# CHAPTER 7: THE ILLUSION OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

## 1. TRAJECTORY OF US ANTI-JAPANESE ACTIONS

The Washington Naval Conference is generally perceived as symbolizing the tendency toward pacificism and international cooperation that followed the First World War. Within the context of Japan-US relations, the 10-year period between the Washington Conference and the Manchurian Incident was a time of cooperation between the two nations, exemplified by the pacifist diplomacy of Ambassador to the US Shidehara Kijūrō. However, if the 1920s had been a phase of genuine international cooperation, it is unlikely that the Manchurian Incident would have erupted 10 years after the Washington Conference.

One conspicuous manifestation of the crumbling of the spirit of international cooperation preached at the Washington Conference was the enactment of an anti-Japanese immigration law two years afterward, in 1924.

### Anti-Japanese sentiment rekindled in US

Let us examine the evolution of anti-Japanese discrimination in the US after the arrangement of the Gentlemen's Agreement.

In 1913 the California State Legislature passed the California Alien Land Law, which prohibited Japanese from owning land, and limiting the period for which they could lease land to three years.

The Immigration Act of 1917 was intended to exclude all Asian immigrants. However, after repeated, vigorous objections submitted by Japan, the wording of the law was changed to remove Japan from the list of excluded nations.

During the First World War American sentiment toward the Japanese took a turn for the better, and there was hope that the California law might be mitigated to some extent. But once the war ended, anti-Japanese movements were rekindled, partly because of Japan's Racial Equality Proposal at the Paris Peace Conference. Another phenomenon that exacerbated discrimination was the so-called picture-bride problem. The exchange of photographs was a very common aspect of matchmaking used by Japanese immigrants in the US and Canada from the late 19th to early 20th century. The parents or other relatives of a young man seeking a bride would seek the services of a matchmaker, who would arrange for an exchange of photographs and biographical information. The prospective young couple would then exchange letters. If the two seemed compatible, the young woman would be added to her fiancé's census record and she would then join the young man in the US, now as his wife. This method was much simpler than having the man return to Japan to find a bride, and it was used by most young male immigrants, especially after the Gentlemen's Agreement, which prohibited new laborers from entering the US or limited their sojourns there, came into being.[1]

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[1] Wakatsuki Yasuo, *Hainichi no rekishi: Amerika ni okeru Nihonjin imin* (History of discrimination against the Japanese: Japanese immigrants in the US) (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1972).

Americans looked askance at the picture-bride custom because it was so different from US practices; it became the source of increased anti-Japanese sentiment among them. It also served as fodder for the anti-Japanese discrimination mill, leading US senators like James D. Phelan and John M. Inman, both of California, to intensify their attacks on Japanese immigration.

With the greater good in mind, the Japanese government decided to outlaw picture-bride marriages, announcing that passports for travel to the US by picture brides would not be issued after March 1, 1920. However, this prohibition did not alleviate discrimination against Japanese in California. The California Alien Land Law of 1920 was a more draconian version of the 1913 law. Not only did it prevent foreigners ineligible for US citizenship from owning land, but also from leasing land for three years (which the 1913 law permitted).

**Japanese deemed "ineligible to citizenship"**

Between 1921 and 1925 14 states (Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, and Washington) passed alien land laws virtually the same in intention as the California Alien Land Law. Then, on November 13, 1922, the US Supreme Court reached a unanimous judgement to the effect that Japanese were ineligible for naturalization (obtaining US citizenship). The following year, this ruling was applied to all Asians.

**Introduction of anti-Japanese legislation**

After World War I ended, Europe suffered a recession, which brought about a sudden increase in the number of immigrants from eastern and southern Europe seeking entry into the US. The new wave of humanity became the subject of economic, ideological, and political debate, and problems relating to immigration from Europe soon captured the public attention. The rise of Americanism, another postwar phenomenon, emphasized a pressing need for strong national unity, and provided a firm basis for a movement to limit immigration from Europe.

