

VOLUME 2/15D: H.D. WILSON, _____, QUOTA FOR JAPAN,
SAN FRANCISCO: C.J.I.C., 1931.

QUOTA FOR JAPAN

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CONFLICTING VIEWS

of

HAWAII and CALIFORNIA

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Interesting correspondence as to the proposed immigration quota for Japan has passed between Wallace R. Farrington, publisher of the Honolulu Star Bulletin, ex-Governor of Hawaii, and the California Joint Immigration Committee, representing the state bodies of the American Legion, Federation of Labor and Native Sons of the Golden West. It appears therefrom that two-thirds of the entire population of Hawaii is now Asiatic, while the combined whites and pure native Hawaiians constitute less than one-seventh; that the California Joint Committee is maintained for the express purpose of defending the present exclusion law, which it claims is the only logical and non-discriminatory defense against similar peaceful invasion of California and the mainland; and that quota for Japan would nullify that law. Ex-Governor Farrington, on the other hand, insists that quota is the reasonable and fair solution of the question which has arisen with Japan, and scores the California Committee for what he calls prejudice and the blocking of goodwill and commerce on the Pacific. The points at issue are covered in this leaflet.

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IMMIGRATION QUOTA FOR JAPAN?

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(COPY)

September 3, 1931.

Hon. Wallace R. Farrington, Publisher,
Star Bulletin, Honolulu, T. H.
Dear Mr. Farrington:

In response to your recent letter criticizing the California Joint Immigration Committee, which represents the state bodies of the American Legion, Federation of Labor and Native Sons of the Golden West, for its opposition to immigration quota for Japan:
You refer to the Joint Committee's attitude as "the nth degree of prejudice" and "an endeavor to block goodwill and promotion of commerce and general friendliness through the Pacific area."

This committee is maintained solely to defend the law excluding aliens ineligible to citizenship. Quota for Japan, or for certain other countries of Asia, would nullify that law; and such quota, therefore, must be opposed by the Committee unless its supporting bodies, named above, and their nationals repudiate the policy they have maintained for years.

As concerns the policy itself, the severity of your criticism may be accounted for partly by the wide difference of opinion on the subject of Asiatic immigration, held in Hawaii and California respectively, and by evident lack of information as to the basic reasons which impelled Congress in 1924 to refuse quota to Japan and which still justify California in opposing it.

Asiatic Population of Hawaii

Hawaii, in the interest of the plantations, has for many years imported cheap labor from Asia, until today her pure native Hawaiian stock and the whites are entirely submerged, constituting together less than one-seventh of the total population of the territory, while over two-thirds of that total population is Asiatic—Japanese, Filipinos and Chinese predominating. In consequence, for many years, Organized Labor has given public warning that there is no place for white labor in Hawaii.

While it is claimed that this Asiatic population has been assimilated, testimony on behalf of Hawaii before the House Immigration Committee in 1921 showed that the great strike of plantation employes was in effect a racial conflict in which practically every Japanese on the island of Oahu, regardless of nativity, religion, position or responsibility, and either voluntarily or under duress, took part against the Caucasians by subscription or action. ("America and Japan," J. C. p. 13) Again, within the past few months, Governor Judd vetoed a measure of the Hawaiian Legislature petitioning for statehood, and declared that such a request should be postponed until time had shown how the Asiatic majority would exercise its control of the franchise. Still again, during the last campaign an openly

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declared opposition to Asiatic immigration threatened seriously the re-election of Hawaii's Representative in Congress.

California's Defensive Policy

Under the "Gentlemen's Agreement" made by President Roosevelt in 1907 for the express purpose of "preventing the increase of Japanese population in continental United States," that population increased from about 50,000 in 1907 to about 150,000 in 1920. (Brief J. C. p. 24.)

Warned by Hawaii's experience, and regardless of Hawaii's policy and opinion, California sought to protect herself and the mainland against a like fate by opposing the immigration, under any pretext, of all those ineligible for American citizenship, and she forbade by law the intermarriage of whites with any of the colored races, including Filipinos.

Quota for Japan means necessarily quota for other Asiatic races, and each would be entitled to the minimum quota of 100, China and Japan to more. There would thus be admitted annually, under the proposed change, and while the present "national origins" plan is in force, about one thousand Asiatics of different races ineligible for citizenship. Caucasian Australia has a quota of only 100. It is not, however, so much the actual number admitted as the attendant nullification of a basic principle of the immigration act—the exclusion of all aliens ineligible to citizenship—which California finds most dangerous. This provision is the barrier, non-discriminatory as to particular race or nation, which was erected to protect California and eventually the mainland against possible peaceful invasion of Asiatics—such as has inundated Hawaii. Remove this safeguard, and a change in the manner of applying quota might open the gates to Asiatics. For instance, a reversion to the "foreign born" plan, in force temporarily from 1924 to 1928 (as advocated by some), would admit 2,000 Chinese annually; and the not improbable demand from Japan in the future that she be allowed as many immigrants as any other first-class power could not be consistently refused if Japanese had been

recognized as eligible for immigration. It must be remembered that Japan has declared that quota will not satisfy her permanently and that she must be conceded ultimately full "racial equality", that is, the same rights and privileges for her nationals, including citizenship, as are conceded to Europeans.

Public Sentiment in California

Wallace M. Alexander, whose main business interests are in Hawaii, has organized a committee of fourteen to promote quota for Japan. It assumes to represent California sentiment in that direction. The following facts contradict that assumption: First, the practically unanimous action of the State Legislature (one opposing vote), which, in 1923, demanded the exclusion of all aliens ineligible to citizenship; and in 1929 opposed quota for Japan, or any modification of the exclusion act; and in 1931 was so deaf to the approaches of the Alexander lobbying committee that the idea of introducing a resolution favoring quota was abandoned: Next the presence on the Joint Committee of the State Attorney General, in support of the State's established policy: Finally, the membership of the three state bodies named above, which maintain this Joint Committee to oppose quota for "ineligibles" offers a fair cross section of public sentiment. In addition, the State Grange is similarly committed in opposition to such quota, as is its national body. On July 31, 1931, representatives of the national bodies of the American Legion and the American Federation of Labor appeared before the Immigration Committee of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce in opposition to quota for Japan.

Equally untrue, and conclusively disproved in a special report to this Committee, July 19, 1930, is the statement that slump in certain branches of our trade with Japan is due to ill will on Japan's part, while it is conceded that the corresponding slump in our trade with other nations is due to general world conditions.

California has only friendship and admiration for the Japanese people. She is selfishly con-

cerned in the maintenance of goodwill and the promotion of commerce on the Pacific. She is not willing, however, to barter state and national welfare for temporary increase in trade, and it is unfair to Japan to suggest that such a condition presents itself in this case. Congress, in 1924, refused to permit the countries of either Europe or Asia to dictate our immigration policy in their own interests; and California feels that Japan, the only country which has continued to find fault with that policy, has no just cause for the dissatisfaction she is encouraged to profess.

It is hoped that the facts herein stated will materially temper your criticism of those who insist that no exception shall be made to the immigration law excluding aliens ineligible for our citizenship. In any event, be assured of my high personal regard.

Sincerely yours,

V. S. McCLATCHY, Exec. Secy.
California Joint Immigration Committee.

VSM:DK

No. 270

Archives
of
British Columbia

