

Despatch No. 214

AMERICAN EMBASSY,
TOKYO.



June 27, 1907.

WR. WRIGHT to THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

SUBJECT; The San Francisco Question; present status; formal resolutions of the political parties and United Chambers of Commerce; suggestion of boycott of American goods.

Despatch No. 314

AMERICAN EMBASSY,
TOKYO.

June 27th, 1907.

To the Honorable Elihu Root,
Secretary of State,
Washington.

S i r:

Referring to my Despatches Nos. 270 and 295 on the subject of the agitation in Japan caused by recent events in San Francisco, I am pleased to report that the extravagant utterances indulged in by a large section of the press of Japan at the first reports of the so-called outrages against the Japanese has brought about a strong reaction, as a result of which practically all of the responsible newspapers have begun to counsel moderation in speech as well as in action. The "Hochi" and other opposition papers alone continue the discussion. (See enclosure No. 1)

The agitation has however taken definite form in two directions. In the first place, each of the prominent political parties has seized the occasion to express its views in a formal manifesto. That of the Progressives, inclosed with my previous despatch (No. 295, June 12) was, as might be expected, a strong arraignment of both the Japanese and American Governments. The Constitutionalist (Seiyukai) followed with a moderately worded resolution reflecting and supporting the views of the Japanese Government. The Daido Club, believed to be controlled by Count Katsura, while refusing to treat the question as an international one adopted

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Anti Japanese Agitation.

Encl. 270-290.

Japan,

American Embassy (Wright) #314.

Encloses various newspaper clippings, and copies of papers; the

Daido party's manifesto; resolutions of the United Chambers of Commerce, and translations of statements issued by the Japanese Diplomatic

authorities regarding the anti Japanese agitation in California, and

states that the Japanese Press generally has adopted a more moderate

tone, but every one of the potential parties in Japan has felt it to be

its duty to issue a declaration on the question, two of them, the Progressives, and the Daido Club criticizing the action of the Government

The meeting of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce also passed a resolution to call upon the American Chambers of Commerce for their assistance in

checking the anti Japanese movement in the United States.

It is said that the question of boycotting American goods was considered at the meeting. The Minister of Foreign Affairs denies the rumor of

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3d Rec. Dept.

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY



3. a resolution criticising the Government's management of the situation, thus practically joining hands with the Progressives in an attack upon the present Cabinet. The political aspects of the situation are well summed up in the editorial notes in the Japan Mail of June 18 and 25 inclosed herewith. Entirely aside from the import of these resolutions, the mere fact that all of the leading political parties should feel called upon for public expression of their views on the subject is an indication of the importance with which the matter has been vested in this country.

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5. The agitation has likewise taken definite form in a resolution adopted at a joint meeting of representatives of the Chambers of Commerce of Japan held on the 22nd instant. While the resolution itself is carefully worded, there is reason to believe that the representatives of the Chambers have been considering a boycott of American goods as a measure of retaliation, directed primarily against San Francisco, should the situation not be otherwise satisfactorily settled. This idea (which very probably originated with Mr. Yamaoka of Seattle, referred to in my previous despatch) was advocated in the column of the "Hochi Shimbun" of June 13th (translation herewith). The suggestion was repeated by Mr. Yamaoka to a meeting of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce reported in the Jiji Shimpō of the 18th and further elaborated by Mr. Nakano, President of the Tokyo Chamber, in an interview with the Asahi Shimbun's representative published in that paper June 23rd. These gentlemen seem to think that such a measure could be organized and carried through in Japan much more

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effectively than in China last year.

9. Another official statement has recently been given out by the Foreign Office to show that there is no ground in the present instance for diplomatic action. I was also informed by Viscount Hayashi in a recent interview that the rumors of Viscount Aoki's recall were quite unfounded, as the Japanese Government had no reason whatever to be dissatisfied with him and had no intention of recalling him. In fact, even the opposition seems to have largely abandoned the idea that the reported acts of violence constitute a valid reason for diplomatic interference and to have fallen back upon the more general ground of undue discrimination by the United States against the Japanese in matters of immigration and naturalization. They would insist upon being granted equal treatment in these respects with white races and attribute the objections of America to race prejudice and the inactivity of their own officials to incompetence. It now seems probable that the Progressives and the Daido Club may unite on some such platform to oppose the Government and the Constitutionalists at the next elections.

10. As of possible interest to the Department, I have ventured to add to the list of newspaper inclosures two copies of the illustrated "Tokyo Puck", which has devoted a whole number to the anti-American agitation. This is but another straw showing which way the wind is blowing and indicates a state of public feeling to which newspapers and politicians alike find it profitable to cater.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,
Your obedient servant,

Wm. E. Wright

Enclosures:

1. Extracts from the Japanese Press indicating the general opinion on the San Francisco affair.
2. Resolution of the Seiyukai.
3. The Daido Party's Manifesto.
4. Extracts illustrating the political aspect.
5. Resolution of the United Chambers of Commerce.
6. Translation from the "Hochi Shimbun", June 13. Suggestion of American Boycott.
7. Translation from the "Jiji Shimpō". Mr. Yamaoka's remarks to the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce.
8. Translation from the "Asahi Shimbun". Interview with President Nakano.
9. Translation of statements issued by the Japanese Diplomatic authorities.
10. Tokyo Puck.