

MEIJI JAPAN THROUGH CONTEMPORARY SOURCES

Notwithstanding what we have stated, our Lord in no wise fails in respect towards Your Excellencies' Sovereign, but on the contrary deeply appreciates, his sincere loyalty. Hence we his officials make this announcement. We may have inadequately expressed our Lord's real purpose, but we trust Your Excellencies will understand it.

2nd year of Koka, the year of Wood-Serpent, 6th month, 1st day.

(Signed) The *Roku* of Japan:
Abe Ise-no-kami Masahiro.
Makino **Bizen-no-kami** Tadamasa.
Aoyama Shimotsuke-no-kami Tadanaga.
Toda Yamashiro-no-kami Tadaatsu.
Translated from the Japanese Language in
Greene : " Correspondence," 121-123.

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II

COMING OF THE AMERICAN FLEET, 1853-1854

1. *Coming of the Black Ship*

A. Letter of Millard Fillmore, President of the United States of America, to His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Japan,* November 13, 1852.

GREAT and Good Friend: I send you this public letter by Commodore Matthew C. Perry, an officer of the highest rank in the navy of the United States, and commander of the squadron now visiting your imperial majesty's dominions.

I have directed Commodore Perry to assure your imperial majesty that I entertain the kindest feelings towards your majesty's person and government, and that I have no other object in sending him to Japan but to propose to your imperial majesty that the United States and Japan should live in friendship and have commercial intercourse with each other.

The Constitution and laws of the United States forbid all interference with the religious or political concerns of other nations. I have particularly charged Commodore Perry to abstain from every act which could possibly disturb the tranquility of your imperial majesty's dominions.

* In fact it was addressed to the *Shogun*.

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The United States of America reach from ocean to ocean, and our Territory of Oregon and State of California lie directly opposite to the dominions of your imperial majesty. Our steamships can go from California to Japan in eighteen days.

Our great State of California produces about sixty millions of dollars in gold every year, besides silver, quicksilver, precious stones, and many other valuable articles. Japan is also a rich and fertile country, and produces many very valuable **articles**. Your imperial majesty's subjects are skilled in many of the arts. I am desirous that our two countries should trade with each other, for the benefit both of Japan and the United States.

We know that the ancient laws of your imperial majesty's government do not allow of foreign trade, except with the Chinese and the Dutch; but as the state of the world changes and new governments are formed, it seems to be wise, from time to time, to make new laws. There was a time when the ancient laws of your imperial majesty's government were first made.

About the same time America, which is sometimes called the New World, was first discovered and settled by the Europeans. For a long time there were but a few people, and they were poor. They have now become quite numerous; their commerce is very extensive; and they think that if your imperial majesty were so far to change the ancient laws as to allow a free trade between the two countries it would be extremely beneficial to both.

If your imperial majesty is not satisfied that it would be safe altogether to abrogate the ancient laws which forbid foreign trade, they might be suspended for five or ten years, so as to try the experiment. If it does not prove as beneficial

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as was hoped, the ancient laws can be restored. The United States often limit their treaties with foreign states to a few years, and then renew them or not, as they please.

I have directed Commodore Perry to mention another thing to your imperial majesty. Many of our ships pass every year from California to China; and great numbers of our people pursue the whale fishery near the shores of Japan. It sometimes happens, in stormy weather, that one of our ships is wrecked on your imperial majesty's shores. In all such cases we ask, and expect, that our unfortunate people should be treated with kindness, and that their property should be protected, till we can send a vessel and bring them away. We are very much in earnest in this.

Commodore Perry is also directed by me to represent to your imperial majesty that we understand there is a great abundance of coal and provisions in the Empire of Japan. Our steamships, in crossing the great ocean, burn a great deal of coal, and it is not convenient to bring it all the way from America. We wish that our steamships and other vessels should be allowed to stop in Japan and supply themselves with coal, provisions, and water. They will pay for them in money, or anything else your imperial majesty's subjects may prefer; and we request your imperial majesty to appoint a convenient port, in the southern part of the empire, where our vessels may stop for this purpose. We are very desirous of this.

These are the only objects for which I have sent Commodore Perry, with a powerful squadron, to pay a visit to your imperial majesty's renowned city of Edo: friendship, commerce, a supply of coal and provisions, and protection for our shipwrecked people.

We have directed Commodore Perry to beg your imperial

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majesty's acceptance of a few presents. They are of no great value in themselves; but some of them may serve as specimens of the articles manufactured in the United States, and they are intended as tokens of our sincere and respectful friendship.

