COPY

Sec. Dulles

July 30, 1956

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I have the honor again to refer to the Korea-Japan relations, which I know are a matter of special interest to you, and which are of the gravest concern to the welfare of both your nation and our own. Our Government views with intense apprehension current developments and policies in Japan, which, if left unchecked, will endanger the very independence of the Republic of Korea.

We have been repeatedly advised of your Government's desire to see friendly relations established between Korea and Japan, and also of your Government's willingness to render good offices, if necessary, to accomplish this most desirable result. For this we are deeply appreciative. As we understand the nature of your Government's concern, apart from the general desirability of having two neighboring countries on friendly terms, particular importance is attached to the question of coordinating Korea and Japan in respect to the defense of the Far East, for the benefit of all the free world. This aim, of course, is highly desirable, and my Government has been patiently endeavoring for its achievement.

Under the conditions that now exist, however, this desideratum seems unfortunately unreal. In order for it to be achieved, two prerequisites must be met: first, there must be developed between the two countries a genuine friendship; and, second, Japan must be definitely and unequivocally committed to anti-Communism. Current developments in Japan make it difficult for us to believe that either of these two prerequisites now exists.

A genuine mutual desire to foster friendship between the two nations can exist only if each is absolutely devoid of any harmful intentions toward the other. Public expressions of friendly regard, accompanied by surreptitious contrivances to undermine the very neighbor whose friendship is avowedly cherished are often more dangerous than open hostility. Korea experienced this sort of friendship offered by Japan half a century ago, and learned costly lessons concerning Japanese "friendship and dispensation of benefits."

When we started the Korea-Japan talks in 1951, we were looking forward to transcending the difficulties of the past, for we wished to lay a firm basis upon which the future friendly relations between the two countries could be built. With the liquidation of the vestiges of the Japanese domination over Korea, it seemed to us possible to achieve a just solution of the various problems arising from the new relationships between the two countries. We expected, perhaps naively, that Japan would freely offer us some evidence of a desire for genuine friendship, if not actual repentance for its past deeds toward us. However, to our intense regret, we encountered the self-same old Japanese imperialistic attitude.

68
0794

As you know, Japan confronted our approach to a solution of our mutual problems with an estonishingly arrogent statement that the very establishment of the Republic of Korea Government was illegal, and with a demand for 85% of our property, together with payment for damages it had sustained in the war. This demand was made despite Japan's solemn pledge in the San Francisco Treaty to "renounce all right, title and claim to Korea" and to recognize the validity of dispositions of Japanese proerty by the United States Military Government in Korea. This incident is exemplary of the Japanese duplicity and of her conception of the proper behavior of the strong toward the weak. Subsequent to this "Kubota statement," prominent Japanese officials have declared that there should be no haste to settle the problems between our two nations until after Japan has become sufficiently strengthened militarily.

Mr. Secretary, we do not discount the importance of the assurances which you have given to us that in the view of your Governemtn this claim by Japan can have no validity, inasmuch as it contradicts the obligations accepted by Japan in the Peace Treaty. If we were dealing in this matter with your Government, we should have no difficulty in reaching an accord--just as our two nations have many times reached agreement on delicate questions in the past. What does concern us is that this position has been assumed by Japan, and that the Japanese Government still maintains it. There could be no clearer indication of the reality of our fears about future Japanese intentions.

As you know, once again the Japanese are talking a great deal about the impossiblity of maintaining their growing population on their own islands. Furthermore, it is deeply imbedded in the traditional thinking of the Japanese that theirs camot be a truly major nation without expansion onto the continent. Both these factors emphasize the very real dangers of Japanese ambitions regarding Korea. Japan has no way of expanding except by first of all seeking to reclaim her brief and aggressive occupation of Korea. In short, it is of the ghihest importance that the Japanese Government should publicly and officially repudiate the Kubota statement and completely vindicate itself of any continuance of the old militarism which has been so costly to both your Government and ours.

Moreover, it is highly doubtful thatJapan meets the other pre-requisite, closely related to the former, of being a genuinely anti-Communistic nation. The increasing tendency of the Japanese Government to seek friendly relations with Soviet Russia, Red China, and even the northern Korean puppet regime is most significant in revealing the Japanese position in our common struggle against Communist totalitarianism.

The evidence seems irrefutable that Japan is now drifting toward neutralism, with the belief that serves her interests best. I am sure that you are keenly perceptive of the surge of anti-Americanism which is currently expressing itself in so many ways in Japan. For our part, we are very deeply concerned by the evidence that we may soon be surrounded by Communist and pro-Communist territories, including Japan in that latter category.

0795 69

Our long historical experience has taught us that the attack upon Pearl Harbor was not an isolated outburst of uncontrolled military zeal, but was part and parcel of Japan's centuries-old tradition of militaristic expansionism. Internally, Japan is essentially an imperialistic and totalitarian nation. Like the Communists, the Japanese respect only power and aspire to conquest. It is only when Japan has no big sword to brandish that she remains docile and appears to be peace-loving. Since the Japanese cannot now foresee how in the immediate future they can manage to achieve military power sufficient to make them a much for the major nations of the world, they are entertaining ideas of neutralism, as a mid-point in their embition to re-establish their dream of hegemony in Asia.

It is the earnest hope of this Government, Mr. Secretary, that you will not dismise these sentiments as mere anti-Japanese sentiments. I must reiterate that we feel deeply the desirability of accomplishing a genuine rapprochment with Japan, based firmly upon equality and mutual regard. Our thinking is not shackled by fantastic fears, but our judgment simply cannot avoid reading the significance of current aspects of Japanese policy in the light of many centuries of experience. If what some people fondly imagine is true -- that Japan has fundamentally changed its nature and has become a peace-loving democracy -- then it should be very easy for the present Government of Japan to renounce wholly the unjust treatment of our country by the old militarism which it has supposedly repudiated. But, if its repudiation is genuine, why was the Kubota statement issued? Why can it not be withdrawn? Why is Japan seeking ever-closer ties with Communism? Why is anti-Americanism rising in Japan? Why have our own overtures toward mutual reconciliation been rebuffed? Why are the Japanese once again emphasizing the "intolerable burden" of their own over-population?

Obviously, we can have no friendly relations with an unchanged, old Japan. Equally obviously, we must remain cautiously detached from a new Japan that seeks its own well-being in friendly relations with the Communist enemies of all free nations. When we are told that Japan is acting as she is because of the need for trade, and that if Korea will trade more with Japan, this trend may be checked, we wonder at the naivete of those who can possibly feel that the small amount of trade Japan could have with us on a legitimate basis could possibly be the determining factor in her national policies.

I am writing this statement to you, Mr. Secretary, because of the great desire of our Government that your nationa and ours may stand united on the questions involved. We believe that the United States Government, as the sponsor and a signatory of the San Francisco Treaty has a moral, if not a legal, obligation to ensure Japanese observance of the terms of that treaty which pertain to Korea. We are deeply aware of the mutuality of interests between your nation and ours in the cementing of close ties of friendship and in the creation of a Far Eastern link in the defense of the free world. We earnestly request thatthe United States Government may make a strong and just demand upon the Japanese Government to observe the terms of the San Francisco Treaty by publically and officially renouncing its arrogant claim to 85% of our property.

0796 70

We believe that such an action by the United States is not only an obligation but also would be an act of great wisdom, in clarifying aspects of the presently very questionable behavior of Japan.

Accept, Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Chung W. Cho

His Excellency John Foster Dulles
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

0797 71