

VI.—NEGOTIATIONS RELATING TO WEI-HAI-WEI AND  
COREA, 1904-5. ✱

No. 102.

*Mr. Jordan to the Marquess of Lansdowne.*

*Seoul, May 19, 1904.*

F.O. China 1661.

D. 4.15 P.M.

Tel. (No. 107.)

R. 4.15 P.M.

Edict published today cancels all Treaties between Russia and Corea. Special reference is made to timber concession 1896 which from being a private transaction is described as having been converted by Russian Government into an instrument of political aggression by supplementary agreement of July 20, 1903. Latter is also declared null and void.

Japanese Minister informs me confidentially that step was taken on the advice of Japanese Government who regard Corean cooperation as a principle of cardinal importance and consider maintenance of Treaty relations with Russia as incompatible therewith.

(Sent to Tokyo.)

No. 103.

*The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir C. MacDonald.*

F.O. Japan 590.<sup>(1)</sup>

(No. 151.)

*Foreign Office, D. September 26, 1905.*

Sir,

*R. November 14, 1905.*

The Japanese Minister called upon me today and informed me that he was instructed to make a communication to me in regard to Corea.

It was to the following effect.

“Confidential.

“September 26, 1905.

“In the external relations of Corea the Imperial Government recognize elements of grave danger still exist. The Court and high officials of Corea have always considered it to be their best policy skilfully to manipulate the influence of Russia and Japan in Corea so as to make them the means of mutual restraint, and it is an undeniable fact that, in pursuing this policy they have not hesitated to enter into unwise treaty and other engagements with foreign Powers. In fact this may be said to have formed one of the direct causes of the recent war between the two Powers.

“Under the agreement of August 22nd 1904 between Japan and Corea the latter agreed to consult Japan before concluding Treaties with foreign Powers and

<sup>(1)</sup> [The copy in this volume is a rough draft, and the text has therefore been checked by the Embassy archives, Japan, F.O. 202/924. The two are identical except for minor differences in capitalisation.]

also before taking any steps regarding important diplomatic affairs.<sup>(2)</sup> In spite of this Agreement and even while the war was still in progress instances have not been lacking where the Korean authorities have disregarded or attempted to disregard the above Treaty stipulation. The Japanese Government have also heard that some influential Koreans are said to be entertaining similar designs at the present time—and this even before peace is definitely established! What, therefore, their course of action will be when peace is restored and the restrictions imposed upon their actions by the conditions of war cease to exist is not difficult to surmise.

"Russia, on the other hand, has recognized in the Treaty of Peace the right of Japan to full liberty of action in Corea. But it is by no means clear what attitude she may be disposed to assume later.

"So long as the relations of Corea with foreign Powers remain as at present the position of Japan in Corea will continue to be an insecure one which is a state of affairs Japan cannot possibly suffer to exist.

"Such being the case Japan may be compelled to take radical steps to eliminate future evils, and in order to accomplish this effectively the Imperial Government have no alternative but to assume the charge of the external relations of the Korean Government. The Imperial Government, therefore, propose to take, ere long, the necessary measures to attain the above object.

"In view of the stipulations which are contained in the new Alliance Agreement the Imperial Government entertain no doubt as to their receiving the full concurrence of His Majesty's Government in this matter. Nevertheless they deem it only right, considering the close relations of the two countries, frankly to state their views on this subject and they hope to anticipate the action they are about to take in Corea by an exchange of views between the two Governments."

I told Viscount Hayashi that, as he was aware, His Majesty's Government were entirely favourable to the development of Japanese influence in Corea and that, so far as they were concerned, the Jap[ane]se Gov[ernmen]t were not likely to encounter any difficulties in giving effect to their policy.

[I am, &c.]  
L[ANSLOWNE.]

(2) [The following is the text of the Agreement of August 22, 1904, as communicated by Viscount Hayashi on August 31:—

F.O. Japan 585.  
Translation.

August 22, 1904.

I. Korean Government shall engage a Japanese subject recommended by Japanese Government as Financial Adviser to the Korean Government and all matters concerning finance shall be dealt with after his counsel being taken.

II. Korean Government shall engage a foreigner recommended by Japanese Government as Diplomatic Adviser to Foreign Office and all important matters concerning foreign relations shall be dealt with after his counsel being taken.