The aforementioned Mr. Griswold describes the situation as follows:

> Japanese immigrants were not the only foreigners affected by the xenophobia that possessed the country after the war. Jews, Catholics, and Negroes, as well as aliens suspected of communism or other "un-American" beliefs, became victims of a national witch-hunt.[2]

Worried that the European recession would give rise to a deluge of immigrants, the US Congress enacted the Emergency Quota Act in 1921. This statute limited the number of immigrants admitted

[2] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 369.

from any country annually to "3 per centum of the number of foreign-born persons of such nationality resident in the United States as determined by the US census of 1910.[3]"

Since this was a temporary statute scheduled to expire in June 1926, permanent legislation to replace it was in the offing.

Such was the political climate when, in December 1923, Rep. Albert Johnson, Republican, of Washington, submitted a bill to the House of Representatives, whereby aliens "ineligible to citizenship" would be prohibited from entering the US. At about the same time, Wesley L. Jones, Republican, also of Washington, proposed a constitutional amendment that would deprive the American-born offspring of aliens ineligible to citizenship of the right to US citizenship. Griswold tells us that "aliens ineligible to citizenship" was "legal phraseology designed to exclude the Japanese without naming them.[4]"

Johnson's bill contained some noteworthy language:

(1) The annual quota of any nationality shall be 2 percentum of the number of foreign-born individuals of such nationality resident in continental United States as determined by the United States census of 1890, but the minimum quota of any nationality shall be 100.

(2) No alien ineligible to citizenship shall be admitted to the United States unless such alien (1) is admissible as a non-quota immigrant under the provisions of subdivision (b), (d), or (e) of section 4, or (2) is the wife, or unmarried child under 18years of age, of an immigrant admissible under such subdivision (d), and is accompanying or following to join him, or (3) is not an immigrant as defined in section 3.[5]

The constitutional amendment proposed by Jones was submitted to the Senate, and then referred to the Committee on the Judiciary without delay.

The gist of the amendment follows:

> No child hereafter born in the United States of foreign parentage shall be eligible to citizenship unless both parents are eligible to become citizens of the United States; and no person heretofore born in the United States shall, from the adoption of this

[3] *Emergency Quota Act of 1921*, H.R. 4075, 67th Congress, 1st session, Chapter 8, Sec. 2 (a)., passed on 13 May 1921, effective and signed by Warren G. Harding on 19 May 1921; https://loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/67th-congress/Session%201/c67s1ch8.pdf.

[4] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 370.

[5] *Immigration Act of 1924*, H.R. 7965, 68th Congress, 1st session, Chapter 190, passed on 26 May 1924; https://loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/68th-congress/session-1/c68s1ch190.pdf; among the exceptions, listed in Sec. 4, are immigrants returning from a temporary visit abroad; immigrants who are ministers of any religious denomination, professors or other educators and their wives and children, and students.

> article, be a citizen of the United States or be eligible to become such citizen unless both parents were citizens of the United States of eligible to become such citizens.[6]

**"Not expediency, but principle"**

To block these two bills, both manifestly anti-Japanese in intent, Ambassador Hanihara Masanao, representing the Japanese government, conferred with Secretary of State Charles Hughes. Hanihara brought to Hughes' attention the fact that Johnson's bill contained language that contradicts the 1911 Japan-US Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, and that the constitutional amendment proposal, if ratified, would impose a particularly onerous burden on Japanese residing in the US. Then, on January 1, 1924, Foreign Minister Ijūin Hikokichi informed Ambassador Hanihara that the immigration problem was on the point of causing a major change in the tone of the Japanese intelligentsia, who had theretofore leaned toward moderation. He instructed Hanihara to confer with Hughes, and to discuss every single one of the following points with him:

(1) The anti-Japanese immigration bill contradicts the Japan-US Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, signed in 1911.
(2) Claims have been made to the effect that restrictions on immigration are applied equally to other Asians. However, judging from the fact that, within existing immigration statutes, limitations on the immigration of Asians have been imposed according to their residence in the so-called barred zone, an area defined by latitudes and longitudes, the new immigration legislation is intended specifically to discriminate against the Japanese.
(3) The discriminatory provisions in the new bill have, in an instant, destroyed policies that the Japanese government has self-sacrificingly implemented for many years by revising treaties, adhering scrupulously to the Gentlemen's Agreement.
(4) Normally, suitability to become a citizen of a particular nation should be determined on a particular individual's merits, not on that individual's race. Deciding arbitrarily that Japanese are to be classified as aliens ineligible for citizenship is a huge blow to our pride.
(5) As Japanese residing on the Pacific coast have been deemed ineligible for citizenship, they have been divested of their rights. Consequently, they have lost their livelihoods and are on the verge of poverty. The constitutional amendment proposal goes one step further. It will divest Japanese immigrants' innocent children of their public and private rights, leaving them without hope and causing their morale to plummet, and relegating them to the unenviable status of a wretched minority in the United States.
(6) Since this same constitutional amendment proposal risks provoking antipathy among the Japanese public, and negatively affecting the amicable relationship between our countries, the Imperial government feels compelled to ask the United States government to give careful consideration to this matter.[7]

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[6] Congress.gov. "S. Con. Res. 1 – 68th Congress (1923-1924: Citizenship of Children of Foreign-Born Parents." December 6, 1923, 90; https://archive.org/details/sim_congressional-record-proceedings-and-debates_december-03-1923-january-15-1924_65/page/2/mode/2up.

[7] *Gaimushō* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), *Taibei imin mondai keika gaiyō* (Documents on Japanese foreign policy: Summary of the Course of Negotiations between Japan and the United States concerning the problems of Japanese immigration in the United States). 760-67 (Tokyo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1972).

On January 15 Ambassador Hanihara met with Secretary Hughes, advising him that the people of Japan would be paying close attention to the progress of deliberations taking place in the United States concerning the immigration law and the constitutional amendment proposal in the House of Representatives. Hanihara apprised Hughes that in the event that both should pass, Japanese public opinion would surely react adversely. The Japanese government was understandably concerned; on January 1, on the basis of instructions from the foreign minister, a memorandum was delivered to the secretary of state. An excerpt from that memorandum follows.

> It is needless to add that it is not the intention of the Japanese Government to question the sovereign right of any country to regulate immigration to its own territories. Nor is it their desire to send their nationals to the countries where they are not wanted. … To Japan the question is not one of expediency but of principle. To her the mere fact that a few hundreds or thousands of her nationals will or will not be admitted into the domains of other countries is immaterial, so long as no question of national susceptibilities is involved. The important question is whether Japan as a nation is or is not entitled to the proper respect and consideration of other nations. In other words, the Japanese Government ask of the United States Government simply that proper consideration ordinarily given by one nation to the self-respect of another, which after all forms the basis of amicable international intercourse throughout the civilized world.[8]

**Secretary Hughes: Immigration Act would undo work of Washington Conference**

On January 28, 1924 Representative Albert Johnson, chairman of the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, wrote Secretary of State Charles Hughes asking his opinion of the immigration legislation then under debate. Hughes penned a long reply to Johnson, dated February 8. Hughes was in favor of imposing restrictions on immigration, yes, but strongly objected to the methods proposed. In Hughes' opinion the restrictions of Johnson's bill were in conflict with the 1911 Japan-US Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. But in his eyes the real problem was one of policy, as he felt that the exclusion provision would unquestionably offend the Japanese and fail to benefit the US.

> The Japanese are a sensitive people, and unquestionably would regard such a legislative enactment as fixing a stigma upon them. I regret to be compelled to say that I believe such a legislative action would undo the work of the Washington Conference on Limitation of Armament, which so greatly improved our relations with Japan. The manifestation of American interest and generosity in providing relief to the sufferers from the recent earthquake disaster in Japan would not avail to diminish the resentment which would follow the enactment of such a measure, as this enactment would be regarded as an insult not to be palliated by any act of charity. It is useless to argue whether or not such a feeling would be justified, it is quite sufficient to say that it would exist. It has already been manifested in the discussions in Japan with respect to the pendency of this measure, and no amount of argument can avail to remove it.

[8] Letter from Hanihara Masanao to Charles Evans Hughes, *Congressional Record*, Vol. 65, Part 6, 11 April 1924, 6073-74; https://www.congress.gov/bound-congressional-record/1924/04/11/senate-section.

