UNITED STATES DIPLOMACY TOWARD KOREA
DURING THE CRISIS RESULTING FROM
THE IMO MILITARY RIOT OF 1882

by S. C. Hong

Two months after the Treaty of Amity and Commerce Between the United States and Korea (hereafter cited as the US-Korea Treaty) was signed, an anti-Japanese riot, known as the Imo Military Riot, broke out in Seoul on July 23, 1882. The riot was mainly caused by discontentment of the Korean military personnel and civilians who were disgusted with the increase of the Japanese expansion in Korea and with the failure of the ruling Min clan in taking proper countermeasures to the growing Japanese influence over Korea.\(^{(1)}\)

Being instigated by ex-regent Taewon-gun, who manipulated the riot into a general uprising which aimed at overthrowing the Min regime and expelling the Japanese from Korea,\(^{(2)}\) a mob of 4,000 soldiers and civilians massacred Japanese policemen and students whom they met in the streets, murdered the Japanese military instructors in the barracks, and attacked the Japanese Legation while Hanabusa, the Japanese Minister, fled from the burning Japanese Legation in Seoul. Professor W.E. Griffis described the riot as follows:

"The Japanese, by their own account, had suspected no danger until the day of the riot, when they noticed great excitement among the people, and that crowds were assembling and rushing to and from. They sent out a policeman to inquire into the nature of the disturbance, and at two o’clock P.M. they learned from a native that the mob would attack the legation. Word also sent to the Japanese by the Korean officer in charge of the drill-ground where the troops were trained by Lieutenant Horimoto, saying that the troops drilled in Japanese tactics had been attacked and the legation would next be in danger. . . . At 5.50 P.M. the mob reached the legation, and raising a united yell,

\(^{(1)}\) Shin, K., KUNDAE CHOSÔN OEGYOSA (申国柱, 近代朝鮮外交史), p. 16: "Most historians have regarded the riot as the consequence of the power struggle between Taewon-gun and Queen Min. However, the riot should be interpreted as a mass demonstration directed against the Japanese and the Min regime. Supporting this interpretation are the actual incidents of the riot in which the Queen narrowly escaped from being assassinated, while the palace and official residences of the Min clan were attacked, and in which Japanese military officers were murdered while Japanese Minister Hanabusa was put to flight from the destroyed Japanese Legation."

\(^{(2)}\) Tahobashi, K., KINDAI NISSEN KANKEI NO KENKYU (田保橋潔, 近代日鮮関係の研究), Vol. I, pp. 772-773.
fired volleys of bullets, arrows, and big stones at the legation......The mob set on fire a house near by and in the rising wind............."(3)

On the next day the rioters invaded the Ch'angdok Palace(4) and tried to assassinate Queen Min and destroyed official residences of state ministers closely associated with the Min clan.

Minster Hanabusa arrived at the port of Nagasaki by the Flying Fish, a British surveying vessel, on July 29 and sent a telegram to the Foreign Affairs Ministry.(5) As soon as the telegram reached Tokyo, public opinion took fire and the Japanese Government decided to mobilize troops and men-of-war to dispatch to Korea with the purpose of carrying out a military expedition.(6) In the meantime, Minister Hanabusa with a large military escort returned to Korea taking instructions from Japan for drastic measures.

Simultaneously, the Chinese Government sent Ma Kien-tsung, a zealous, able and daring young official, to Korea with plenipotentiary powers while dispatching a fleet and 4,000 troops to Korea to support the Korean Government and watch Japanese movement in Korea.(7) In mid-August 1882 "the outbreak of hostilities between China and Japan was one of the most likely events to happen."(8)

Under such circumstances the impact of the riot of July 23 could no longer be limited to the relationship between Japan and Korea alone. With war imminent in Korea, the United States, which had incurred on obligation in making the US-Korea Treaty,(9) was in the position to offer good offices to bring peace to Korea.

