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POSSIBLE DANGER BETWEEN EMPIRE AND REPUBLIC.

THE cordial spirit of friendship which the Government and people of Japan cherish toward the United States of America is now as real and intense as it has always been. This has been so ever since the character and aims of the Republic and its citizens became thoroughly known in this country, and that was not less than forty years ago. This is also the conviction that rules the mind of the nation at this moment, including, we do not hesitate to say, even that of those who are inclined to be sensational about the San Francisco race crusade. While all this will be unqualifiedly acknowledged by every intelligent Japanese, we are pained to think it has become possible to talk of the danger of the breaking of this unparalleled relationship. In view of the recent intimations that serious anxiety is beginning to be felt by the American public as to developments in this country, as an ardent advocate of an everlasting good understanding with America, we deem it our duty to make a clear and candid statement of the real situation here.

Is there any danger of the present pro-American feeling swinging round to its opposite pole? We would not say there is, but we may describe how it may develop. We may also say the swing will be electric-like in its rapidity and completeness when it occurs. But before stating wherein lies that danger, it seems in order to first clear the course of what we regard as misconceptions on the American side. For instance both the *Tokyo Asahi* and the *Mainichi Shimbun* received from America a few days ago almost identical dispatches to the effect that the making public by our Government of official papers relating to the San Francisco affair would cause a change in the public opinion of Japan. The implication contains a possible error of judgment and also a misconception.

We do not pretend to know what are those official papers referred to in the telegram, but we are persuaded that the Government has good reasons for withholding them from the public, it being perhaps the better judge of how their publication would affect the Japanese mind. The telegram would imply that our public is being seized with ill feeling toward America. That this belief on America's

part is wholly incorrect will not require much to show. True, the irrepressible loquacity and free-lance habits of Count Okuma have recently betrayed him into indulging in premature utterances. The fearless old peer is no longer the leader of any political party and he spoke only as an individual who had succumbed to the temptations of an American yellow journal. The rancorous voice of an ambitious man in disappointment must not be taken for that of the nation. Then there was the *Tokyo Keizai*, whose editor is a close friend of Count Okuma, which made itself ridiculous by talking war, to which alluded a short while ago; but it again is an exception. On the contrary the press, the organ of public opinion, have on the whole been very moderate, indeed, eminently consistent with the nation's pro-American feeling in their comments, as will have been seen from our summaries of their editorials from time to time. In the circumstance it is unfair and unjust to speak off-handedly of anti-American feeling in Japan, which does not exist. It is also unwise to do so; because there is a danger that this misconception of our attitude—if insisted upon in America—may so far sour us into believing that Americans are resolved not to be better informed of our true wishes. But this is not the danger we have hinted at above, although it may materially assist the other and more serious one to become real, if our friends across the Pacific as much as ourselves are not careful.

It is conceivable on the other hand that Americans and the public of this country differ in the seriousness of view they take of the outrages at San Francisco. In the relation of civilized countries, they do not send out

warships or take other demonstrative steps each time their nationals receive ill treatment in one or the other; for they are assured of justice on whichever side the wrong may be. Especially in the intercourse with a country like the United States the other civilized Powers are disposed more sympathetically than otherwise toward its Federal Government in its dealings with the unruly states in the union. And such is our present attitude. But we take it for granted that all fair-minded Americans see in the condition of affairs and the nature of the crimes committed in San Francisco, matters of international concern which, if they happened in China or Turkey, would justify any civilized Power in making a demonstration. Should they fail to see the matter in this light, that will be where the difference will come in and difficulty arise; for we view the situation precisely in the manner we have stated. A recent advice said that civil cases would be made of the outrages. But that does not alter the principle involved, and we must be assured of its importance being brought seriously home to the people of San Francisco, irrespective of the particular way in which the trouble so far arisen may be settled. Otherwise there will be no hope of permanent safety for our compatriots in that port and each recurrence of the outrages will in spite of ourselves engender and thicken in our mind the belief that after all the Federal Government and the general public of America are powerless to ensure our treaty rights. And we are coming very near the real danger.

We fully understand the value of the spirit of conciliation in international intercourse; and we are at all times open to its exercise to all reasonable extent. In our relations with America, however, there has always been something higher and nobler than this, which is after all a matter of exigency. The reason why we hold America in the highest esteem and treasure her friendship is because she has given our complete trust as a Power from whom we can always expect justice, truth, and humanity. And we have been taught to respect President

Roosevelt as the very personification of this America. Anything that will tend to awaken in us the suspicion that he is not all we have believed him to be, in what he has declared in the course of the past eight months, will come to us as a most dreadful shock. The shock will be so severe as to destroy with a vengeance all the hope we have built on all the lofty qualities of America. That is the danger we are afraid of most. But we hasten to say that we have no ground whatever for fearing this danger will be realised. We refer to the subject with the sole desire to warn against any action or utterance on either side which will pave the way for such a danger. In the meantime we earnestly hope that America will not be misled into attaching too much weight to rumours of political movements to pull down the Saionji Ministry, and force the recall of Viscount Aoki. The agitators themselves are not anti-American; they like Americans so well that they are agitating to be given opportunities to live quietly and unmolested among them. The only unfortunate thing is that they are getting in the hands of politicians hostile to the present Cabinet, and political stock is being made of the San Francisco situation. But that the movement will lead to any serious anti-American feeling is impossible. Nor need any significance be attached to the utterance of a man like Viscount Tani. He is a veteran soldier, erratic and old fashioned in thought and has no political following of any complexion. We do not even know what it was that he said and is now referred back by an American telegram. At all events the country possesses any number of men better qualified to talk on foreign affairs than the aged general.