

Introduction

July 1, 1924, was a day of anger against the United States in Japan. At rallies across the country, speakers denounced America as a treacherous nation and were met with enthusiastic applause. Theaters boycotted American movies: interpreters who were supposed to help audiences understand silent films refused to go on the job. This day of national action was the culmination of a period of protest during which a man had even committed *hara-kiri* outside the former embassy of the United States in Tokyo, and the nation's leading intellectual—Inazō Nitobe, who was at the time undersecretary general of the League of Nations and whose portrait today graces Japan's 5,000-yen note—had vowed never to set foot in the United States again.

The source of all this outrage was a new law that completely barred Japanese immigration to the United States. Today, this law—and Japan's aggrieved response to it—is recognized as one of the principal causes of the deadly clash between the United States and Japan that began in 1941. Indeed, Emperor Hirohito allegedly referred to the rejection of Japanese immigrants in California as one of the original causes of the Pacific war.¹ In 1941, Kikuichi Fujita, commander of the Eighth Squadron heading to Pearl Harbor, wrote in his diary that whereas the Japanese had previously just endured the treacherous behavior of the Americans, such as the exclusion of Japanese immigrants, it was now time to teach them a lesson.²

Although U.S.-Japanese relations were cordial in theory for much of the

period during the 1920s (especially after Japan accepted the framework of international cooperation in the Far East embodied by the Washington Conference in 1921–22), the American immigration law nevertheless had serious psychological consequences and thus stands out as one of the few disputes to disturb relations during those years.

To fully understand the impact of the enactment of the exclusion law on the Japanese mind, one needs to contextualize the significance of the immigration issue in the history of U.S.-Japanese relations.

From the time when the United States fleet first “opened” Japan in the 1850s until the end of the nineteenth century, U.S.-Japanese relations had been relatively smooth and without much conflict, mostly because neither country displayed much interest in expanding its power in the Pacific. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the United States was busy developing its territory within the North American continent. The fact that it was concentrating its energy on the establishment of a stable internal political system also made it difficult for the country to pay attention to affairs overseas. The Civil War, which lasted from 1861 to 1865, in particular drained the country’s energy away from Asian entanglements. Although the United States was rapidly growing into a world power, it was not yet ready to become a major player in world politics in the manner of the European powers. The United States even showed some distaste for imperial politics. For those reasons, until the late nineteenth century, the United States made few aggressive overtures outside the American continent.³

Neither was Japan ready to embark on imperial activities in the Pacific. The nation had just opened its doors to the world and was still economically and militarily vulnerable. Relations between Japan and the Western powers were characterized by unequal treaties: Japan had no tariff autonomy and the Western powers enjoyed extraterritoriality in Japan. Japan focused its energy on removing these inequalities and, therefore, was not in a position to compete with the United States.

This mutual indifference ended in the 1890s, when the dynamics of international relations in the Pacific were transformed, on the one hand, by Japan’s victory over China and the annexation of Taiwan in 1895, and on the other, by the annexation of Hawaii and the Philippines by the United States in 1898. For the first time, the United States and Japan encountered one

another as growing imperial powers facing each other across the Pacific. It is significant that in 1897 Japan sent a battleship to Hawaii for the purpose of checking on the activities of the United States. The Japanese Minister in the United States even advised his government to annex Hawaii.⁴ The two countries had come to regard each other as rivals across the Pacific.⁵ The Japanese victory over Russia convinced the United States that Japan was no longer a small, weak country in Asia. Japan, too, detected the rise of American interest in Asia, especially in China. While the U.S. navy drafted a war plan against Japan, called "War Plan Orange," in 1907, in the same year the Japanese navy added the United States to the list of its potential enemies.⁶

This strategic confrontation between the United States and Japan at the turn of the century coincided with the rise of anti-Japanese movements on the Pacific Coast of the United States. The flow of Japanese immigrants into the United States had begun late in the nineteenth century, at a time when U.S.-Japanese relations had been characterized by mutual indifference. In those days the presence of Japanese immigrants in the United States did not give rise to any massive anti-Japanese movement, partly because the number of Japanese was not large and partly because the Japanese were composed mostly of *Shosei imin* (student immigrants), who were eager to study American culture and society. However, around the turn of the century the number of Japanese immigrants to the U.S. mainland began to greatly increase, and these new immigrants were more interested in earning money than in studying American culture. It was then that conspicuous anti-Japanese movements began to appear in communities along the Pacific Coast, where the Japanese population was clustered. The majority of these new immigrants became farmers and peasants who, despite their initial intention to return to Japan after having earned enough money, turned from being sojourners to settlers as they realized the difficulties of economic success in the face of exclusionist laws and limited occupational niches. As these immigrants gradually came to play an important role in local agriculture and began to compete with American farmers, they came to be seen as a threat to American agricultural enterprise.⁷