The significance of the explosive situation in Korea was evident to John Russel Young(10) who, at the time of the outbreak of the riot in Seoul, was in Shanghai

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(3) Griffis, W.E., Corea, the Hermit Nation, p. 438.
(4) Seoul University, KUKSA KAEGWAN (國史概觀), p. 592.
(5) Takeda, K., MEIJI JUGONEN JIHEN TO HANABUSA KOSHI (武田勝藏， 明治十五年朝鮮事変と花房公使), pp. 18–34.
(7) Dennet, T., Americans in Eastern Asia, p. 469.
(9) Article I of the US-Korea Treaty of 1882 stipulates:
There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the President of the United States and the King of Choson and the citizens and subjects of their respective Governments. If other Power deal unjustly of oppressively with either Government, the other will exert their good offices, on being informed of the case, to bring about an amicable arrangement, thus showing their friendly feelings. (Underlined by the writer.)
(10) John Russel Young was selected by General Grant as the press representative and accompanied the General around the world in 1877. Young was appointed Minister to China at General Grant's request, immediately upon the accession of President Arthure in 1881. Young's intimate and very cordial personal relations with General Grant put him well at ease in the field of diplomacy and made his diplomatic career very successful. Young was regarded as among the three or four most com-
on the way to his newly appointed duties as American Minister in Peking. The Japanese consul at Shanghai, acting on orders from Tokyo, informed Minister Young of the rigid policy adopted by the Japanese Government toward Korea. Being aware of the fact that there would be little chance for peace between Korea and Japan unless timely measures were taken, Minister Young sent a telegram to Secretary of State Frelinghuysen on August 1, 1882 and requested that President would order a naval vessel to Korea to protect American interests. On August 12, the Minister dispatched the *U.S.S. Monocacy* to Korea from China “with instructions to watch the proceedings, preserve strict neutrality, and offer good office if convenient.”

The following statement by Minister Young well represents the United States policy to be employed toward the Korean situation during the crisis resulting from the riot of July 23:

“We had just signed a treaty with Korea, the first of the outside Powers to enter into a convention. It was natural that our counsel would be the first the Koreans would invoke. It was proper also that the American flag should be seen in Korean waters whenever events menaced American interests. Our influence would largely affect the action of China, and much depended upon this because the relations between China and Japan had become strained. Knowing the sensitiveness of the Japanese in reference to the treaty with Korea (Korea) by Commodore Shufeldt, it seemed also fitting that the Commander of the *Monocacy* should bear to the Japanese a message of sympathy for the massacre of their people and the outrage of the legation.”

In compliance with Minister Young’s instructions, the *U.S.S. Monocacy*, under the command of Commander C.S. Cotton, sailed from Chefoo at 9 A.M. on August 12, 1882 and was at 4:40 P.M. on the following day off the coast of Inch’on. Commander Cotton described the military situation which he found in the Inch’on area as follows:

“I found here a Japanese force of two ships of war, under the command of Rear Admiral K. Nire, and 1200 troops under the command of a General; also a Japanese despatch vessel and two transports (M.B. Steam Ships); and two Chinese steel cruisers, on board of one of which the Chinese Envoy, Ma Taotai’s flag was flying. Admiral Ting in his flagship had returned hastily to Tientsin for troops and more ships.........................

petent American diplomatic representatives in the Far East in the nineteenth century. Better than anyone else Young was able to understand the relations among Korea, Japan and China. Young’s view on Far Eastern problems was well expressed in his book entitled *Around the World with General Grant* (2 vos., New York, 1879.).


(12) Dennett, T., op. cit., p. 469.

(13) Parenthesis added by the writer.

(14) Department of State, China Despatches, Vol. 61, No. 27, (Minister Young to Secretary State Frelinghuysen, October 2, 1882.).
The Japanese Naval Force has been augmented by the arrival of three more ships, and is now represented by the Kongo, the flagship, and the Hiei, both large, thin armored corvettes, mounting 14 guns and carrying crews of about 300 men each; by the Nishin and Seiki, smaller wooden corvettes with about 150 men each, and by the Juigei, the Mikado's yacht, 2 guns and 175 men."