III. Korean Government shall previously consult Japanese Government in concluding Treaties and Conventions with foreign Powers and in dealing with other important diplomatic affairs such as the grant of concessions to or contracts with foreigners.

*Verbal Explanation on Communicated Agreement.*

The present agreement is nothing more than the natural consequence or development of the Protocol of February 23, 1904, concluded between Japan and Corea which the Viscount Hayashi communicated to the British Government at that time. The Agreement does not in any way interfere with the full operation or validity of Corea's existing treaties and the Article III of the Agreement is not intended to place any impediment in the way of legitimate enterprise but merely to check the future conclusion of unwise and improvident engagements which in the past have been the sources of trouble and complications.

This agreement was signed at Séoul August 22, v. also Sir C. MacDonald's Tel. No. 242 of August 29, 1904, F.O. Japan 581.]

## No. 104.

*The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir C. MacDonald.*

F.O. China 1767.

Foreign Office, October 13, 1905.

Tel. (No. 193.) Secret.

D. 10 A.M.

Have Japanese Gov[ernmen]t given any indication recently whether they still attach importance to our retention of Wei-hai-wei? If not could you ascertain their views without making them aware that matter is under consideration here?

## No. 105.

*Sir C. MacDonald to the Marquess of Lansdowne.*

Tôkiô, October 15, 1905.

F.O. China 1767.

D. 2.20 P.M.

Tel. (No 247.) Secret.

R. 5.30 P.M.

Your telegram No. 193.<sup>(1)</sup>

Japanese Government have given no indication that they have changed view expressed by Baron Komura (my telegram No. 23\*) namely, that it was the "earnest wish" of his Government that Great Britain should retain Wei-hai-Wei.

Yesterday I had good opportunity to sound Prime Minister and Minister of Marine privately and separately on this point. They were both strongly of opinion that so long as Germany held Kiao-chow, so long should we remain in Wei-hai-Wei.

They considered transfer of the Liaotung Peninsula to Japan made no difference whatever in our lease of Wei-hai-Wei.

As to whether Japan will try to extend lease of Liaotung beyond the 25 years, the statesmen above mentioned naturally show reserve, but from the way they spoke Japan has undoubtedly come to stay.

I am of opinion that our withdrawal from Wei-hai-Wei would be in opposition to wishes of Japanese Government, and would create the very worst impression throughout Japan.

I venture to think, also, that it would injure our influence and prestige in the Far East generally.

MINUTE.

v. Sir E. Satow's 185 and my minute.<sup>(2)</sup>

L.

<sup>(1)</sup> [v. immediately preceding document.]

\* Of Jan[uary] 25. The telegram only contained the statement quoted as to Wei-hai-wei. The rest of the message referred to the conditions of peace.—W. L.

<sup>(2)</sup> [v. immediately succeeding document.]

## No. 106.

*Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Lansdowne.*

Peking, October 16, 1905.

F.O. China 1767.

D. 12.25 P.M.

Tel. (No. 185.)

R. 1 P.M.

Your tel[egram] No. 148 (of Oct[ober] 13.)<sup>(1)</sup> Withdrawal from Wei-hai-wei.

Chinese view would be that we were simply giving up in accordance with stipulation that the lease ends when Russian occupation of Port Arthur terminates.

<sup>(1)</sup> [Not reproduced.]

Representation of the China Association doubtless accords with views of British community, but I regard it as premature to approach Chinese Gov[ernmen]t with proposals for renewal until Japanese terms in regard to transfer of Liaotung peninsula are known to H[is] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t. Reasons were given in my private letters of Aug[ust] 24 and September 21 and more fully in my Desp[atch] of October 5<sup>(\*)</sup> which should reach you November 16.

Effect of our withdrawal would be to furnish Germany with an opportunity of claiming it under Art[icle] 5 of her Kiaochow Agreement and would seriously weaken our political position. I do not see what compensatory advantages we could obtain. Territorial zones China would not give, commercial would be shared by all other countries, railway and mining concessions are not obtainable in the present mood of the Chinese Gov[ernmen]t.

At the risk of trespassing outside my own province I venture to add these other considerations.

As a health station for H[is] M[ajesty's] ships during hot season in South China and for training crews in gunnery and torpedo and rifle practice the place is invaluable and cost of civil administration is insignificant. I do not see what we can possibly gain by withdrawal.