May the Almighty have your imperial majesty in His great and holy keeping!

In witness whereof, I have caused the great seal of the United States to be hereunto **affixed**, and have subscribed the same with my name, at the city of Washington, in America, the seat of my government, on the thirteenth day of the month of November, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-two.

[Seal attached.]

Your good friend,

Millard Fillmore.

By the President:

Edward Everett, Secretary of State.

Hawks: *Narrative*, I, 256-257.

B. Letter of Commodore Perry to the Emperor, July 7, 1853.

*United States Steam Frigate Susquehanna,
Off the Coast of Japan.*

THE undersigned, commander-in-chief of all the naval forces of the United States of America stationed in the East India, China and Japan seas, has been sent by his government of this country, on a friendly mission, with ample powers to negotiate with the government of Japan, touching certain matters which have been fully set forth in the letter

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of the President of the United States, copies of which, together with copies of the letter of credence of the undersigned, in the English, Dutch, and Chinese languages, are herewith transmitted.

The original of the President's letter, and of the letter of credence, prepared in a manner suited to the exalted station of your imperial majesty, will be presented by the undersigned in person, when it may please your majesty to appoint a day for his reception.

The undersigned has been commanded to state that the President entertains the most friendly feelings towards Japan, but has been surprised and grieved to learn that when any of the people of the United States go, of their own accord, or are thrown by the perils of the sea, within the dominations of your imperial majesty, they are treated as if they were your worst enemies.

The undersigned refers to the cases of the American ships *Morrison*, *Lagoda*, and *Lawrence*.

With the Americans, as indeed with all Christian people, it is considered a sacred duty to receive with kindness, and to **succour** and protect all, of whatever nation, who may be cast upon their shores, and such has been the course of the Americans with respect to all Japanese subjects who have fallen under their protection.

The government of the United States desires to obtain from that of Japan some positive assurance that persons who may hereafter be shipwrecked on the coast of Japan, or driven by stress of weather into her ports, shall be treated with humanity.

The undersigned is commanded to explain to the Japanese that the United States are connected with no government in Europe, and that their laws do not interfere with the

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religion of their own citizens, much less with that of other nations.

That they inhabit a great country which lies directly between Japan and Europe, and which was discovered by the nations of Europe about the same time that Japan herself was first visited by Europeans; that the portion of the American continent lying nearest to Europe was first settled by emigrants from that part of the **world**; that its population has rapidly spread through the country, until it has reached the shores of the Pacific Ocean; that we have now large cities, **from** which, with the aid of steamvessels, we can reach Japan in eighteen or twenty days; that our commerce with all this region of the globe is rapidly increasing, and the Japan seas will soon be covered with our vessels.

Therefore, as the United States and Japan are becoming every day nearer and nearer to each other, the President desires to live in peace and friendship with your imperial majesty, but no friendship can long exist, unless Japan ceases to act towards Americans as if they were her enemies.

However wise this policy may originally have been, it is unwise and impracticable now that the intercourse between the two countries is so much more easy and rapid than it formerly was.

The undersigned holds out all these arguments in the hope that the Japanese government will see the necessity of averting **unfriendly** collision between the two nations, by responding favourably to the propositions of amity, which are now made in all sincerity.

Many of the large ships-of-war destined to visit Japan have not yet arrived in these seas, though they are hourly expected; and the undersigned, as an evidence of his friendly intentions, has brought but four of the smaller ones, **de-**

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signing, should it become necessary, to return to Edo in the ensuing spring with a much larger force.

But it is expected that the government of your imperial majesty will render such return unnecessary, by acceding at once to the very reasonable and pacific overtures contained in the President's letter, and which will be further explained by the undersigned on the first fitting occasion.

With the most profound respect for your imperial majesty, and entertaining a sincere hope that you may long live to enjoy health and happiness, the undersigned subscribes himself,

M. C. Perry,

*Commander-in-chief of the United States **Naval** Forces
in the East India, China, and Japan seas.*

To His Imperial Majesty,
the Emperor of Japan.

Hawks: *Narrative*, I, 258-259.

C. Perry's Letter in Connection with the Delivery of a White Flag, [July 14,] 1853.

FOR years several countries have applied for trade, but you have opposed them on account of a national law. You have thus acted against divine principles and your sin cannot be greater than it is. What we say thus does not necessarily mean, as has already been communicated by the Dutch boat, that we expect mutual trade by all means. If you are still to disagree we would then take up arms and inquire into the sin against the divine principles, and you would also make sure of your law and fight in **defence**. When one considers such an occasion, however, one will realize the

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victory will naturally be ours and you shall by no means overcome us. If in such a situation you seek for a reconciliation, you should put up the white flag that we have recently presented to you, and we would accordingly stop firing and conclude peace with you, turning our battleships aside.