On August 14 Commander Cotton had an interview with Admiral Nire and handed over to him a letter addressed to Hanabusa, the Japanese Minister. The content of the letter is as follows:

"In accordance with my instructions from the Hon John Russell Young, U.S. Minister at Peking, I have the honour to inform you that the President of the United States, having been notified of the late attack upon the Japanese Embassy at the Capital of Korea, has sent me to express his sorrow and regret that so unfortunate an occurrence should have taken place, and particularly that it should have resulted in so great a loss of life; and to render such friendly offices on behalf of the United States as may be proper.

It will give me pleasure to pay my respects to your Excellency at such time and place as may best suit your Excellency's convenience and as may be appointed by you.

However, Minister Hanabusa's reaction to the message delivered by Commander Cotton was indifferent and the Minister cordially turned down the Commander's request for an interview in his letter of August 15 as follows:

"I have the honour of responding (to) your letter written in behalf of H.E. J. Russel Young, U.S. Minister at Peking, expressing the kind sympathy of the President of the United States on our unfortunate event. It was doubly unfortunate for Japan and for Korea.

Though you give me a great liberty to appoint a day and a place to accept your sympathizing compliments from the President of the United States, yet I have to beg to express a keen regret that it seems just at present impossible to make any convenient arrangements with you therefore. I have been instructed by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan to see the King of Korea to settle the consequential matters of the outrages and leave Inch'on for Seoul very early tomorrow morning.

Thanking you very respectfully for your letter and the kind sympathy of the President of the United States and wishing to return my respectful compliments to H.E.J. Russell Young, U.S. Minister, and expressing my great regret.

(15) Ibid., Enclosure (Commander Cotton to Mr. Young). The Japanese naval force, including the warships Kongo, Hiei, Nissin, and Seiki, was under the command of Rear Admiral Kagenori Nire. The Japanese troops were under the command of Major General Heinosuke Takashima. Escorting Minister Heinosuke Takashima, the naval vessels and troops arrived at Inch'on August 12, 1882.

(16) Ibid., Enclosure (Commander Cotton to Mr. Hanabusa, August 14, 1882.).
to be unable to accept your personal delivery of the compliments on account of the pressing circumstances."(17)

There was another incident in which the Japanese authorities attempted to prevent the United States from exerting good offices at the early stage of the negotiations between the Japanese and Korean Governments. The incident occurred at an interview between Commander Cotton and Admiral Nire on August 15. At the interview the Commander expressed a wish to communicate with Korean Government representatives. On the following day, however, the Japanese Admiral replied to the American Commander that the Chinese Minister would be better able to arrange an interview for the Commander, due to the existing circumstances.

Although no Japanese official papers nor documents have mentioned about the details on the American influence by sending the U.S.S. Monocacy to the Korean waters, it is obvious, in view of the forementioned incidents, that Minister Hanabusa was annoyed at Commander Cotton's attempt to offer good offices.(18) The following facts well prove that Minister Hanabusa was unprepared for American intervention at the time he received the forementioned letter of August 15 from Commander Cotton.

In early August Minister Hanabusa had an emergency meeting with Foreign Minister Inoue who hastily came to Shimonoseki to give the former in person detailed instructions based on the official decision on Korea policy which had been adopted at the emergency cabinet meeting of July 31. Upon his arrival in Shimonoseki on August 7, Foreign Minister Inoue briefed Minister Hanabusa and handed over to him the 9-point instruction and the 4-point confidential directive(19) on how to proceed

(17) Ibid., Enclosure (Mr. Hanabusa to Commander Cotton, August 15, 1882).
(19) (Japanese Foreign Ministry, Instructions and Directives contained in Records Concerning Minister Hanabusa and Korea.) (Cited from Tahobashi K., op. cit., pp. 793-795.)