Since the sudden increase of Japanese immigrants coincided with Japan's emergence as an imperial power, their arrival and their gradual establishment was viewed by many as part of a Japanese scheme to conquer the United States, or at least the Pacific Coast. This image of Japanese immigrants as a

threat to America linked the domestic concern of immigration to foreign relations, and the Japanese immigration issue came to occupy an increasingly central place in debates over U.S.-Japanese relations.⁸

As the number of Japanese on the West Coast increased, the anti-Japanese movement strengthened, especially in San Francisco. Most symbolic was the formation of the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League in May 1905. The League was basically an extension of the labor movement in San Francisco, and its leaders mainly came from labor unions such as the Building Trade Council and the Sailors' Union.⁹ Although the League was active in anti-Japanese propaganda, it temporarily ceased its anti-Japanese campaign when its leader, Patrick Henry McCarthy, became mayor of San Francisco and found it necessary to suppress the anti-Japanese campaign in order for the city to be selected as host for the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1915.¹⁰

The United States and Japan tried to settle the problems concerning Japanese immigrants in the United States at the government level. The Japanese immigration question, which had previously been a local issue, reached the federal level when the San Francisco Board of Education segregated Asian children into a separate public elementary school in 1906. Although this incident was settled through the good offices of the federal government, it became clear that it would no longer be possible to dismiss the Japanese immigration issue as simply a local issue. The incident was reported in Japan as an example of American discrimination against the Japanese. *Kokumin Shimbun* declared that the segregation of Japanese children was a terrible offense to Japanese pride that should not be accepted meekly. For the Japanese, who had made every effort to obtain Great Power status since the advent of the Meiji Restoration, the incident became a matter of national dignity that threatened to undermine everything Japan had achieved (*Kokumin Shimbun*, 11 December 1906 and 4 January 1907). The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907–1908 was the result of the efforts of both governments to solve the Japanese immigration issue through diplomatic channels. The Japanese government agreed that it would greatly decrease the number of immigrants by restricting the issuance of passports. Although, according to this agreement, restrictions on immigrations were to be implemented bilaterally, given that there were very few immigrants from the United States to Japan, the agreement was in fact a face-saving measure for

Japan. In fact, it was imperative that Japan, eager to assert its equality with the Western powers, be able to preserve its honor.

However, the Gentlemen's Agreement did not succeed in resolving the anti-Japanese problems on the Pacific Coast, in part because the number of Japanese who were resident in the United States did not decrease, and in part because the wives of earlier Japanese immigrants, who were still permitted to enter the United States under the agreement, continued to arrive. As the Japanese moved out from the cities into rural areas, anti-Japanese sentiment that had at first been mainly concentrated in San Francisco spread throughout California. In 1913 the California state legislature passed a bill to ban land ownership by aliens, the unstated target of which was the Japanese immigrants. This anti-Japanese land law aroused anti-American sentiments in Japan. However, these anti-American sentiments were limited around this time, because many Japanese viewed the law as a local incident and considered that most Americans not actually living on the Pacific Coast would not agree with the law.

Anti-Japanese sentiments in the U.S. eased temporarily during World War I, partly because Japan participated in the war on the same side as the United States, and partly because American attention became diverted from the Japanese immigration question. In fact, even as anti-Japanese sentiments on the Pacific Coast eased during this period, organizational movements directed against the anti-Japanese movement began to emerge. The first of these was organized by the Protestant clergy, especially those who had formerly been missionaries in Japan. The central figure was Sidney Lewis Gulick, who had taught at Dōshisha University in Kyoto between 1906 and 1913. He worked through the organizations he established, including the National Committee for Constructive Immigration Legislation and the Commission on Relations with Japan. The second pro-Japanese movement developed from those members of the business community who already had trade relations with East Asia. Members of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce were enthusiastic about the anti-exclusion movement, for example. The central figure was Wallace Alexander, who organized the Japanese Relations Committee in the chamber of commerce in 1915. Finally, some intellectuals who were devoted to the peace cause were also engaged in the pro-Japanese movement.¹¹