Translated by Masatoshi Konishi.

2. *Debates on the Opening of the Country*

D. Enquiry from the Bakufu to the Officials and the Daimyo Concerning the Countermeasure for America, August 5, 1853.

Two copies of translations of letters delivered by the American ship which came to Uraga recently have now reached us. As regards trade, we have our own customs so far and it cannot be decided easily whether or not to permit it. Since this is at present our nation's most important problem, you are requested to read the contents of the above letters most carefully and minutely, and to consider critically the advantages and disadvantages for our nation, while also being fully mindful of future situations. Even what may incur the displeasure [of the *Shogun*] will be excused, and each of you is therefore to fully and unreservedly report your plans and ideas.

Our accepting these letters delivered by the American ship in Uraga is just a political expedient, therefore all should disregard that fact and speak their minds openly.

Translated by Masatoshi Konishi.

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E. Humble Propositions as Regards Maritime Defence, by Tokugawa Nariaki, Lord of the Mito Clan, to Abe Masahiro, Councillor of the Bakufu, August 7, 1853.

That I believe it is urgently necessary that once the Bakufu determines upon a policy of either peace or war, it should never be changed:

To discuss the advantages and disadvantages of war or of concluding peace : should the former become the main policy, a martial spirit will arise all over the country, and, even were we to be defeated for a while, we would finally expel the foreign brigands; [on the other hand,] should peace become the main policy instead, it may [no doubt] be for a while, but people throughout the country would become demoralized and this may later lead to the downfall of the country. Since the above has been clearly proved in Chinese history, and many men of intelligence, ancient and modern, have argued the point with certainty, I would here also like to discuss the problem, but in a rough outline, without going into details. Hence, there follow ten arguments to show that peace [with the foreign countries] is by no means desirable.

Now, the Divine Country is [certainly] not very large and wide, but as regards the policy against foreign barbarians, Empress Jingu subjugated the three Korean countries in ancient times, while during the Koan Period [1274-81] in the mediaeval times the Mongolian army was defeated, during the Bunroku Period [1592-98] in the modern times Korea was subjugated, and during the Periods of Keicho and Kan'ei [1596-1643] Christians were uprooted-thus the most appropriate decisions and glorious crusades [of

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our nation] have been made overseas. Nevertheless, the American barbarians who came this time were fully cognizant of our prohibitions, yet they arrived at Uraga, presented a white flag to signify the will to conclude peace, forcibly offered a request [for trade], sailed deep into the inland sea, fired blank shots, and were arrogant enough to have surveyed around. We can find practically no words to describe their insolent attitude, and this can well be said to be the first insult given our nation since the creation of the world. We consider capitulation to be nothing but serious humiliation to our nation; on the other hand, if His Reverence would not conquer these foreign brigands-who, as mentioned above, sailed so deep into the inland sea as to draw near the venerable castle, and threatened and obstructed us-and if His Reverence would even accept their request, this reverend National Body might never, if I may say so, be excused. This is the first argument for the claim that peace should by no means be concluded.

The Christian creed is the thing most severely prohibited in *the Bukufu*; the notice-board mentioning the above has been set up in each and every corner of the country; even then one should by no means be careless about the poisons of the prohibited evil religion. Much less so if His Reverence would let America acquire intimate relationships with our country; naturally the above-mentioned religion would rise again despite repeated prohibitions. If the situation becomes so we should certainly feel sorry to the divine souls of the reverend ancestors [of His Reverence]. This is the second argument for the claim that peace should by no means be concluded.

To exchange such worthless goods of theirs as woolen cloth or glass objects for such valuable materials of ours

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as gold, silver, copper and iron incurs a lot of disadvantages without even a little advantage. It is time for even the trade with Holland to be terminated. If His Reverence would nevertheless go further and open the way for worthless trade [with our country] in addition to that with the Dutch, the great afflictions of the Divine Country would not be surpassed. This is the third argument for the claim that peace should by no means be concluded.

For many years [foreign countries like] Russia, England, etc. have wished to trade with us but [His Reverence] has not allowed it. If He now permits the American barbarians to trade, should Russia and other countries also apply for it, how would He be able to refuse? This is the fourth argument for the claim that peace should by no means be concluded.