The 9-point Instruction:
I. The Korean Government is to take responsibility for not having taken proper measures to quell the riot; to submit a written apology to the Japanese Government; and to fulfill the following demands:
   II. To arrest the ringleaders of the mob within 10 days from the date of this demand; and to punish them.
   III. To pay the expenses for the mobilization of the Japanese troops to be dispatched to Korea as a result of Koreans' violation of the treaty with Japan.
   IV. To pay adequate indemnity to the families of the Japanese killed by the mob.
   V. To provide Korean soldiers to guard the Japanese Legation for the period of five years as a precaution against further disturbance.
   VI. To open the Anbyon area to Japanese traders.

In case any evidence is found that the Korean Government had made serious faults in handling the mob, and that nature of the riot was more serious than it was thought, the demand to be made by the Japanese Government should be more
the forthcoming diplomatic negotiations and what to demand from the Korean Government.

At the Shimonoseki meeting, however, Foreign Minister Inoue set up no specific countermeasures to the possibility of American intervention with the forthcoming Japan-Korea negotiations. In fact, it was two weeks after the Shimonoseki meeting that he became aware of the significance of Chinese attempt to intervene with the negotiations and it was on August 28 that Minister Hanabusa received a dispatch from Foreign Minister Inoue requesting to make the terms contained in the 9-point Instruction and the 4-point Directive soften in view of the growing Chinese intervention.\(^{20}\)

Due to the lack of specific instructions on how to handle foreign intervention, Minister Hanabusa seemed to have no definite idea of what to do with Commander Cotton's request for an interview made by a letter of August 14. Therefore, it was best for the Minister to try to avoid meeting with the American Commander until the Japanese Government set a definite policy concerning foreign intervention with Japan-Korea negotiations.

Cordially rejecting Commander Cotton's request for an interview Minister Hanabusa, escorted by a company of infantrymen and marines, hastily departed Inch'on for Seoul. The purpose of the Minister's hasty visit to Seoul was to have the Japanese troops reach Seoul ahead of the Chinese so that he could take the initiative to proceed with the negotiations with the Korean Government.\(^{21}\)

On the same day Commander Cotton was visited by two emissaries of the King. They were the Minister of War, a cousin of the King, and the Vice Minister of the Interior Ministry. In a report submitted to Minister Young the Commander described the meeting with the Korean ministers as follows:

"The visit was a very pleasant one and lasted some time. I informed the minister that the President was aware of the attack upon the Japanese Legation, rigid. The following additional demands are to be made:

\begin{enumerate}
  \item To concede Koje-do or Ulnung-do.
  \item To expel those Government officials who had rendered assistance to the mob; and to punish them.
  \item To pay additional indeminity.
\end{enumerate}

\textit{The 4-point Directive:}
\begin{enumerate}
  \item To have the Korean Government open Hamhung, Taegu and Yanghwa-jin.
  \item To obtain the right for Japanese Legation officials and consuls to freely travel the inland of Korea.
  \item To settle the case of the violence to the Japanese residents in the Anbyon area.
  \item To obtain privilleges regading trade agreements.
\end{enumerate}


\(^{21}\) Takeda, K., \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 44–45.
regretted it very much and hoped that the matter would be amicably settled; that he had directed a ship to be sent here, and I had come in accordance with your instructions, to observe and report upon the state of affairs, and render such friendly offices as were proper. They replied that the King knew of our arrival and that they had been sent by him to pay this visit; that he regretted the trouble between Corea and Japan and was very anxious that the former friendly relations should be restored and continued. Ma Taotai himself acted as interpreter.(22)

Being encouraged by the Korean ministers, Commander Cotton once more proposed an interview to Minister Hanabusa who had returned to Inch’on from Seoul on August 25, and a meeting between the Commander and the Minister was held on August 26. At the meeting, however, the Minister gave the Commander no detailed information on his visit to Seoul but the bare fact that he had entered Seoul with his troops, with the unwilling consent of the Korean authorities; that he had an interview with the King in the Palace.

