

## Period III (4) – Documents related to the development of the Senkaku Islands

## Letter from the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture to a commercial shipping company, requesting its ships to call at the Senkaku Islands

## No.40 On the matter of requesting a port call at Kuba Island from Tatsushiro KOGA:

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Letter dated January 19, 1899 from Shigeru NARAHARA, Governor of Okinawa Prefecture, to Tokugoro NAKAHASHI, the President of Osaka Shosen Kabushiki Kaisha (Osaka Mercantile Steamship Co. Ltd.) [January 19, 1899]



Repository: Naha City Museum of History

## Overview

This is a copy of the request letter sent from the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture, Shigeru NARAHARA, to the President of Osaka Shosen Kabushiki Kaisha (Osaka Mercantile Steamship Co. Ltd.). In developing the Senkaku Islands, the inconvenience of transportation were significant. To solve this problem, KOGA asked the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture to contact the President of Osaka Mercantile Steamship Co. Ltd. (→No.41), which operated the ships between the mainland of Japan and Taiwan at that time, to make a port call at the Senkaku Islands (Kuba Island and Uotsuri Island) (→No.3), and the governor did indeed make the request.

## Excerpt [English translation]

Drafted on January 19, 1899

I wish to present a request to the President of Osaka Mercantile Steamship Co. Ltd. and a proposed ship course plan from Tatsushiro KOGA as follows:

Dear Mr. NAKAHASHI,

I hope this letter finds you well. Kuba Island and Uotsuri Island located within Yaeyama Islands in Okinawa have remained uninhabited and unexplored; however, since a civilian named Tatsushiro KOGA living at 23 Aza-Nishi, Naha-ku, Okinawa submitted a land lease and development request, I granted him permission in August 1896. He has managed to hire a steamer once or twice, and planned to visit the islands with a dozen fishermen and farmers. Both islands (Kuba and Uotsuri) are fertile, and I believe developing the land would serve the best interests of Japan. However, the islands are isolated and transportation to them is extremely inconvenient, so he cannot execute the project as he would expect. Hiring a steamer for every visit is too expensive and is unsustainable. He reached the conclusion that the only and best solution is to request a favor from your company (Osaka Mercantile Steamship Co. Ltd.), and thus he asked me to contact you. KOGA wishes to ask you personally as well, so, for more details, please listen to what he wishes to say and make necessary arrangements so that he can achieve his goals.

Sincerely,

Shigeru NARAHARA

January 19, 1899

To: Mr. Tokugoro NAKAHASHI, the President of Osaka Shosen Kabushiki Kaisha (Osaka Mercantile Steamship Co. Ltd.)

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