People say that the foreign barbarians do not have evil designs and want only trade, and if this alone were permitted nothing would happen; nevertheless, they have a habit of first seeking a mutual relationship in trade, but in the end they start propagating the Evil Creed or making unreasonable demands on us. [To give some examples, there are] the afflictions caused by the Christians well before the Kan'ei Period, and in more recent times there is the case of the Opium War during the Ch'ing Dynasty in China; we should thus never follow the wheel-track of a wrecked cart. This is the fifth argument for the claim that peace should by no means be concluded.

I am afraid I hear the scholars of Dutch learning secretly telling one another that the current international affairs are quite different from those of ages past, and hence, because it is quite precarious for our Divine Country alone to observe a seclusion policy and be thus isolated out in the

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ocean, it would be better to have mutual contacts between countries and open the way for trade. However, if this Divine Country would recover [now] the power it once possessed in mediaeval times, when people's hearts were firmly united, and there was a full supply of arms, we might be able to extend our glory far and wide, even to foreign lands; but at present our customs and manners have become so soft and indolent that we fear even a few foreign battle-ships. [While we are in such a situation] as to be pressed by the other side to start trade, it would really be an empty armchair argument to talk about sailing abroad and plundering far-away lands. This is the sixth argument for the claim that peace should by no means be concluded.

Though defence has been entrusted to the Hikone and Aizu Clans, I hear that recently the vassals of the Aizu Clan arrived here in the scorching heat, after they had run for days and nights the whole distance of seventy to eighty *ri*; and that the lords appointed to guard the outer and inland sea areas also managed to gather immediately the necessary numbers [of warriors]-all such are indeed praiseworthy deeds. On the other hand, the decision has not yet been made to expel the foreign brigands who sailed well into the inland sea and arrogantly surveyed around. In such a situation the warriors and people from various parts of the country will get tired of following commands, only in vain, and they would certainly experience a sense of weariness. This is the seventh argument for the claim that peace should by no means be concluded.

The fact that the maritime defence has been entrusted to the Kuroda and the Nabeshima Clans does not mean they are to defend only against China and Holland, but against all the foreign barbarians. And yet in the vicinity of Uraga

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[His Reverence] accepted the foreign barbarians' formal request-this means allowing them to pass up and down a secluded channel and let the two families waste time guarding barriers that would not be used. How would these two families feel then? This is the eighth argument for the claim that peace should by no means be concluded.

According to those who have recently actually seen the deeds of the foreign brigands right in front of their own eyes, even humble men, I hear, felt chagrined, and they lamented that, if His Reverence would not expel such very rude barbarians, what good would the equipment of the maritime forts be? It is only natural to think thus when one sees on the spot the arrogant deeds of the foreign brigands. In fact, when I heard this, I felt like telling them that, though simple folk, they truly deserved the country's gratitude. And yet, while even such ignorant and humble men lament this way, the decision to drive away [the foreigners] has not yet been made. If His Reverence treats [the foreigners] only too tolerantly and compassionately the ordinary people will not understand the real mind [of His Reverence], and thus some wicked people might lose respect for the reverend authority and might even cause treasonous plots to take place. This is the ninth argument for the claim that peace should by no means be concluded.

The policy to drive the foreign brigands away has been the obvious counsel of the reverend ancestors of His Reverence, and the same policy had been repeatedly affirmed, especially during the Bunsei Period [1818-30]. Even aside from the venerable mind [of the Emperor], supposing a decision were made to fight, peace has [practically] reigned too long, and arms cannot [easily and immediately] be supplied. Therefore, it sounds rather reasonable to claim

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that [the decision to fight in this situation] would too easily inspire the foreign brigands, and the [ensuing] disaster would be immeasurable. If at the moment we are unavoidably forced to conclude peace with them, it would certainly lower the venerable glory of His Reverence; therefore it would be better [according to some] to endure for the time being and let the foreign brigands be pacified, while we are to devote ourselves to arming the nation, and later, with every section fully equipped, go into suitable action strictly according to the venerable law observed so far. However, even though the people were to be stirred up days and nights for this matter, in view of their present tendency to pass their time in too much ease and indolence, they would not easily become devoted [to the country] at the expense of even their lives. Further, the *Shogun* have shown no [interest in] military affairs, the arms of the lords have not been up-dated for years and years-this is another matter that disturbs me. There have already occurred such things as the revolt in Ezo Island [Hokkaido] during the Kansei Period [1700], when arms were actually provided but they were for all practical purposes insufficient; likewise, in the last year of Tiger [1842], expelling the foreigners was put off, for the purpose, it seemed to me, of pacifying the foreigners for the time being while arms might be prepared in the meantime, but after twelve years the arms of the lords do not seem to be particularly well furnished. Now, on the arrival of the foreign brigands all the people were greatly confused. No doubt there were some who were somewhat aware of the crisis during the stay of the barbarians' ships; but since after their sailing away His Reverence ordered the people to return to their former routines, all the people have again been pacified and are enjoying