Commander Cotton was quite disappointed at the result of his meeting with Minister Hanabusa due to the latter’s non-cooperative attitude toward the American attempt to render good offices. In his report(23) to Minister Young, Commander Cotton wrote that he was led to infer that Hanabusa’s interview with the Korean King was not very satisfactory as his (Cotton) with Minister Hanabusa assuredly was not. The Commander added in the same report that no Japanese had given him first hand information at all during his stay 16-day in Korean waters.

He also stated in another report(24) to Minister Young that he had failed entirely to elicit original information from the Japanese Minister or Admiral. All of the information obtained from them was either at second hand or of trifling importance, in spite of the markedly friendly character of Minister Young’s instruction, of which Commander Cotton apprised the Japanese both verbally and by letter; and in spite of every attention to courtesy from the Commander in both his official and personal capacity.

Although Commander Cotton failed to secure cooperation from the Japanese authorities, he was successful in holding another friendly meeting with a Korean magistrate two days after it. On August 28 the Korean magistrate called the Commander on board and brought 26 chikens, 100 eggs and some vegetable as simple homely gifts in Oriental fashion. The Commander presented him in return with knives, scissors, needles, thread, tobacco, soap, buttons, and combs, etc., with which the Korean magistrate appeared pleased.(25)

(22) Department of State, China Despatches, Vol. 61, No. 27, 1882, Enclosure (Commander Cotton to Minister Young, August 29, 1882.).
(23) Ibid.
(24) Department of State, China Despatches, Vol. 61, No. 27, 1882, Enclosure (Commander Cotton to Minister Young, September 1, 1882.).
(25) Ibid.
At the meeting the Korean official informed the Commander that the Koreans disliked the Japanese excessively because the latter treated them so contemptuously; but that they liked Americans and were very glad to see an United States ship-of-war present. He was very curious to know what the United States would do in the event of war between Korea and Japan and whether the Commander would give asylum to Koreans seeking protection on board.

It was not the Japanese authorities but the Chinese that officially informed Commander Cotton of the conclusion of a treaty between the Korean and American Governments. On September 4 the Commander received an official copy in Chinese of the treaty from Admiral Ting, the Commander of the Chinese fleet. On the same day Commander Cotton sent it to Minister Young in Peking. The English translation of the treaty was as follows:

Whereas in the riot of July 23rd evil minded Coreans made a sudden attack upon the Japanese Legation, thereby causing the death of many of its inmates as also of the Japanese Military Instructor employed by the Corean Government; and

Whereas the Government of Japan places great importance upon the maintenance of friendly relations:

Therefore, it has been satisfactorily arranged that the Government of Corea shall carry out in good faith the following Six Articles together with two supplementary Articles following thereafter, as a satisfaction for the past and a guaranty for the future.

In faith whereof the Representatives of the two Governments have hereunto set their hands and seals.

Article I. The Corean Government will arrest the ringleaders of the mob within 20 days from the date of this instrument and inflict severe punishment upon them. Japan may appoint deputies to accompany the Corean Authorities in making arrests. If the arrests are not effected within the specified time, the Japanese Government may take the matter into its own hands.

Article II. The Japanese dead will be buried with all the customary honours by the Corean Authorities as a token of regret at their fate.

Article III. The Corean Government will distribute the sum of $50,000 to the families of the deceased Japanese and to the wounded as an expression of sympathy.

Article IV. The sum of $500,000 will be paid by the Government of Corea as indemnity for the sudden attack of the mob upon the Japanese Legation and the damage done to the premises, and for the expenses in despatching a naval and military force to protect the Japanese Minister. This sum shall be paid in five annual installments of $100,000 each.

(26) Quoted in Minister Young’s dispatch to Secretary of State Frelinghuysen, October 2, 1882. (Department of State, China Despatches, Vol. 61, No. 27.)
Article V. The Japanese Legation will maintain a certain guard of soldiers as a precaution against disturbances for which force the Corean Government undertake to provide barracks. If for the space of one year the Corean soldiers and people observe the law, the Japanese Minister, on being satisfied that it is no longer necessary to guard against disturbances, will withdraw it.

