

Sacramento Bee, one of the chief supporters of the progressive state government, makes this reply:

"As a matter of fact, the alien land bills before the legislature have no more application to the citizens of Japan than to those of any other nation. They conflict with no Japanese treaty right or obligation, and would not have the effect of denying to Japanese any right or privilege which Americans have in Japan.

"Furthermore, even President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Elihu Root, while opposing a bill for separate schools for Orientals, admitted there would be no cause for international objection to an alien land bill, applicable to all aliens, and said they did not protest against anything of the sort."

The Asahi (Tokyo), one of the leading independent papers of Japan, not only protests against the enactment of the alien land bill, but threatens retaliation. It is quoted as saying that "American advocacy of equality is a hollow sham," and that "the Californians propose to treat their neighbors across the Pacific worse than negroes." The Asahi goes on:

"This anti-Japanese agitation will impress us with a keen sense of humiliation which will require many years to efface. Americans must be prepared for a cool reception when they come to Japan as tourists or settlers."

The chambers of commerce of San Francisco and Los Angeles asked the legislature not to pass the bill because it might cause the Japanese government to refuse to participate in the Panama-Pacific exposition. But there was no real cause for alarm on this point, if we are to believe press dispatches from Tokio, which aver that the officials at the Japanese capital have no intention of withdrawing from the exposition. And the Tokio chamber of commerce telegraphed to the California commercial organizations, thanking them for their efforts to defeat the measure, and begging them to continue their endeavors in behalf of friendly relations between Japan and the United States. Premier Katsura's party is reported as being in favor of the friendliest possible settlement of the controversy. The substance of the bill is given in a San Francisco dispatch to the New York Times, dated April 5:

"As amended, the measure provides that an alien may hold land for one year, or, in case of a minor, for one year after attaining his majority, but at the end of that time the property escheats to the state unless the owner has become or has declared his intention of becoming a citizen of the United States. An alien gaining land by inheritance may hold it for one year only under the same conditions.

"All property owned by an alien shall be sold or disposed of within three years from the passage of the act, unless declaration of intention is made, and leases shall run for not more than five years. Those in force when the act is passed shall be declared void at the expiration of five years.

"The provisions of the act are not to apply to property acquired prior to 1894, but the provisions do apply to corporations where the majority of the stock is held by aliens."

Article I of the treaty of 1911, regulating the right of Japanese in this country, is the clause which the Japanese, and many of the American newspapers outside California, say the lawmakers at Sacramento would violate. It provides that:

"The citizens or subjects of each of the high contracting parties shall have the liberty to enter, travel, and reside in the territories of the other, to carry on trade, wholesale and retail, to own or lease and occupy houses, manufactories, warehouses, and shops; to employ agents of their choice, to lease land for residential and commercial purposes, and generally to do anything incident to or necessary for trade upon the same terms as a native citizen or subject, submitting themselves to the laws and regulations there established."

"The curious notion seems to prevail at Sacramento," remarks the New York World, "that the United States must be governed by the acts of the legislature of California," and it goes on to say that "a people with any sense of humor would stop before they made themselves ridiculous," and that if nothing else will restrain the California legislature, "it will have to be taught the meaning of the constitution of the United States." We read further:

"Within the borders of California there are 101,350,400 acres of land. According to the census of 1910, of the total population of 2,377,549, only 41,324 were Japanese, including men, women, and children, or less than 1% per cent, of whom only a small fraction occupied

land. Yet this is the awful peril which confronts California and has started all the clamor at Sacramento."

It is suggested by the Buffalo Enquirer that under national persuasion, California went slow at the time there was so much agitation against admitting Japanese to the public schools, and that a "memory of that episode should aid it to go slow again." The Indianapolis News thinks that perhaps the Japanese government will be difficult to deal with, but hopefully suggests that "what is demanded is fairness, and this doubtless will be forthcoming." And some justification of the California viewpoint is made by the Indianapolis Star, which observes that "no state would, of course, willingly embarrass the national government, but it surely has the right to guard its own territory from any peoples it deems undesirable by any legal means."

MR. BRYAN IN CALIFORNIA

Following are Associated Press dispatches: Sacramento, Cal., April 28.—California, in the fulness of her right as a state, may enact a rigid land law barring orientals from ownership, but such action would be against the earnest wish of the national administration. This is the substance of the message William Jennings Bryan, secretary of state and principal representative of President Wilson, delivered today to a secret conference attended only by Governor Johnson, Lieutenant Governor Wallace and 120 members of the California legislature.

Secretary Bryan arrived in Sacramento at 6 o'clock this morning. With his consent plans were laid for an immediate hearing, and shortly after 11 o'clock the first session of the conference began. Until the doors of the assembly were closed and locked Secretary Bryan refused to give any inkling of his mission to anyone and even at the conference he spoke only after legislators had explained fully the public demand for alien land legislation that brought about the present situation.