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the idleness of peace, even to such an extent that they at once disperse arms gathered so hurriedly. To allegorize the above, it is just like a person who, disregarding the fact that his porch has already caught fire, does not bother to take measures to put out the fire-so miserable is our warriors' case at present. Ever since some government officers have made suggestions, albeit faint suggestions, about concluding peace with them, the people cannot be stirred up, despite daily notices; in the same manner, the tasks of guarding the maritime forts have all been entrusted to civil officers, which means they can never be useful for true military purposes. If His Reverence would at all make the decision right now to drive them away, the morale of the men would be raised tenfold, and arms would also be prepared immediately, even without any order or action. Only this way is the venerable task of conquering the barbarians to be accomplished, and the warrior to be really worthy of the name of "ruler of all lands." This is the tenth argument for the claim that peace should by no means be concluded.

Now the advantages and disadvantages either of fighting or concluding peace have been more or less thoroughly discussed above; but to know is easy and to do is hard. In a declining dynasty people tend to cling to peace and do not like to fight in defence; some even slander those who argue for war as people who look for trouble and enjoy confusion, and in the extreme even suggest that we beg for the enemy's pardon and punish those who argue for war, and that we conclude peace; in the end they lead [our nation] to corruption. How absurd they are! Since we have such brave traditions in our Divine Country, there would be no one cowardly and mean once the government

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decides [to fight]. But good advice is always harsh to the ear, and good medicine tastes bitter. Since people tend easily to be tempted by a temporizing and retrogressive policy, many precautions are necessary; and once a decision is made, it should by no means be changed—this is what I consider should be the first policy for maritime defence.

*That it is important that, once the decision is made by the government to fight, a solemn edict should be promulgated, not **only** to the lords, but to each and every corner of the country, letting the people, regardless of whether they are warriors or peasants and merchants, be ready to fight in mutual co-operation with united spirit and energy throughout the whole Divine Country:*

Since the edict is to be prepared by the office concerned there ought to be no ineptness about it, but as it is to be promulgated up to the smallest branches [of society], I fear the benevolent mind might not be thoroughly understood. [The edict] should therefore, I hope, be made simple and clear enough as to arouse the strong anger of even an ignorant man or woman, so that people become ready to devote their lives [for our nation]. It is needless to mention here that it is an urgent task to prohibit any luxuries or idleness and to let people live a simple and economic life; but if trade [with the Americans] were at all permitted the people's attitude would relax and their lives would naturally become luxurious, even with daily notices to command them to live humbly. On the other hand, if the decision to expel the foreigners were made by the Council, the spirits of all the people would brace up and everyone would again reveal the ancient virtues of warriors, let alone recover the above-mentioned simple and economical way of living;

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if I may say so, this would certainly be the most praiseworthy achievement since the Kyoho Period [1716–36], with no other renewal surpassing it.

As I also told you on the eighth, there is no doubt that it is difficult to fight after such an extremely long reign of peace, and rather easy to opt for peace. However, there would not be any seriously evil result if the decision to fight were made, and all the people in the nation prepared themselves to fight in unity, but then peace came about; on the contrary, the way things are now, if peace is decided upon but by some chance we were dragged into fighting, we would have no means to help ourselves. Therefore, what I said on the eighth should be treated as a strict secret to be kept only by the maritime defence officer, while publicly, I hope, an edict of expulsion should now be made at His esteemed command. If my idea about peace is kept in your heart, others will intuitively get to understand it. Therefore if my humble plan were to be adopted I hope that *the word "peace" should be concealed and only entrusted to the maritime defence officer.* That is also why I have not written anything about peace in this document.