Article VI. The Corean Government will despatch an officer of high rank provided with a letter from the King apologizing the Government of Japan.

Signed and sealed by His Japanese Majesty's Minister HANABUSA, and by LI YU YUAN (YI YU-WÖN)\(^{(27)}\) and CHIN HUNG CHI (KIM HONG-JIP),\(^{(28)}\) Senior and Junior Ministers of Corea.

*Copy of Supplementary Conventoin of Two Articles*

In order still further to confirm in the future mutual good feeling and to facilitate commercial relations the Governments of Corea and Japan have agreed upon the two following supplementary articles.

Article I. Hereafter the limit of travel at the foreign settlements at Yuan Shan (Wönsan)\(^{(29)}\) Fu san (Pusan)\(^{(30)}\) and Reu ch’uan (Inch’on)\(^{(31)}\) is enlarged to fifty li in all directions-the Corean li being the standard of measure for distance. And after a period of two years reckoning from the date of the ratification of this treaty, a year being twelve calendal months, this limit shall be still further extended to 100 li. At the expiration of one year from the date of this instrument the port of Yang hua chen (Yanghwa-jin)\(^{(32)}\) shall be opened to foreign trade.

Article II. Japanese Diplomatic and Consular Officers with their families, staff and servants shall be permitted to travel freely throughout the interior of Corea. Upon notification of the points to be visited a passport will be issued by the Board of Rites. The local authorities will grant protection and escort to the bearers of such passport.

Signed and sealed by the respective Plenipotentiaries. To be ratified within two months from date of signature (August 30th) and ratifications to be exchanged at Tokio (Tokyo).\(^{(33)}\)

Although the dispatch of the *U.S.S. Monocacy* to Korea made little effect in curbing the ambition of Japan toward Korea and in safeguarding the overlordship of China in Korea,\(^{(34)}\) the pressure of the American vessel and the Commander’s efforts made a considerable contribution to the peaceful settlement of the dispute.
between Japan and Korea resulting from the riot of July 23, 1882. In a memorandum dated September 25, 1882, Chester Holcombe, Secretary of the United States Legation in Peking referred to the evaluation made by the Chinese Foreign Affairs Ministry regarding the achievement of the U.S.S. Monocacy:

“At the request of Minister Young I went to the Foreign Office September 20th to hear what the Chinese Ministers might be willing to say about a rumoured settlement of recent difficulties between Corea and Japan.

Wang, a member of the Privy Council, and Ch’en, late Chinese Minister at Washington, were present.

H.E. Wang introduced the business himself by saying that the Chinese Government was very grateful to Minister Young for sending a United States vessel of war to Corea; as her commander had acted much to moderate the demands of the Japanese and to bring about an amicable settlement of the questions at issue.”

In the same memorandum Secretary Holcombe stated that he had made the following reply to Mr. Wang:

“It would be a source of deep gratification to our Government to learn that the presence of the Monocacy in Corea had been of service to either of the powers interested. The United States desired above all things to see relations of lasting and sincere friendship maintained between China, Corea and Japan, and would always be ready to do all that could legitimately be done to secure this result.”

With respect to the Imo Military Riot of 1882, the diplomacy of the United States was not necessarily limited to dispatching the U.S.S. Monocacy to Korea to offer good offices. There was more diplomatic role for the United States to play in connection with the newly signed Chemulp’o Treaty which was supposed to settle the dispute between Japan and Korea caused by the riot of July 23, 1882.

Chinese Viceroy Li Hung-chang strongly objected to the indemnity stipulation included in the Chemulp’o Treaty and he planned to make efforts, through a third nation, if possible, the United States, to induce Japan to waive the question of the indemnity of $500,000 which the Korean Government should pay to Japan.