While the failure of the Versailles Conference to insert a racial-equality

clause into the League of Nations Covenant shocked the Japanese,¹² they nevertheless gained confidence in their position as one of the great world powers by securing status as a permanent member of the Council of the League. Although some Japanese navy officers were deeply dissatisfied over the disarmament agreement, the success of the Washington Conference further contributed to the improvement of U.S.-Japanese relations. The Conference created a postwar world order controlled by the Anglo-American powers, with which Japan chose to cooperate. Although the rejection of the racial-equality clause left a deep scar on the Japanese mind, at the beginning of the 1920s, U.S.-Japanese relations entered a relatively stable phase.

Anti-Japanese sentiment along the Pacific Coast soon became prevalent again, however, since West Coast residents were little affected by expectations at the governmental level. In 1920 a California referendum was proposed to tighten up the 1913 alien land law. California politicians, including State Senator J. M. Inman, State Controller John S. Chambers, and U.S. Senator James Phelan, took advantage of the issue to augment their influence and popularity.¹³ As a result of an energetic campaign promoted by some exclusionist state officials, including the governor, two-thirds of the California voters approved the referendum. Exclusionists in California, who were not fully satisfied with the anti-Japanese land laws at the state level, now turned their focus to the prohibition of Japanese immigrants at the federal level. In September 1920 a new exclusionist organization, the Japanese Exclusion League of California, was organized, headed by State Senator Inman, and backed by the Native Sons of the Golden West (NSGW), the American Legion, the California State Federation of Labor, the California Federation of Women's Clubs, the State Grange, the Farm Bureau, and the Loyal Order of Moose.¹⁴ The new Japanese Exclusion League soon suffered from financial difficulties, however. Fundraising efforts did not work well and, finally, in 1922, the organization ceased to function as a membership organization, although its executive members continued to meet regularly. After 1922, the financial support of two of its most dedicated members, retired newspaperman Valentine Stuart McClatchy and former U.S. Senator James Phelan, became particularly significant.¹⁵

Also in 1922, a decision of the U.S. Supreme Court concerning Japanese immigrants' eligibility for U.S. citizenship aided the anti-Japanese cause. Federal law had restricted the right of naturalization to aliens who were

either “free white” or of “African nativity and persons of African descent.” Since the former category was not precisely defined, the status of the Japanese remained ambiguous. Some felt that the “free white” category should be interpreted inclusively, so as to allow Japanese immigrants to become naturalized citizens. As a matter of fact, some lower federal courts had issued naturalization documents to some Japanese immigrants at the turn of the century.¹⁶ Although this practice was ended by order of the U.S. Attorney General in 1906, after unfavorable decisions by the lower federal courts, the Supreme Court did not take up the matter of Japanese naturalization until *Takao Ozawa v. United States* in 1922. Takao Ozawa was a perfect candidate to test the Supreme Court’s views because he satisfied all requirements for naturalization other than the racial one. Ozawa was born in Japan in 1875 and immigrated to San Francisco in 1894. Since this time, he had lived continuously in the United States. He had studied at the University of California. He was fluent in English and worked for an American company. However, the court declared Ozawa “ineligible to citizenship” because the naturalization right was reserved for “free whites” and “persons of African descent.” The court’s ruling in November of 1922, that Japanese, as “Mongolians,” were “aliens ineligible to citizenship,” gave exclusionists the justification for their cause.

In the meantime, anti-Japanese measures were also being prepared at the congressional level. Only a couple of months after the court decision, a bill to ban Japanese immigration was submitted by the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization. Since there was not enough time to pass the bill in the 67th Congress, a clause barring all Japanese immigrants from entry into the United States was inserted into an immigration bill proposed in the 68th Congress, which convened in December 1923. Although the main targets of the immigration bill were immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, whose influx into the United States had increased dramatically around the turn of the century, anti-Japanese Californians did not miss their opportunity to insert a clause to ban the entrance of “aliens ineligible to citizenship.” Although the term “Japanese” was not used, it was clear that they were the object of the bill’s new language, since most other “aliens ineligible to citizenship,” such as Chinese and Asian Indians, were already banned. Worried that the bill, if passed, would disturb American-Japanese relations, the State Department and the Japanese Foreign Ministry worked

diligently to abort the clause. The Japanese Foreign Ministry sent frequent letters of protest to the State Department, and the State Department promised the Foreign Ministry its full support in opposition to the bill. The State Department considered that it would be possible to prevent the inclusion of the anti-Japanese clause simply by requests to individual legislators.