*Since hand-to-hand engagements with **spears** and **swords** is a forte of our Divine Country, I hope all the members of all families, whether direct **feudatories** of the **Shogun** or their vassals, will improve their abilities to use spears and swords, both in tournaments and for practical uses:*

There is no need to mention that the art of using spears and swords is a forte of the Divine Country; when one sees the spear and sword tournaments held nowadays one realizes that the technique has reached its peak. However, the theory held by the scholars of Dutch learning has been

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prevalent; but I am not one to say we should fear the foreign barbarians' ships, well equipped with guns and cannons as they are, and should despair of overcoming them no matter what we do. Such a person is one who looks at only one side of the shield. Warships, guns, and cannons are not convenient means for a hand-to-hand fight; even if the foreigners might invade the land near the sea, they could never be able to pursue their greed further unless they penetrated deep enough. Then we would choose the most brave warriors, equip ourselves with spear- and sword-troops, make full use of our abilities and restrain their demands as occasion may require, knock away [the arms] at their sides, and cut down each and every one from behind, thus fighting a fierce battle with lightning speed—in this way victory can certainly be ours and we can deal a fatal blow to all the foreign brigands. Hence, a warrior of the Divine Country should, as a first requirement, never be without the two arts of spear and sword. However, many families still carry on tournaments in which old abuses are continued and time-honoured mottoes are mouthed, but which only serve to create fresh abuses as they fight just to gain a decision in the competition, with the result that some teach techniques by no means applicable to actual combat. The reason I have discussed the above is merely because I hope much care will be taken in regard to training all members of the several families in the practical arts of spear and sword, and in regard to producing weapons with exact care for the weight, length and so on, based on actual fighting models.

To take an illustration, [we can] go aboard their ship and treat them warmly as if we were enjoying our mutual discussion, and [we can suddenly] stab the captain and cut

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to death with our long swords or halberds those who would rush against us on the upper deck, and [some may] cut the ropes of the sails; no matter how many cannons there may be on board in each and every corner, they will not be able to fire them inwardly towards the deck of the ship, and even their guns may be useless, as they would not be able to see people on the upper deck from inside the ship; thus a small number [of warriors] would [successfully] conquer those in a big warship.

That I would like to request the preparation of warships and steamships, as well as shipwrights, pilots, and so on, all as many as required, ordering them from the Dutch sailing this autumn; also to order the newly invented guns and rifles or cannon; and as soon as these arms are brought back they are all to be offered to His Reverence :

There might occur an objection to the above from fear lest our public reputation should collapse if we let foreigners provide the above arms; but it is, rather, due to the magnanimity of the Divine Country that it adopts the good points of foreign countries and efficiently utilizes them. There are also precedents of this, such as our letting the three Korean countries repeatedly provide scholars on the five Chinese classics and other technicians. Therefore, I do not think anything wrong if we follow the above course. While the barbarians are gifted in new inventions, it is the forte of the Divine Country to grasp the mechanics and produce the same. We may be able to produce even better steamships later on. Moreover, if we obtain a detailed knowledge of the products and discover the processes [of making them], it would also enable us to be prepared to overcome them; thus I would consider it a stroke which

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cuts both ways. We fully realize that the profit from trade with the Dutch is not great even now; therefore, certain officials might be too worried that, if the Dutch are to bring warships and so on, we could not easily pay them, and not only would the profit for the year be nil but we would instead incur an enormous loss. However, even if His Reverence would have warships be built [by ourselves] as we received our usual profit from the Dutch, the expenditure would still be enormous. Therefore, if His Reverence foresees investing all the profit from Dutch trade in warships, there might be no loss at all. Now, we can economize on the enormous loss of expenditures if not only His Reverence's officials but even lords were also allowed to use large warships, limiting the number according to status, and letting, for instance, the western lords be stationed at Uraga aboard ship. Further, if we retain a warship at Haneda or Hommoku on the inland seacoast and use it in an emergency to fight a defensive battle, there might not occur such things as happened recently, when the foreign brigands sailed in without difficulty. His Reverence's officials could also make use of a large ship not only for going and coming between [Edo] and Kyoto, Osaka and other distant places, but also for carrying rice and for other purposes as well—the profit [of warships], thus, would last forever. Although everyone may say nowadays that what is important in the maritime defence affairs is to put emphasis on warships and cannons, I personally think it easier and more practical to let them be provided [by the Dutch] rather than to order them to be constructed by our technicians, thus wasting a great deal of time. Furthermore, if the ship-building materials and the rest were to be collected only after deciding to let them be provided by the Dutch, it would be too late.

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Therefore, even right now His Reverence's officials should start preparing well for the above, letting the feudal lords prepare [to collect the materials], and the arrangement would thus be taken care of most excellently. Concerning the size of wood, the quantity of iron, etc., let the officers ask the Dutch who are at present in port, and most of the questions will be answered.