At an interview with Secretary Holcombe on September 20, 1882, Mr.H.E. Wang manifested much warmth of feeling in opposition to the stipulation that Korean is to pay $500,000 to Japan, and declared that the exaction of this sum was uncalled for and unreasonable. Mr. Wang also expressed his view as follows:

“The attack upon the Japanese Legation was a mere incident in the riot which the King of Corea regretted exceedingly but which, as the facts fully
proved, he was, at the moment, quite powerless to prevent. The King was ready to express his regret in the strongest terms, and to furnish all reasonable guarantees for the future. The Japanese had suffered no considerable damage in property in the riot, and had been put to no great expense necessarily in consequence of it. Corea is very poor and the amount named would be a serious burden to her."

At the interview Mr. Wang also expressed a hope that the United States might find some way to speak a word to Japan on this matter.

American Minister Young had the same feeling as the Chinese officials had toward the indemnity stipulation. He regretted that the Japanese Government in making the Chemulp’o Treaty had insisted upon an indemnity. Not because of the amount but because of the principle, he was opposed to the indemnity stipulation. Minister Young strongly expressed his view on the matter in a diplomatic dispatch addressed to Secretary of State Frelinghuysen:

"The principle which Japan here accepts in its application to Corea is the very principle against which her Government has been contending when applied to herself by the Western powers. The Simonoseki indemnity,(38) which was exacted from Japan and about which there have been important debates in Congress, was resented by Japan, because it was imposing a fine upon a nation for acts committed by the subjects of tributary and at the time an irresponsible prince. The American Government by executive messages to Congress, and by the declarations of your predecessors has disapproved of the Shimonoseki indemnity and the policy it embodied."(39)

What Minister Young tried to remind foreign policy makers in Washington, D.C. was that the Japanese Government was attempting to create a new grievance by imposing upon the King of Korea a burden of the kind which the Japanese Emperor found it so hard to bear when the Western powers forced him to accept as a consequence of the Shimonoseki incident of 1864; and that if the indemnity stipulation included in the Chemulp’o Treaty should be connived at, it would make it more difficult for the United States to sustain the principle on which the American Government alone had pronounced against Japan’s payment of a fine to foreign powers at the time the Shimonoseki Treaty was signed.

Referring to the principle, Minister Young said in the same dispatch, "My only objection is to the principle involved, an objection that would be as valid if the fine had been five, and not five hundred thousand dollars. There was no war (between Japan and Korea), nothing on the part of the Japanese necessarily involving a large outlay."(40)

(38) Treat, P., Early Diplomatic Relations of the United States and Japan, 1853-1865, p. 412.

(39) Department of State, China Despatches, Vol. 61, No 27, Ministe Young to Secretary of State Frelinghuysen, Oct. 2, 1882.

(40) Ibid.
Citing the following precedents in the diplomatic history, the Minister tried to justify his opposition to the indemnity stipulated in the Chemulp’o Treaty:

“England fitted out ships and sent troops to Canada pending her demand upon the United States for the surrender of Mason and Slidell. She moved a large body of soldiers from India to Malta when relations with Russia were in peril during the recent Russo-Turkish war. In neither case did England ask or expect from the United States or Russia any indemnity for the outlay.”(41)

Despite Minister Young’s effort to eliminate the indemnity clause from the Chemulp’o Treaty, before the United States Government took concrete steps, the ratification of the Convention of Two Articles as it was originally signed in August, was exchanged between the representative of both the Korean and Japanese Governments in Tokyo on October 31, 1882.(42)

As far as the disputes, resulting from the riot of July 23, 1882, between Korea and Japan was concerned, a settlement was brought about by signing the Chemulp’o Treaty. However, an unsolved issue still remained between the United States and Korea. The US-Korea Treaty signed on May 23, 1882 was transmitted to the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate on July 29, 1882, only a few days after the outbreak of the riot and there was evidently considerable doubt as to whether it would be approved and ratified due to the crisis resulting the anti-foreign riot in Seoul.(43)

Being anxious to have the US-Korea Treaty ratified by the United States Government, the King of Korea dispatched two special envoys, Minister Cho Yong-ha and Governor KIM Yun-sik, to China to have them appeal to United States Minister Young in Peking.(44)

On September 18 1882 the Korean envoys submitted the following letter to the American Minister:

“The affair of July 23rd in our country was purely an internal difficulty which has already been completely adjusted. The Treaty which has been signed and sealed will be carried into effect in all the particulars of its several stipulations in accordance with the provisions of international law.