#### MINUTES.

*Wei-hai-wei.*

1. We have not yet seen any official version of the Treaty of Peace, but we believe that by its terms Japan has to settle with China as to the transfer of the Liao-tung lease.

2. I annex Article V of the Kiao-chau Agreement.\* Germany could apparently only claim Wei-hai-wei by retirement from Kiao-chau which is unlikely after the expenditure she has incurred there.

W. L.

#### \* ARTICLE V.

Should Germany at some future time express the wish to return Kiao-chau Bay to China before the expiration of the lease, China engages to refund to Germany the expenditure she has incurred at Kiao-chau, and to cede to Germany a more suitable place.

Germany engages at no time to sublet the territory leased from China to another Power.

The Chinese population dwelling in the ceded territory shall at all times enjoy the protection of the German Government, provided that they behave in conformity with law and order; unless their land is required for other purposes they may remain there.

If land belonging to Chinese owners is required for any other purpose, the owner will receive compensation.

As regards the re-establishment of Chinese customs stations which formerly existed outside the ceded territory but within the 50-kilom. zone, the Imperial German Government intends to come to an agreement with the Chinese Government for the definitive regulation of the customs frontier, and the mode of collecting customs duties, in a manner which will safeguard all the interests of China, and proposes to enter into further negotiations on the subject.

The above agreement shall be ratified by the Sovereigns of both the Contracting States, and the ratifications exchanged in such manner that, after the receipt in Berlin of the Treaty ratified by China, the copy ratified by Germany shall be handed to the Chinese Minister in Berlin.

The foregoing Treaty has been drawn up in four copies, two in German and two in Chinese, and was signed by the Representatives of the two Contracting States on the 6th March, 1898, equal to the 14th day of the second month in the twenty-fourth year Kuanghsu.

(Great Seal of the Tsung-li Yamen.)

The Imperial German Minister,  
(Signed)

BARON VON HEYKING.

LI HUNG-CHANG (in Chinese), Imperial Chinese Grand Secretary, Minister of the Tsung-li Yamen, &c., &c.

WENG TUNG-HO (in Chinese), Imperial Chinese Grand Secretary, Member of the Council of State, Minister of the Tsung-li Yamen, &c., &c.

(\*) [Not reproduced.]

This expenditure is to be recovered from China if Germany goes but I agree that any such withdrawal is in the highest degree improbable. Sir E. Satow is as emphatic as Sir C. MacDonald in deprecating the abandonment of W.H.W., and from the F[oreign] O[ffice] point of view I think Sir E. Satow correctly sums up by stating that it "would seriously weaken our political position."

We have now the Commercial Community in this country and in China, H[is] M[ajesty's] Ministers at Peking and Tokio, the Japanese Gov[ernmen]t and the Col[onial] Office all dead against withdrawal.

F. A. C.  
Oct. 16, 05.

This telegram is conclusive as to the view of,

1. The British community,
2. Sir E. Satow himself,

and Sir C. MacDonald leaves us in no doubt as to the opinion of

3. The Japanese Gov[ernmen]t and
4. His own.

I understood from the Prime Minister that he would bring the question before the defence committee at its first meeting.

The Admiralty are apparently in favour of withdrawal, but whatever may be said upon strategical grounds, the political arguments are entitled to much weight.

If however we remain we shall have to regularize our position and obtain an extension.

I attach no importance to the argument that if we retired from W[ei]-h[ai]-W[ei] the Germans might come in.

L.  
20/10.

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[*ED. NOTE.*—In reply to a question in the House of Commons on February 22, 1906, Mr. Runciman stated "It is not considered that the transfer of the Russian lease of Port Arthur has made any change in the present *status* of Wei-hai-Wei, which is leased to His Majesty's Government, and no action is at present contemplated with regard to the lease." (*Parl. Deb.*, 4th Ser., Vol. 152, p. 505.) Some further *pourparlers* both with Japan and with China took place during the latter half of 1906. A Memorandum from the War Office of November 3 expressed the view that the military value of Wei-hai-Wei was considerable, and Sir Edward Grey upheld this view in negotiation.]

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No. 107.

*Sir C. MacDonald to the Marquess of Lansdowne.*

F.O. China 1767.