Although the techniques of [making and using] guns and cannons have shown gradual improvement recently, since ours are not as elaborate as the foreigners, I hope His Reverence's officials and the several families devote themselves to further studies of the above, increasing the number of guns as much as possible and having them sufficiently equipped with gunpowder and bullets:

Guns and cannons are the most important arms both for offence and defence. If they [the foreigners] are to oppress us with them, definitely we have to respond with the same. Unlike fowling-pieces, big artillery is still not common; further, because of the peace that has long prevailed in our country, we have few cannons good for balls weighing more than one *kamme*. Among the arms imported, there are many without the stands and other accessories, needed for operation, and thus there are many that cannot be fired adequately enough for practical purposes. Therefore, all the families should, I hope, produce practical arms and teach practical techniques with them, always aiming at an exquisite ability to kill all the brigands in one stroke. Even fowling-pieces should include use of gunpowder and flints. Since copper materials have recently been getting scarce, [His Reverence is requested to order] the melting of such useless copper objects as braziers, candlesticks and the like, (though without going so far as requesting that the large bells of Buddhist

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temples be melted down) and to prohibit thereafter the production of such copper objects as those listed above. Furthermore, should the copper till now being handed over to the Dutch be also saved, there might not be a scarcity of copper material. Now, unlike spears and swords, guns and cannons are useless if they are without ammunition. Therefore, certainly the fireworks [display] at Tsukudajima, but also any sort of fireworks, should be prohibited throughout the land, and each part of the country should be ordered to produce plenty of gunpowder. I do hope the arrangements for the above will be taken immediately, since, if the treatment is late by one day, so much worse will the sickness be; it would be as awkward as seeking enough moxa for only three years, though the illness would necessitate seven years of treatment.

That I hope that guard stations will be constructed at strategic positions along the coast, regardless of whether the estate is official or private, and that troops will also be stationed there, mixed in among the fishermen:

No place on the coast should ever be left unguarded; if people were to set out from the capital on the arrival of a strange ship, we might miss the chance [to meet an urgent situation]. However, if a certain number of people were always to be on duty, the expenditure would be unbearable, and so such stations would tend to be rarely cared for. Therefore, I think the local fishermen should be divided into sections, and someone else chosen in addition to them and set up as foreman or the like. Those who have the status of yeoman should be appointed as the leader. They are to be given simple training and instructed that, in case of an emergency, they would be rewarded thus or thus, depend-

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ing on their meritorious services in the battle. If, then, they are strictly organized and hard-trained on the sea, some might perform admirably and act as good support till others are sent from camps in the capital. In the meantime, besides the above, there might also be guard stations constructed at strategic points along the coast, and those sent there who are from among the sons of lords or the like; they are to study there both the literary and military arts during ordinary times, but once an emergency arises they are to lead the native warriors and subdue the foreign brigands with cannon, spear, sword, and so on. In regard to the above guard-station system, however, I cannot propose general rules about the actual way to form the sections of native warriors, the propriety of giving ranks, the permission to wear two swords [like the warriors], the offering of a stipend, exemption from the statute labours, and so on. These are completely up to the customs of the various parts of the ruling families, or native customs and manners. To sum up, however, what I would like to see is the taking of practical measures which will also be long-lasting.

9th at night.

Mito.

To: Fukuyama, Esq.

Translated by Masatoshi Konishi.

F. Written Statement of Ii Naosuke, Lord of the Hikone Clan, to the Bakufu Regarding the American Government Letter, October 1, 1853.

UNTIL the twelfth year of Kan'ei [1635] there were nine licensed trading ships at Nagasaki, Sakai, Kyoto, and so on. Under Daiyuin-sama [Tokugawa Iemitsu] Christianity was

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prohibited and the above nine ships were not allowed to sail [to foreign lands], the law of national isolation was laid down, trade was limited to China and Holland only and [trade with] other countries was absolutely not permitted.

However, when one takes into careful consideration present conditions—noting the imminence of invasion by foreign countries, heroic souls who fear much for their country and men with quick perception who feel dissatisfaction [with the trend of the times] are carrying out heated debate—as regards meeting the present danger, one cannot suppose that the world will be at peace and our empire safe if we enforce only the above-mentioned policy of national isolation. In any case, the setting up of a thoroughgoing coast defence cannot be finished in a few months or years. In the first place, ever since the fourteenth year of Keicho [1609] when we did away with military ships of five hundred *koku* and over, the coast of Japan has had no cannon-equipped warships capable of at least opposing an invasion from without. Therefore if to-day Hachijojima, Oshima, and the other outlying islands were to be occupied for use as bases of operations, we would by no means want to let such a state go unremedied, but without warships we could place no hope of success in any tactics to drive them away. It is said that, when one is ensconced in a castle and its bridges are removed, one cannot stay isolated and protect oneself for long; again, when a battle is fought [between forces] separated by a river, the side which crosses the river is the one that gains the victory. That one who advances forward has a spirit of derring-do, whereas one who waits becomes daunted, seems true enough from examples both in ancient and contemporary times. The law of national isolation decreed by the venerable ancestors of Your Reverence