Such anti-Japanese measures were not supported unanimously by politicians. Although the House of Representatives did not oppose the insertion of the Japanese exclusion clause, which was supported by Albert Johnson, chairman of the Committee of Immigration and Naturalization, the Senate was reluctant to accept the clause. Some senators favored quotas on Japanese immigration instead. Whether the Japanese exclusion clause passed would depend on the Senate. Since immigration policy was made by the legislative branch, the State Department had no direct means to influence Congress. Urged on by Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, Masanao Hanihara, the Japanese ambassador, sent him a letter explaining Japan's position on this issue and asking the Senate not to include the clause, which would totally prohibit immigration from Japan.

The manifest object of the [exclusion clause] is to single out Japanese as a nation, stigmatizing them as unworthy and undesirable in the eyes of the American people. . . .

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. On the contrary, the Japanese Government showed from the very beginning of this problem their perfect willingness to cooperate with the United States Government to effectively prevent by all honorable means the entrance into the United States of such Japanese nationals as are not desired by the United States, and have given ample evidence thereof, the facts of which are well known to your Government. . . .

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. (emphasis added)¹⁷

Use of the phrase “grave consequences” had unexpected results, however. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge interpreted the phrase as “a veiled threat,” and scholars have generally agreed that the Hanihara letter, rather than convincing legislators to strike the exclusion clause, actually prompted passage of the bill.¹⁸ A provision added to the bill that would have endorsed the Gentlemen’s Agreement of 1907–1908 was defeated in the Senate by a vote of 76 to 2.¹⁹

Historians have attributed Southern senators’ approval of the exclusion clause to their racism, but Southerners were in fact mostly indifferent on the race issue. Rather, their reluctance to support exclusion reflected the ill-feeling they harbored toward Senator Samuel M. Shortridge from California, who was attempting to push an anti-lynching bill through the Senate. The Southerners decided to support Japanese exclusion only after the senior senator from California, Hiram Johnson, intervened. Craving the insertion of the exclusion clause and feeling an antipathy against Hughes, Johnson made a deal, promising to dissuade Shortridge from pushing the anti-lynching bill in return for the Southerners’ support. Passage of the exclusion clause was therefore assured. It was only necessary to find a plausible reason to explain the sudden change in the views of the Southern senators. The Hanihara letter provided them with a convenient excuse.²⁰ In the end, the House passed the Johnson bill, which included the exclusion clause, on April 12, and the Senate passed a similar bill on April 15, 1924.²¹

It was not practical national interest that caused the resulting Japanese indignation. Even if the exclusion clause had not been included in the bill, the number of immigrants permitted into the United States would have amounted to less than two hundred per year. Japanese reacted vehemently to the bill because, in their eyes, the ban was a betrayal of trust. After all, many Japanese felt that the immigration question had been settled with the implementation of the Gentlemen’s Agreement of 1907–1908. The racial implications of the law also aggravated Japanese sentiment. Japan, which had chosen to cooperate with the Western powers at the Washington Conference, was not given the immigration quota allowed all European countries. In Japan, the total ban of Japanese immigrants to the United States in 1924 was interpreted as a rejection of Japan, made exclusively on the grounds of race, by the existing world order, controlled by the Western nations. The Japanese interpreted this to mean that no matter how hard Japan tried to cooperate

with the United States, they would never be treated as America's equal. Thus, the clause became a thorn in the flesh of the Japanese people and continued to be a disturbing factor in U.S.-Japanese relations in the interwar years, a period during which economic, political, and cultural issues were becoming increasingly interconnected. In this period, whenever the interests of the two countries collided, the exclusion clause sprang to the Japanese mind as evidence of American racism against the Japanese.

