

The Edicts of the Tokugawa Shogunate, 1635

1. *Japanese ships are strictly forbidden to leave for foreign countries.*
2. *No Japanese is permitted to go abroad. If there is anyone who attempts to do so secretly, he must be executed. The ship so involved must be impounded and its owner arrested, and the matter must be reported to the higher authority.*
3. *If any Japanese returns from overseas after residing there, he must be put to death.*
4. *If there is any place where the teachings of Christianity is practiced, there must be a thorough investigation. ...*
5. *If there are any Europeans who spread the teachings of Christianity of Christ they will be imprisoned.*
6. *Samurai are not permitted to purchase any goods originating from foreign ships directly from Chinese merchants in Nagasaki.*

Questions:

1. What do you think was the purpose of the Edicts of 1635? What foreign policy was Japan adopting?
2. Why was this policy adopted? What concerns did the Shogun have?

Commodore Perry Addresses Letter to the Emperor of Japan, 1853 (adapted)

Great and Good Friend:

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

I have the kindest feelings toward your majesty's person and government. However, I am surprised and grieved to learn that when our sailors are shipwrecked on your shores, they are treated as if they are your worst enemies. . . . The government of the United States wishes to obtain positive assurances that persons who may hereafter be shipwrecked on the coast of Japan shall be treated with humanity.

I wish that the United States and Japan can live in friendship and carry on trade with each other. The United States extends from ocean to ocean. Oregon and California lie directly opposite the territory of your imperial majesty. Our steamships can go from California to Japan in eighteen days. Our great state of California yields about \$60 million in gold every year. It also has silver, precious stones, and many other valuable things. Your imperial majesty's subjects are skilled in many of the arts. I would like our two countries to trade with each other. This would benefit both Japan and the United States.

I wish to live in peace and friendship with your imperial majesty. However, no friendship can long exist, unless Japan ceases to act toward Americans as if they were her enemies. . . . Many of the large ships-of-war destined to visit Japan have not yet arrived in these seas, though they are hourly expected. . . .

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

Your Good Friend
Millard Fillmore

Questions:

1. Explain two reasons why Perry was visiting Japan.
2. How did Perry try to encourage the Japanese Emperor to open trade relations with the United States.
3. If you were the Japanese Emperor, how would you have responded to this letter?