> The question is thus presented whether it is worth while thus to affront a friendly nation with whom we have established most cordial relations and what gain there would be from such action.[9]

Hughes adds that if the clause pertaining to aliens ineligible to citizenship were eliminated, and the quota system applicable to citizens of other nations were applied to Japanese immigrants as well, only 246 Japanese immigrants would be entitled to enter the US each year. If this system were to be adopted, together with the Gentlemen's Agreement concluded between the US and Japan, the US would be able to avail itself of effective cooperation from the Japanese authorities, as far as the issuing of passports and immigration permits is concerned. Moreover, the Japanese government would certainly cooperate in preventing Japanese from entering the US from adjacent territories. Such a double control resulting in the entry of fewer than 250 Japanese into the US per year would be much more effective than excluding all Japanese nationals. Hughes said he was well aware of the necessity of placing limitations on immigration, but hoped that a way could be found to avoid charges of discrimination against the US.[10]

**US Congressmen take issue with "grave consequences"**

On April 10, 1924 Ambassador Hanihara sent a letter of protest to Secretary Hughes in accordance with instructions from newly appointed Foreign Minister Matsui Keishirō. The main points covered in the letter were:

(1) Japan has "scrupulously and faithfully carried out the terms of the Gentlemen's Agreement.
(2) Japan has stopped issuing passports to picture brides as of March 1, 1920.
(3) According to statistics published by the Commissioner-General of Immigration, during the 15 years between 1908 and 1923, there was an increase of only 8,681 Japanese immigrants, for an annual average of only 578 individuals. Furthermore, their number included every type of Japanese citizen, including merchants, students, tourists, government officials.
(4) "To Japan the question is not one of expediency, but of principle. … The important question is whether Japan as a nation is or is not entitled to the proper respect and consideration of other nations.[11]

The ambassador concluded his letter as follows:

> [T]he manifest object of the [provision excluding aliens not eligible to citizenship] is to single out Japanese as a nation, stigmatizing them as unworthy and undesirable in the eyes of the American people. And yet the actual result of that particular provision, if the proposed bill becomes the law as intended, would be to exclude only 146 Japanese per year. On the other hand the Gentlemen's Agreement is, in

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[9] US Department of State, Office of the Historian, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1924, Volume I: The Secretary of State to the Chairman of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization of the House of Representative (Johnson of Washington): https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1924v01/d141.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

> fact, accomplishing all that can be accomplished by the proposed Japanese exclusion clause except for those 146. It is indeed difficult to believe that it can be the intention of the people of your great country, who always stand for high principles of justice and fair-play in the intercourse of nations, to resort — in order to secure the annual exclusion of 146 Japanese — to a measure which would not only seriously offend the just pride of a friendly nation, that has been always earnest and diligent in its efforts to preserve the friendship of your people, but would also seem to involve the question of the good faith and therefore of the honor of their Government, or at least of its executive branch.
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> Relying upon the confidence you have been good enough to show me at all times, I have stated or rather repeated all this to you very candidly and in a most friendly spirit, for I realize, as I believe you do, the grave consequences which the enactment of the measure retaining that particular provision would inevitably bring upon the otherwise happy and mutually advantageous relations between our two countries.[12]

However, when Hanihara's letter was made public, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge (then chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee) seized upon the phrase "grave consequences" in the letter, insisting that it was a "veiled threat." Lodge stated further that the "United States can not legislate by the exercise by any other country of veiled threats." Two words had become a colossal bone of contention; in the space of just a few days the anti-Japanese Immigration Act of 1924 passed the House of Representatives, and then the Senate.[13]

On April 17 Ambassador Hanihara wrote to Hughes, explaining that he was "unable to understand how the two words, read in their context, could be construed as meaning anything like a threat."[14]

Hanihara explained, "I simply tried to emphasize the most unfortunate and deplorable effect upon our traditional friendship which might result from the adoption of a particular clause in the proposed measure. … In using these words, which I did quite ingenuously, I had no thought of being in any way disagreeable or discourteous, and still less of conveying "a veiled threat."[15]

On April 18 Hughes responded to Ambassador Hanihara, stating, "I had no doubt that these words were to be taken in the sense you have stated, and I was quite sure that it was far from your thought to express or imply any threat."[16]

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[12] Ibid.