(No. 266.) Confidential.

T6ki6, D. November 6, 1905.

My Lord,

R. December 27, 1905.

His Excellency Baron Komura, Minister for Foreign Affairs called upon me officially this afternoon. He explained this departure from diplomatic etiquette by saying he could not receive me at his residence, because, owing to his almost immediate departure for China on a special mission, he would be inundated with callers, and he wanted to speak to me privately and without interruption on one or two subjects.

His Excellency commenced by expressing his great satisfaction and that of the Japanese Government at the King's desire to raise this Legation to an Embassy. This, he said, had given the utmost satisfaction to His Majesty The Emperor. He spoke also of my probable appointment as Ambassador here, and then proceeded to tell me about his approaching mission to China. His Excellency said that he was taking with him Mr. Denison and practically the same staff he had with him in America; the object of his mission, which was practically a continuation of the Portsmouth mission, was to arrange with the Chinese Government the transfer of the lease of the Liaotung Peninsula and of the railway from Changchung to Port Arthur as laid down in Articles V and VI of the Treaty of Peace.

His first care would be to arrange with the Chinese Government the opening of certain places in Manchuria for trade and commerce. His Excellency reminded me that shortly before the war the Japanese Government in conjunction with the United States Government wished to open Harbin, Antung and a port\* near the mouth of the Yalu to trade. The Chinese Government were willing, but owing to the opposition of the Russian Government who objected to the opening of Treaty ports in Manchuria within what they called their sphere of interest, the matter dropped.

Your Lordship will remember that the American Government appointed Consuls to these places, but these Consuls did not, on account apparently of objections raised by the Russian Government, proceed.

During the Portsmouth negotiations, His Excellency said he had pressed Monsieur de Witte hard, and had insisted that these ports, whether within or without the Railway zone, should be opened, even going the length of threatening to break off the negotiations if this point was not ceded. At last Monsieur de Witte yielded and gave a verbal promise that no opposition from the Russian Government would take place, and the promise was entered in the *procès-verbal*.

The establishment of a Treaty Port, owing to its international character, in any province or part of China is undoubtedly a great bar to that part of China becoming absorbed or annexed by another Power. The strong objection which Russia had, and which apparently she still has to this establishment in Manchuria is, I venture to think, significant.

Baron Komura said that he intended to try and settle this question of the establishment of these Treaty Ports in Manchuria first, so as to get it definitely arranged "Before the Russian Government had time to change their minds or Monsieur de Witte to forget his promise."

I asked whether His Excellency anticipated any difficulty with the Chinese Government in the matter of the transfer of the lease of the Liaotung peninsula. Baron Komura said he did not, considering that the whole of Manchuria with the exception of the leased portions was, thanks to the efforts of the Japanese, to be handed back to China; and that this rendition of Manchuria meant the release of the whole of North China which up till then was slowly but surely being absorbed by Russia, the Chinese would be ungrateful indeed if they made any objections to the provisions of Articles V and VI of the Treaty.

I asked whether the Japanese Government would be content with the remainder of the unexpired lease of 25 years which the Russians had obtained in 1898. I hardly expected to draw an expression of opinion from His Excellency on this point, but he answered at once and with frankness that his instructions were not to raise the question of the duration of the lease. If the Chinese raised the point he was to decline to discuss it. His own personal opinion was strongly in favour of the above course, later on when the lease was about to expire he thought the Japanese Government should insist upon holding Port Arthur at any rate for as long as the Germans remained at Kiao-chau. "This," His Excellency added with a smile, "we could do by virtue of the most favoured nation clause in our treaty with China."<sup>(1)</sup>

His Excellency then touched on the British occupation of Wei-Hai-Wei and said that not only had the Japanese Government no objection to our remaining in possession, but they earnestly hoped we would. It was most important that this naval port should remain in possession of a strong and friendly Power, at any rate as long as any of the leases which China had given to other Powers remained in force—he added, "I beg that you will telegraph this to your Government."

His Excellency then spoke about railway guards on the Manchurian railway line. The number of these, as Your Lordship is aware, is fixed by the Protocol of the Treaty at 15 per kilometre. These guards, Baron Komura said, would be dispensed with, so far as the part of the Railway under Japanese control was concerned, the

\* Tatungkow.