This history is all relatively well known today. Less well recognized are the efforts that were made during the 1924–1941 period to rectify the situation. One might get the impression, especially from studying the policies of the two governments during that period, that no one took much interest in repairing U.S.-Japanese relations once they had been damaged by the exclusion provision. But that was not the case, and therein lies the purpose of this study, which is to investigate how internationalists in America tried to build cordial U.S.-Japanese relations by opening America's doors at least a crack to Japanese immigrants.²² Recent scholarship has emphasized that not only governments but also civic groups such as business associations and private foundations play a critical role in the shaping of America's foreign relations. That is especially true of the period before World War II, and yet the number of studies focusing on the private sector during that period is surprisingly small. The weight of scholarship continues to lie on the side of works studying intergovernmental relations. Since the main players in the battle over the Japanese exclusion clause came from the private sector, a study of their activities will shed new light on how non-governmental groups can influence American foreign relations.

The necessity of emphasizing the private sector is much more apparent when we turn to American–East Asian relations. Since American foreign policy traditionally places much less importance on relations with non-European countries, the influence of non-governmental groups rises correspondingly outside of Europe. Private Americans, especially businessmen and missionaries, were always in the forefront of American expansion into the Far East. Taking advantage of close connections with the government and of public ignorance of the region, and exercising extensive influence upon public opinion, businessmen and clergymen had a significant influence on American relations with East Asia. Moreover, American foreign

relations in the Far East were also greatly influenced by the non-governmental sector because the Department of State could not afford sufficient staff and budget for its activities in the region.

This study focuses in particular on clergymen, particularly missionaries, and businessmen, two of the most prominent private-sector groups that advocated cordial U.S.-Japanese relations. Missionaries have played a significant role in American relations with non-European countries since the early nineteenth century. They were in the field many years before the first professional diplomats were assigned, and their devotion and commitment went far beyond those of other groups. Their role in East Asia has not been totally ignored; scholars have noted their influence in American foreign relations. However, those studies concentrate mostly on the role of the China mission. A good example of such work is Jane Hunter's *Gospel of Gentility*, which reveals the important role American missionaries played in the shaping of U.S. foreign relations in China.²³ Very little, however, has been written about Japan missionaries' influence upon American attitudes toward Japan. Although their activities in Japan were much less extensive than those of missionaries in China, it is also true that clergymen who spent years in Japan continued to be active in advocating amicable U.S.-Japanese relations in America. Sandra Taylor's *Advocate of Understanding* is one of the few works dealing with relations between American missionaries to Japan and American attitudes toward Japan; she clearly demonstrates the significant role those missionaries played, through the examination of a former missionary in Japan who spent his life promoting cordial U.S.-Japanese relations.²⁴ Nevertheless, despite its significance for its detailed biography of one of the most outspoken former American missionaries to Japan, Taylor's study devotes only five pages to Gulick's post-1924 activities on the Japanese immigration issue. By building on Taylor's biographical study, this work will focus on missionaries' visions of peaceful U.S.-Japanese relations.

Businessmen, especially traders, have also influenced American relations with East Asia. They have always been among the first Americans to arrive in "new" areas around the globe, even preceding the missionaries. A few works demonstrating business influence upon American foreign relations have appeared. Emily Rosenberg's *Spreading the American Dream* is a good example of a work in the scholarly tradition of focusing on non-governmental factors, and, as she demonstrates, business interests have played a vital role in

American international relations.²⁵ Joan Hoff's *American Business and Foreign Policy, 1920–1933* remains an important work, examining the business community's influence upon American foreign policy.²⁶ But although American business groups were among the few interested in U.S.-Japanese relations in pre-World War II America, not much has been written about their attitude toward Japan throughout the 1920s and 1930s, with the exception of some studies on particular investment plans to Japan (and regions under its influence) or on specific trade conflicts.²⁷ Nevertheless, they played a significant role during this period, and their reluctance to join the anti-Japan cause affected American attitudes toward Japan during these decades.

The Japanese immigration issue provides an excellent perspective from which to examine the role of private Americans, because non-governmental interests were the main actors in U.S.-Japanese relations concerning this issue. Neither the Japanese nor the U.S. government made any significant move with regard to the question after 1924. Although the issue was discussed at every major U.S.-Japanese diplomatic meeting, both governments had their own reasons for not moving to resolve the question. The Foreign Ministry in Tokyo wanted to avoid being regarded as interfering in U.S. domestic affairs. The Department of State, on the other hand, did not want to appear to be infringing on the domain of Congress. It was thus left to private groups to take action regarding the exclusion clause.

