

The fact that the dictatorial regime of Mr. Park Chung Hee, who thoroughly represses all nationalistic and democratic criticism, exists, might be called a great fortune in light of the desire of the Japanese to achieve the above mentioned. The Park Regime has continued to support low wages, which are less than one-quarter of that of Japan, and using it to subordinate the Korean economy to the Japanese economy in the form of a sub-contract. The Korean economy has already come to depend upon Japan for more than thirty percent of its trade, approximately thirty percent of the foreign debt, approximately seventy percent of technical aid, and about seventy percent of direct foreign investment. The Korean economy is, in fact, incorporated into the Japanese economic block. For instance, if the loans from Japan are stopped, the Korean economy would have a negative growth rate. In addition, Japan has in fact, consolidated the basis for military control over Korea through the frequent exchange of Korean and Japanese military personnel. Almost all of the highest-ranking officials of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces have come to Korea to observe in detail the Korean military set-up. What is worse is that the adherence to the division of the Korean peninsula, which the Park Regime pursues as a convenient instrument to maintain the dictatorship, that is, the continuance of confrontation, tension, and hostility between the south and the north, becomes the essential condition and a decisive benefit to the development of the newly growing industrial-military alliance of your country.

Even though everything about the Park Regime, which is the origin of indescribable suffering, misfortune, and shame of the Korean people, is of benefit to your industrial-military alliance and to the corrupt extreme rightists, we can never believe that it is at the same time of benefit to the majority of the people of your country. On the contrary, it can only be a great hinderance that interrupts your people's desire for peace, democracy, and a welfare economy. What does it mean that your government, which should speak for all the people of Japan, has both obviously and consistantly pursued the status quo in the Korean peninsula--that is, the continuance of facism and the permanent eternalization of the devision between the south and the north? Your government might believe that it can gain a great deal because of its support of the Park Regime over the past 15 years. However, your government should at the same time clearly recognize the fact that you are loosing something more important--the hearts of the people of both Korea and Japan. The stepping down of the Liberal Democratic Party in Japan could never be considered an accidental phenomenon. We believe that it is not unrelated to an erroneous Korea policy-line by the Liberal Democratic Party--a policy which is based on black adhesion with the Park Dictatorial Regime. However, I do not

(3)

Prime Minister Fukuda

June 17th, 1977.

intend to dwell upon domestic matters of your country. What I wish to call your attention to is the fact that in our people's mind there is rapidly arising, especially in the minds of the young, a feeling of deep antagonism towards Japan. You should keep in mind the fact that the future of Korea is not in the hands of the Park Regime, but ultimately in the hands of these young people.

For the past 50 years Japan has interfered with and distorted the development of our national history. The Japanese government has aligned itself with the prolonging of the tragedy of the south-north division which is the source of all suffering in modern Korean history. You are probably unable to imagine how great is our people's grudge and resentment when faced with the fact that the Japanese government, is today again aligning itself with the Yushin System so that it is interfering with our people's way to direct democracy, autonomy, peace and unification. However, if you are truly and sincerely concerned about the future of Japan and Korea-Japan relations, you should make an effort to understand this situation.

It seems to me that there is no reason for the peoples of our two nations to confront one another in hostility. I firmly believe that these two peoples have a common desire for real and true freedom, justice, peace, and humane life--opposing all forms of repression. As neighbours who live in the same era and moreover who are separated by just a narrow strait, our two peoples should be able to have feelings of solidarity, friendship, and cooperation in pursuing such democratic values and ideas as we commonly have. I believe that Korea-Japan relations will come into a true path only when the relations stand firmly on this base.

Due to the changes of various international situations surrounding North-East Asia, including the establishment of the new plan for the withdrawal of United States troops from Korea, Korea-Japan relations are coming into a new and extremely serious period. At this important juncture I believe that you should make a decision to fundamentally clean-up the Korea policy of your government which up till now has been misguided in part by the corrupt extreme rightists, and to immediately begin efforts to return Korea-Japan relations to the proper path. As a start, I urge your government to examine closely, to clear-up and to sever any shady relations with the Park Regime, and you should make clear your critical attitude towards the Yushin System. In addition I hope you will express your deep concern and solidarity with the Korean people who are struggling for democracy and who are suffering on behalf of the Japanese people and thus sincerely reflect your concern over the Korea-related policy.

(4)

Prime Minister Fukuda

June 17th, 1977.

I of course do not deny that these kinds of decisions will be accompanied by "labour pains" by both Korea and Japan. Nevertheless only by overcoming the impending small interests and slothfulness and taking a long-range view, will Korea-Japan relations be able to avoid a breakdown in the future and only in this way will both peoples be able to advance peace, freedom and democracy together.

I hope that you will be able to reach a wise decision, and I sincerely request that you not make an erroneous judgement.

May God be with you.

Yours sincerely,

(Mr.) Yun Po Sun
Former President
Republic of Korea