[13] *Congressional* Record, 68th Congress, 2nd Session, 14 April 1924, 6305; https://www.congress.gov/bound-congressional-record/1924/04/14/senate-section.

[14] *Office of the Historian: Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1924, Volume II*, "The Japanese Ambassador (Hanihara) to the Secretary of State, 17 April 1924; https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1924v02/d286.

[15] Ibid.

[16] "Immigration: Correspondence Between the Secretary of State and Ambassador Hanihara," 18 April 1924, in *International Conciliation No. 211*, June 1925, 35-36.

At around the same time Hughes wrote to Sen. Lodge to convey his deep disappointment.

> I am deeply concerned. It seems to me that an irreparable injury has been done, not to Japan but to ourselves, and, as I think, most unnecessarily, it is a dangerous thing to plant a deep feeling of resentment in the Japanese people, not that we have need to apprehend, much less to fear, war, but that we shall have hereafter in the East to count upon a sense of injury and antagonism instead of friendship and cooperation. I dislike to think what the reaping will be after the sowing of this seed. I fear that our labors to create a better feeling in the East, which have thus far been notably successful, are now largely undone.[17]

### Anti-Japanese Immigration Law enacted

On May 5, 1924 House of Representatives passed the immigration bill on a vote of 308 to 58; the Senate followed suit with a vote of 69 to 9. On May 17 the legislation was forwarded to President Coolidge.

On May 26 Coolidge signed the bill.

The immigration law, which had incited controversy upon controversy, was now law. Immigration problems, which had surfaced in the 1900s, and had steadily intensified, had now arrived at a resolution of sorts. According to Griswold, "The exclusion law that the Japanese and United States Governments had tried for thirty years to avoid had at last become a fact.[18]

The official name of the anti-Japanese immigration act is Immigration Act of 1924. As mentioned earlier, it was a new law comprising 32 sections that was approved on May 26 and went into effect on July 1, 1924. It was designed to permanently replace the Emergency Quota Act if 1921 and to place additional curbs on immigration.

For instance, Section 11 (a) refers to the annual quota of any nationality (see above). The next section (b) reads as follows: "The annual quota of any nationality for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1927, and for each fiscal year thereafter, shall be a number which bears the same ratio to 150,000 as the number of inhabitants in continental United States in 1920 having that national origin (ascertained as hereinafter provided in this section) bears to the number of inhabitants in continental United States in 1920, but the minimum quota of any nationality shall be 100." According to that standard, after July 1, 1927 the quota for Japanese immigrants should have been 185 persons.

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[17] Iriye Akira, After Imperialism: The Search for a New Order in the Far East 1921-1931 (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 35.

[18] Griswold, *op. cit.*, 375.

However, according to Section 13 (c), "(c) No alien ineligible to citizenship shall be admitted to the United States … ."[19] The US Supreme Court had already ruled that Japanese nationals were "not eligible to citizenship." Therefore, they were excluded from the quota system. Chinese had been barred from entering the US by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. All other Asians were excluded by the Immigration Act of 1917. Therefore, the Japanese were, beyond a shadow of a doubt, the targets of the exclusionist clause in the Immigration Act of 1924. It is little wonder that the 1924 version is referred to as the "Japanese Exclusion Act."

**Japanese government issues "solemn protest"**

Unfortunately, the anti-Japanese immigration act became law, despite herculean efforts on the part of the Japanese government, dating back to the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907, to maintain the status quo. On May 31, 1924 the Japanese government prepared a letter of protest, which was entrusted to Ambassador Hanihara for delivery to Secretary Hughes. An excerpt follows:

> The Japanese Government are deeply concerned by the enactment in the United States of an act entitled the "Immigration act of 1924." While the measure was under discussion in the Congress they took the earliest opportunity to invite the attention of the American Government to a discriminatory clause embodied in the act, namely, section 13 (c), which provided for the exclusion of aliens ineligible to citizenship in contradistinction to other classes of aliens, and which is manifestly intended to apply to Japanese. Neither the representations of the Japanese Government nor the recommendations of the President or of the Secretary of State were heeded by the Congress, and the clause in question has now been written into the statutes of the United States.
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> It is, perhaps, needless to state that international discriminations in any form and on any subject, even if based on purely economic reasons, are opposed to the principles of justice and fairness upon which the friendly intercourse between nations must, in its final analysis, depend. To these very principles the doctrine of equal opportunity, now widely recognized, with the unfailing support of the United States, owes its being. Still more unwelcome are discriminations based on race.
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> (…)
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> Unfortunately, however, the sweeping provisions of the new act, clearly indicative of discrimination against Japanese, have made it impossible for Japan to continue the undertakings assumed under the gentlemen's agreement. An understanding of friendly cooperation reached after long and comprehensive discussions between the Japanese and American Governments has thus been abruptly overthrown by legislative action on the part of the United States. The patient, loyal and scrupulous observance by Japan for more than sixteen years of these self-denying regulations, in the interest of good relations between the two countries, now seems to have been wasted.

[19] *Congressional Record*, 68th Congress, Session I. Chs. 185, 190. 1924, 153-169; https://web.archive.org/web/20210323020221/https://loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/68th-congress/session-1/c68s1ch190.pdf.

(…)

The letter concludes as follows:

> Accordingly, the Japanese Government consider it their duty to maintain and to place on record their solemn protest against the discriminatory clause in section 13 (c) of the immigration act of 1924 and to request the American Government to take all possible and suitable measures for the removal of such discrimination.[20]

The dialogue exchanged between the Japanese and US governments, which had begun in the middle of the Meiji era, had come to an end, though far from a satisfactory one. It remained in force until after World War II, when it was replaced by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (on June 27). The discriminatory clause had been removed and a quota (185 individuals per year) was restored to the Japanese. But until then, for a period of 28 years, Japanese immigrants were banished from the ports of the US.

**Anti-American sentiment reaches boiling point**

When the Immigration Act of 1924 passed both houses of Congress in mid-April of 1924, Tokyo's 15 newspapers, having concluded that the anti-Japanese statute was unjust and immoral, issued a joint protest, which was published on April 21. An excerpt follows:

> The anti-Japanese legislation recently passed by both houses of the US Congress is patently discriminatory and unjust. … We find it utterly unbearable that the friendship between Japan and the United States, which was further strengthened by the Washington Conference, and the bridge of amity built between the two opposite coasts of the Pacific on the occasion of the Great Kanto Earthquake of the preceding autumn, as well as many pleasant memories, should be destroyed by actions taken by the United States Congress. Should the legislation in question become law, we will be compelled to perceive it as the true will of the American people. Indisputably it will deeply wound the traditional friendship between the two nations, as well as bring great harm to the brilliant enterprises resulting from the cooperation of the citizens of both nations and designed to contribute to the welfare of both individuals and nations.

On April 20 a Citizens' Assembly held in Tokyo and organized by activist Uchida Ryōhei spearheaded anti-American gatherings all over Japan. More than a few resolutions agreed on at such gatherings were communicated to President Coolidge via telegraph. On April 25 another assembly for students of Nippon, Waseda, and Tōyō universities was held at the Central Buddhist Hall in Misaki-chō, Kanda, Tokyo. This one featured impassioned lectures on the anti-Japanese problem delivered by volunteer speakers, who appealed to "all patriots" to "rise up and come to the aid of their endangered compatriots."

Similar assemblies were held throughout Japan. Police officials were so concerned about the safety of American residents that they issued advisory memoranda to police stations. Furthermore, Prime

[20] Robert McElroy, "New Immigration Law over Japan's Protest" in *Current History 1924-07: Vol. 20, Issue 4*, 648-50; https://archive.org/details/sim_current-history-forum_1924-07_20_4/page/648/mode/2up.

Minister Kiyoura Keigo, Home Minister Mizuno Rentarō, other Cabinet members, and the Ministry of the Army received quite a few radical missives.

When the anti-Japanese Immigration Act was enacted on May 26, Japanese public opinion reached a boiling point; there were many gatherings held to oppose the statute. On May 31 a man in his forties, infuriated at the US, committed *seppuku*, leaving behind suicide notes, pleas urging Americans to reconsider and Japanese compatriots to rise up against injustice.