Americans advocating the modification of the immigration law, most of whom were in the private sector, can be broadly classified into two groups. The first group, made up of clergymen and peace advocates in the eastern part of the United States, was primarily active from the immediate aftermath of the enactment of the law until the late 1920s. The main figure in this group was Sidney L. Gulick, a former missionary in Japan. Born in 1860, the son of a missionary attached to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in Hawaii, Gulick followed in his father's footsteps and went to Japan in 1887 as a missionary. He taught at Dōshisha University from 1906 to 1913, when he returned to the United States and began to work to counter the anti-Japanese movement on the Pacific Coast. He took advantage of his position in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America (FCCCA) in his work for the anti-exclusion cause. After he failed to bar the adoption of the exclusion clause in the immigration law of 1924, he immediately started the movement to give Japan an immigration

quota by modifying the immigration law, thereby hoping to restore amicable U.S.-Japanese relations.

The second group of Americans who wanted to modify the immigration law were businessmen, chiefly traders on the Pacific Coast who were engaged in trade with Japan. This group was active between the end of the 1920s and the late 1930s. The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce was the central organizing resource of the movement and its main figure was Wallace M. Alexander. Alexander was born in Hawaii in 1869 and inherited from his father large holdings of sugar properties on Maui. He was president of Alexander & Baldwin Ltd. and a director of many Pacific-oriented companies such as the Matson Navigation Company and the Honolulu Consolidated Oil Company of California. He had been advocating amicable U.S.-Japanese relations since the 1900s, establishing the Japan Relations Committee in the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and serving as a trustee of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Since San Francisco was the largest port on the Pacific Coast and a large portion of its trade was with Japan, the chamber of commerce there was greatly interested in U.S.-Japanese relations. In addition to the San Franciscans, lumber traders in Washington and Oregon were also active in the movement to modify the exclusion clause. Since their lumber export business was heavily dependent on Japan, they also placed great importance on amicable U.S.-Japanese relations.

In addition to these two major groups, several other groups or individuals also advocated the modification cause. Some intellectuals, like Professor George Blakeslee of Clark University, who participated in organizations dealing with international relations such as the Institute of Pacific Relations and the Institute of Politics, belong to this category. Such intellectuals argued that jeopardizing U.S.-Japanese relations by excluding a mere two hundred or so immigrants a year was irrational.

The Japanese themselves also advocated the modification of the immigration law. Foreign ministers continued to mention the issue at successive openings of Diet sessions. The *Gaikō Jihō*, the semi-official publication of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, published articles concerning the immigration question every July on the anniversary of the implementation of the law. While the Japanese army, whose interests were focused on Asia, tended to link the United States with its Asian policy, the navy, which faced the United States across the Pacific, was much more directly interested in affairs with the

United States. Naval officers could not overlook American racial prejudice against Japanese, and as a result some of them bore a grudge. However, these opinions were relatively subdued in the public sector. More outspoken were the rightist organizations, many of which attacked the exclusion clause. These included such famous groups as Kokuryū Kai (the Amur River Society, known as the Black Dragon Society in the West) and Taikōsha (the Great Forward Society), as well as small, local, and often single-issue groups such as Kyōkutō Renmei Kyōkai (the Far East Allies Association) and Ajia Renmei Kyōkai (the Asia Allies Association).²⁸ All of them cited the exclusion clause as the foremost example of American racial prejudice against Asians and continued to advocate its modification from time to time, once the outrage of the bill's passage had abated. While the exclusion clause was merely one more example of American racism for rightist groups in Japan, it represented a deadly blow to such pro-American Japanese as Eiichi Shibusawa, a prominent businessman; Inazō Nitobe, the great educator and undersecretary general of the League of Nations; and Kentarō Kaneko, a politician and a classmate of Theodore Roosevelt at Harvard College. Now these men shouldered the burden of proof: when they argued that Japan should be on friendly terms with the United States, they had to prove that the exclusion clause was not based on a consensus of American citizens.²⁹

There was also opposition to modification from within the private sector in the United States. After the enactment of the immigration law of 1924, the anti-Japanese movement became much less profitable politically, since most of the anti-Japanese agenda had been realized by the law. Therefore, anti-Japanese agitators such as California state senator Inman and California state controller Chambers, who had been active before 1924, now appeared to be uninterested in the anti-modification movement. The main force of the anti-modification movement was the California Joint Immigration Committee (CJIC), based in San Francisco. While this organization was backed by four California organizations, it was mostly operated by one man, Valentine Stuart McClatchy, who devoted much of his personal fortune and most of his time to the activities of the organization.