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left the bridges to China and Holland. Would it not be good to use these bridges prudently to handle [the demands of] the foreign countries? For a time avoiding war, should we not adopt the strategy which seems likely to enable us, with the passage of time, to achieve certain victory? The coal which America is now so desirous of is, I understand, being produced in abundance in Kyushu. We have tentatively offered them the excuse that it is needed by us, too; but when they face an emergency need at sea, it seems they should be allowed to come to Nagasaki and seek provisions and, when there are surpluses, these should be supplied them, without begrudging firewood and water; with regard to foodstuffs, though various parts of the country have now abundant, now lean harvests, still something should be supplied to people who are adrift and in a predicament—in recent years we have taken good care of castaways and sent them back. At this juncture there is no need for deliberation. All proposals can be submitted through the Dutch. With regard to commerce, it is true, the nation has been prohibiting it, but the past and present situations are not the same, and mutually to fill each other's needs is a law of nature. We can notify the reverend ancestors of Your Reverence, and begin to send merchant ships from our land to the Dutch trading firm in Batavia to carry on trade. We can leave it to the Dutch to separate what are American, what are Russian goods, and let them transact business for us. However, it will still take one or two years to build a ship large enough to sail [to foreign lands]. If we grant [America and the other countries] more or less the same treatment as the Dutch and in this way put them off their guards, resurrect the licensed trading ships of Kan'ei days and earlier, let the big merchants of Osaka, Hyogo, Sakai,

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and so on invest in the project as a starter, construct sturdy new warships and steamers, load them with goods that are not needed in Japan, hire for the time being Dutch navigation officers and engineers, put on board with them men of solid character and clever wits who will learn the methods of firing cannon, the methods of piloting a ship, and the art of sailing, be in fact intent chiefly on the training of sailors though outwardly we call the ships merchant ships, gradually increase the number of ships, make the men become experts, make it possible for Japanese to sail the seas freely and, without waiting for the secret report of the Dutch, see and hear for themselves the conditions in foreign lands, at some future time complete the outfitting of a navy, [while this is going on] penetrate the intimidations and deceits [offoreign countries], reform the bad habits of luxury and wastefulness [within the country], prepare strong military armaments, and enhance our military prestige even in the eyes of lands overseas-then I think that the empire will not be isolated, will be matured inwardly and outwardly, and yet will be safe. If we take constructive measures first, we can at any time at our convenience impose a limit on commerce as in the Kan'ei Period and not let them approach Japan. This, it seems to me, is a good policy. Also, in regard to the suspect religion [Christianity], we can then take as severe restrictive measures as we wish. Since both America and Russia are said to have mastered the art of sailing only in rather recent times, and the people of our empire are by nature gifted and clever, if we start training now I see no reason why we should be inferior to the Westerners. If, with due consideration for the nation's situation, the nation can be protected in such a way that it can enjoy peace forever without fear of the country being invaded by bar-

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barians, even if there has to be a revision of a command decreed by [Your Reverence's] venerable ancestors, still, I believe that this coincides with the mind of the venerable ancestors. However, since, to settle this [affair], I think it principally necessary to muster the confidence of the whole country, it seems to me that Your Reverence ought first of all to announce it to the Court, then send imperial envoys to Ise Shrine, Iwashimizu Hachiman Shrine, Kashima Shrine, etc., as well as an envoy of Your Reverence to Mt. Nikko, and [there] report that Your Reverence wishes to make a decision that will bring peace to the land and safety to the nation-to follow the will of Heaven being the custom from time immemorial of the Divine Country and also a means for uniting the hearts of the people. Now, it is by no means easy, by means of Your Reverence's military arrangements in the waters around Edo, to have everything in readiness to meet some unforeseen emergency; the matter must not be put off even a second. No matter how many rings of iron walls are built, if some untoward event happens, the harmony of the people could not be secured. At any rate, I believe that the pressing need of the hour calls for Your Reverence to take measures that will set all minds at rest and gladden everyone, and to issue orders to all concerned.

The above view will appear to be opposed to Your Reverence's prohibition, and it is brash of me, but since Your Reverence has asked me to set down fully a flawless plan, I have submitted the above.

Translated by Edmund Skrzypczak.