In June American Christian missionaries active in Japan began receiving threatening letters. On June 3 the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce approved a resolution condemning the new immigration law; its members announced that they would wire it to all chambers of commerce in the US.

On June 5 leading newspaper companies in Tokyo and Osaka prepared a joint declaration:

> The enactment of an anti-Japanese law is an outrage which, at essence, not only scoffs at benevolence and justice, but also dismisses the traditional friendship between Japan and the United States. The Japanese people value patience, but we shall not tolerate discriminatory treatment. As agents of Japanese public opinion, we hereby express the resolute determination of our people, and ask Americans, officials and private citizens alike, to examine their consciences.[21]

On the same day the Ryōgoku Arena was the site of an anti-American rally designed to express Japanese unity and determination in their opposition to American anti-Japanese actions; the rally drew an audience of 30,000. Those in attendance heard speeches by Tokyo University Professor Uesugi Shinkichi and activists Tōyama Mitsuru and Uchida Ryōhei.

The anti-American movement put its mark on the film industry, too. Industry representatives adopted a resolution vowing to show no American films as of July 1.

The Immigration Act went into effect on July 1, 1924. On that day a man pulled down and made off with an American flag that had been hanging high above the ruins of the US embassy.[22] However, he was soon apprehended and arrested; the flag was returned safely and rehoisted.

**Historical significance of the year 1924**

Nineteen twenty-four was the year when the anti-Japanese immigration law took effect, but it was also the year when War Plan Orange, a strategy intended for use during a war with Japan, took shape.

In April 1904, soon after the Russo-Japanese War commenced, a series of war plans developed jointly by the US Army and Navy, with a color assigned to each hypothetical enemy nation, was formulated. For instance, red stood for England, black for Germany, green for Mexico, and

[21] Segawa Yoshinobu, "*1924 nen Beikoku imin hō to Nichibei* gaikō" (The immigration act of 1924 and Japan-US diplomacy) in *Kokusai Seiji 26* (International politics 26), 1964.

[22] The embassy had been destroyed by a fire caused by the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923.

orange for Japan. War Plan Orange hypothesized a battle in which the US defended the Philippines against Japan. For 20 years after the US acquired the Philippines in the Spanish-American War (in 1898), Japan had no intention of attacking the Philippines. But the US, assuming it did, went steadily forward with its Pacific strategy. According to American historian William R. Braisted, the stage for War Plan Orange, which was formally adopted in August 1924, was the western Pacific Ocean (despite the fact that the naval arms race had been curtailed by the Washington Conference).[23]

An analysis of the events that transpired reveals that 1924 was a very meaningful year. The enactment of the anti-Japanese immigration act in the US filled the Japanese with sorrow and shame, and made them feel like citizens of a weak nation. Not since the Triple Intervention had they been compelled to endure such a calamity. The Washington Conference certainly restrained Japanese expansion into the Pacific and the Far East. But the consequences were even more far-reaching. The ideals touted at the conference, international friendship and cooperation, when exposed to the light of day by the anti-Japanese immigration act, turned out to be nothing more than illusions. The Japanese were justified in their suspicions that the Washington system was marred by hypocrisy. Almost involuntarily, the Japanese began to act on their deeply rooted mistrust in the Washington system of naval limitation, as well as a national desire to defeat that system. Moreover, the fact that War Plan Orange, whose target was Japan, was officially adopted, was an important event that symbolizes the historical shift in the Japan-US relationship.

Many thought that the Washington Conference heralded a new era in the Pacific, but that was an illusion that lasted for only two years. The Immigration Act of 1924, in fact, nullified the achievements of the conference, jeopardized peace in the Pacific, and caused the buds of international friendship to wither and die.[24] Shut out from the white world, Japan proceeded focus even more attention and interest on Manchuria, a new realm that would enable the Japanese to survive, even thrive, or perhaps a lifeline. The year 1924 was the crossroads between war and peace.

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[23] William R. Braisted, "*Amerika kaigun to orenji sakusen keikaku*" (The US Navy and the Orange War Plan), trans. Asada Sadao, in Hosoya Chihiro and Saitō Makoto, eds., *Washinton Taisei to Nichibei kankei* (The Washington system and Japan-US relations) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1978).

[24] Segawa, *op. cit.*