If your Government ratifies this Treaty and appoints an Envoy, it is requested that he come to Reu-chuan (Inch’ŏn)(45) and exchange certificates

(41) Ibid.
(42) Japan Foreign Affairs Ministry, NIHON GAIKO MONJO (外務省外交文書), Vol. 15, Attachment No. 4.
(43) Frelinghuysen to the Foreign Relations Committee, July 29, 1882, Department of State, Report Book (14), p. 653.
(44) Okudaira, T., CHOSEN GAIKOKU KOSHO SHIMATSU (朝鮮外交交涉始末), pp. 142–143.
(45) The romanization in the parenthesis was added by the writer. The Korean pronunciation was based on the McCune-Reischauer System.
of retification, to the end that the two Governments with their respective citizens and subjects may mutually enjoy the benefits arising from its observance.

The undersigned having come to Tientsin upon official business, and fearing that exaggerated reports may have reached your Government and created a feeling of distrust have felt bound to make this communication to which they beg your attention." (46)

In response to the letter from the Korean envoys, Minister Young wrote to them as follows:

"Your Excellencies, I am in receipt of your communication of September 18th written from Tientsin. In this you give me the welcome news that the said affair of July 23rd has been arranged; and that the convention between your government and Japan will be carried into effect in accordance with the provisions of international law. You also request my government, in the event of the ratification of the treaty signed with Commodore Shufeldt, to send an envoy to Corea to exchange ratifications.

I shall be happy to lay before my Government the communications with which your Excellencies have honoured me. At the same time I am gratified to know that the unfortunate disturbance in your country has been suppressed, and that relations have been established with Japan.

The United States having been the first great power to give her hand to Corea and ask your sovereign to come within the circle of civilized treaty-observing nationalities, to the end that commerce, trade, manufactures and the advantages of civilization may be enjoyed by your people, cannot fail to view with deep and friendly interest all that concerns the welfare of your sovereign and his kingdom.

I am happy to have occasion to express these sentiments to your Excellencies. For your communication accept my thanks; and the assurance of my high consideration I am, etc." (47)

Informing Secretary of State Frelinghuysen of the correspondence with the Korean envoys, Minister Young expressed his view on American foreign policy to be employed toward Korea. The Minister was of opinion that the United States should be in treaty relations with Korea. To justify his stand, Minister Young stressed that Japan would have no fair ground of complaint about United States attempt to establish treaty relations with Korea because the United States is going to do what Japan did toward Korea years ago.

Refuting the existing objections that Korea is the dependency of China; that she stands towards the outside nations like Bavaria as a part of the German Empire, and Pennsylvania as a state of the American Union; and that a treaty to be valid should

(46) Department of State, China Despatches, Vol. 61, No. 27, 1882, Enclosure, No. 6.
(47) Ibid.
have the consent of the Chinese Emperor, Minister Young made the following statement:

"The question whether a treaty with Corea would hold good without imperial approval will find an answer in Siam. We look upon the King of Siam as a Sovereign. We have just sent a minister to his court. And yet Siam is as much a dependency of China as Corea.

The Siamese sovereigns took their freedom from tribute for granted, and the world regards them as independent. There is no reason why we should not have treaty relations with Corea as well as with Siam". (48)

In the same diplomatic dispatch to the Department of State, the Minister also insisted that the establishment of treaty relations with Korea and the presence of an American envoy at the Korean court would lend to the preservation of peace among China, Korea and Japan.

Minister Young's efforts to convince foreign policy makers in Washington, D.C. became fruitful when the US-Korea Treaty was approved on January 9, 1883. Ratiﬁcations were exchanged at Seoul on May 19 and the treaty was proclaimed on June 4, 1883. (49) At the same time Lucius C. Foote, the newly appointed Minister, established the American Legation in Seoul.

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