Those who expected Secretary Bryan to expound a new theory of state's rights were disappointed, as were those who expected predictions of war. Advice in the name of President Wilson was all Mr. Bryan had to offer and the paramount question here tonight is whether such advice will overcome the previously announced determination of the progressive republican majority to enact an anti-alien land-holding law along the lines already agreed upon.

Secretary Bryan reaffirmed the state's right to act in a manner it saw fit, but suggested several alternatives to the passage of a bill restricting aliens "ineligible to citizenship" basing his reasons on the broad foundation of public policy. Briefly these alternatives in the order in which they were suggested are as follows:

First—Delay immediate action and allow the state department to try to accomplish the ends desired by means of a new treaty with Japan.

Second—Delay immediate action and appoint a commission to investigate the subject of alien land ownership and act in conjunction with the president in securing relief.

Third—Enact a law similar to the statute in Illinois, which permits aliens to hold land for a period not exceeding six years and applied alike to all aliens.

Fourth—Enact a law similar to the federal statute governing land ownership in the District of Columbia, which is a general law applying to all aliens.

Of these alternatives it may safely be said, according to the leaders in the legislature, that the last two are out of the question. Many democrats favor turning the matter over to the state department, while the progressive republican majority apparently remains unchanged in its support of a bill that would apply its restrictions to orientals alone.

The conference with Secretary Bryan served to show the breadth of the sentiment in favor of an alien land law that shall be effective in checking Japanese and Chinese immigration. A dozen or more senators and as many representatives declared the people of the state were almost a unit in declaring for such a law, and it was thought that if the legislature failed to pass the bill at this session it would be taken up by the initiative and passed at the polls.

The conference opened with Lieutenant Governor Wallace in the chair and Secretary Bryan seated with Governor Johnson and Speaker C. C. Young of the assembly on the platform. Secretary Bryan was introduced and in a brief statement asked the conference to tell him the exact situation.

"I was sent to Sacramento at the request of President Wilson," said Secretary Bryan, "to

consult with the governor and the members of the legislature on the pending anti-alien legislation. I am more interested in the methods to be employed than in the end to be attained and I would be pleased to hear suggestions from any of you before speaking further."

Senator Boynton, administration leader, thanked Mr. Bryan on behalf of the legislature for his visit. He then outlined the situation for the visitor, saying in part:

"At the time President Wilson's telegram was received last week, announcing the wish to send Secretary Bryan to confer with this body, there were two bills on this subject before the senate. It was apparent that the people of the state were strongly in favor of the enactment of an anti-alien land law and such a law probably would have been passed before this time if it had not been for the telegram from the president. At his request we postponed further consideration until Mr. Bryan could present his views."

Senator Boynton then requested Mr. Bryan to point out specifically the objections of the national government and of Japan to the pending measures and to give his reasons from a diplomatic standpoint why California should not enact such a law.

When Mr. Bryan remained silent other members of the majority party urged him to comply with the request. Senator Caminetti, democrat, suggested that a small group of members from both houses be selected to hear Mr. Bryan's arguments, but Boynton protested and carried his point.

After several others had spoken, many of them quoting statistics to show the increase in land holdings by Japanese during recent years, Secretary Bryan arose. His first statement was concerning the secret conference which he said he had favored, with the support of Governor Johnson and the presiding officers of both houses.

Secretary Bryan said he could speak with more frankness to the members than he could to a "promiscuous audience."

"As the representative of the president," he began, "I feel keenly the responsibility that is placed upon me.

"I would have preferred to have him come himself, as the head of the nation, but that seemed impossible and he delegated me to speak for him. I do not pretend to do other than express his views. I am simply his spokesman, and I will say to you only that which he would have me say.

"As to the constitutionality of our treaty with Japan you will pardon me if I decline to act as the supreme court. Further, as to the question of immigration, I think we can consider that question as independent of the land question with which we are here concerned."

Questions concerning the treaty and the immigration of Japanese to the United States had been asked during the debate. Continuing Mr. Bryan said:

"I have listened to what you have said, and I assume everything to be true, that you have not overdrawn nor exaggerated the feeling of the people of California in the matter. I can assume that the people demand that something be done. In that case the first question is whether the legislation is demanded at this time. If it can be delayed, then the first suggestion that the president would have me make is that you permit an effort to be made to deal with the question diplomatically with a view to reaching the same results without legislation.

"If the demand is so immediate that this can not be done can action be deferred for two years and in the meantime have a commission appointed to investigate conditions and act with the executive? Would it not be worth while to try this plan before you adopt the plan that might result in unfriendliness from a foreign nation?"

"I am not going to indulge in any speculations as to what may happen if you do anything now, but I am here to advise against the use of any language that would offend any people that have dealings with us."

In case immediate action was demanded Secretary Bryan said he would be in favor of a law framed along the lines of the Illinois law, or the statute in the District of Columbia, which are general in character.

"Either of these measures is preferable to language that contains the words 'ineligible to citizenship,'" added Secretary Bryan. "President Wilson believes that if you use these words you might as well make a law declaring specifically against Japanese and Chinese ownership.

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