<sup>(1)</sup> [Unsigned marginal comment: "A very odd reading of Art. X' of the Treaty."]



moment it was seen that China was capable of looking after the Railway herself. During the peace negotiations Monsieur de Witte had contended for 20 men per Kilometre, Baron Komura for 5, ultimately the present number was decided upon.

His Excellency said that he thought his mission would last upwards of a month. During his absence Count Katsura would, as before act as Minister for Foreign Affairs

I have, &c.

CLAUDE M. MACDONALD.

P.S.—Baron Komura also said that he hoped in the matter of the lease of Wei-hai-wei His Majesty's Government would adopt the same attitude which the Japanese Gov[ernmen]t intended to take regarding the lease of Port Arthur.

C. M. MACD.

MINUTE.

The conclusive argument for the retention of Wei Hai Wei for the present appears to me to be the strong feeling of the Japanese. The last expression of this feeling in Sir C. MacDonald's No. 266, should be added to the paper already prepared.

E. G.

[Jan. 1, 1906.]

No. 108.

*Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Lansdowne.*

*Peking, November 21, 1905.*

F.O. China 1675.

Tel. (No. 217.)

Corea.

D. 12.35 P.M.

R. NOON.

Japanese Ambassador states that a treaty was signed on October 18 [sic] by Korean Minister for Foreign Affairs and Japanese Minister by which Corea agrees to receive Japanese protectorate, and to leave conduct of foreign affairs in the hands of the Japanese Government. Consequently the maintenance of the Foreign legations will become unnecessary.

No. 109.

*Communication by Viscount Hayashi, November 22, 1905.*

*Agreement between Japan and Corea.*

F.O. Japan 600.

*November 17, 1905.*

The Governments of Japan and Corea desiring to strengthen the principle of solidarity which unites the two Empires have, with that object in view, agreed upon and concluded the following stipulations to serve until the moment arrives when it is recognized that Corea has attained national strength:

ARTICLE I.

The Government of Japan, through the Department of Foreign Affairs in Tokio, will, hereafter, have control and direction of the external relations and affairs of Corea and the diplomatic and consular representatives of Japan will have the charge of the subjects and interests of Corea in Foreign countries.

## ARTICLE II.

The Government of Japan undertake to see to the execution of the treaties actually existing between Corea and other Powers and the Government of Corea engage not to conclude hereafter any act or engagement having an international character, except through the medium of the Government of Japan.

## ARTICLE III.

The Government of Japan shall be represented at the Court of His Majesty the Emperor of Corea by Resident-General, who shall reside at Seoul primarily for the purpose of taking charge of and directing matters relating to diplomatic affairs.

He shall have the right of private and personal audience of His Majesty the Emperor of Corea.

The Japanese Government shall also have the right to station residents at the several open ports and such other places in Corea as they may deem necessary. Such Residents shall, under the direction of the Resident-General designate the powers and functions hitherto appertaining to Japanese Consuls in Corea and shall perform such duties as may be necessary in order to carry into full effect the provisions of this agreement.

## ARTICLE IV.

The stipulations of all treaties and agreement[s] existing between Japan and Corea not inconsistent with the provisions of this Agreement shall continue in force.

## ARTICLE V.

\*The Government of Japan undertake to maintain the welfare and dignity of the Imperial House of Corea.

In faith whereof the undersigned duly authorized by their Governments have signed this Agreement and affixed their seals.

November 17th.

HAYASHI GONSUKE,  
*Envoy Extraordinary and Minister  
Plenipotentiary.*

PAK CHE SOON,  
*Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

November 17, 1905.

In confidentially communicating to your Lordship the accompanying Agreement between Japan and Corea I am instructed by Count Katsura to inform you of the intention of the Imperial Government to officially communicate the present Agreement in due time to His Majesty's and other Governments. I am also to add that the perilous situation in Corea has rendered necessary the conclusion of this compact but that the Treaties existing between the Powers and Corea will be respected by the Imperial Government and that the Imperial Government intends shortly to make a declaration to the effect that all proper commercial and industrial interests enjoyed by the Powers in Corea will in no way be injured.

Pending such official communication and declaration, however, the Imperial Government have deemed it right to make known confidentially to His Majesty's Government the present Agreement and hope that His Majesty's Government will regard the communication as confidential for the present.