V. S. McClatchy was born in Sacramento, the son of a newspaperman, James McClatchy, who had migrated to the United States from Ireland in 1840. The young McClatchy inherited a half-ownership of the *Sacramento*

Bee and established the *Fresno Bee* with his brother C. K. McClatchy. While V. S. McClatchy ran the newspaper business, he was also engaged in the anti-Asian immigrant movement as a sideline, working for the Japanese Exclusion League of California and conducting anti-Japanese campaigns in his own papers until 1923, when he sold his interest in both papers to his brother. He then began to devote most of his energy to the exclusion movement, setting up his own organization, the CJIC. This committee represented the four organizations that had earlier supported the Asiatic Exclusion League (predecessor of the CJIC). By organizing the CJIC, McClatchy became the leader of the exclusion movement in California both in name and reality.

The largest of the four supporting organizations was the California State Federation of Labor, whose membership was around nine thousand in the mid-1920s.³⁰ Although California labor had traditionally opposed Asian immigration, beginning with the influx of Chinese in the nineteenth century, the growth in the ranks of the State Federation of Labor at the turn of the century strengthened the tendency. At that time, the organization started to include many members from unskilled trades such as “butchers, cooks, waiters, stablemen, street-railway employees, retail clerks, laundry workers, teamsters, barbers, hodcarriers, tanners, and laborers.”³¹ Most in those unskilled trades were directly threatened by the influx of Japanese immigrants. Paul Scharrenberg, secretary-treasurer for the organization, spoke for these members. He was born in Hamburg, Germany, in 1877 and had come to the United States in his teens and worked as a seaman. After a ship he was on was wrecked off the coast of California, he settled in the state and joined the American Seamen’s Union, working as an editor of its *Coast Seamen’s Journal*. He enlisted himself in the California State Federation of Labor around 1904 and served as the group’s secretary from 1910 to 1936. Throughout his incumbency, he was an enthusiastic supporter of the exclusion cause. Even after the enactment of the 1924 immigration law, he continued to be active in the CJIC, representing the labor federation. His presence had a very negative effect on the anti-exclusion movement, especially after 1924, because he deceived many Japanese elites into believing he was sympathetic to them, which later caused disappointment and confusion.

The second supporting organization for the CJIC was a group of small farmers who competed with Japanese farmers. There were two major farm

organizations in California in the 1920s: the California State Grange, made up of small and part-time farmers, and the California Farm Bureau Federation, which represented relatively large farmers. Neither had expressed opposition to Japanese immigrants as cheap labor in the early years of Japanese immigration and settlement. However, once the Japanese ceased being low-paid workers and gradually became landowning farmers, they found themselves under attack by both groups. After 1924, however, the two groups diverged on the issue of Japanese farmers. The large farmers of the Farm Bureau Federation were no longer directly threatened by newly established Japanese farmers, and therefore unenthusiastic about continuing the anti-Japanese movement. Moreover, the Farm Bureau's original aims had been educational, and its membership was more than twice as large as that of the Grange, two more factors that mitigated against continuing the anti-Japanese cause. On the other hand, the small farmers in the Grange, who had to compete directly with Japanese farmers, did not easily drop the anti-Japanese cause from their agenda. The Grange thus became another of the four supporting organizations of the CJIC at the time of its founding. However, their support for the CJIC was short-lived. After 1924, they soon realized that they were far more threatened by Mexican and Filipino immigrants, whose entrance was neither banned nor controlled by the 1924 immigration law. In addition, the financial burden of CJIC membership weighed heavily on the small farm organization, whose membership never surpassed 10,000 in the 1920s. The Grange, therefore, gradually lost its interest in participating in the activities of the CJIC.³²

The third supporting organization for the CJIC was the NSGW, a fraternal society, incorporated in 1876, which strictly restricted its membership to men born in California "under the American flag."³³ It expanded greatly around the turn of the century, from 113 members at the time of its founding to 160 "parlors" and 30,000 members by 1924. Unlike the California State Federation of Labor and the California State Grange, the primary concern shared by its members was not economic but nativistic. Its monthly publication, the *Grizzly Bear*, started in May of 1907, published racist articles, and almost every issue carried anti-Asiatic pieces. The NSGW was disproportionately influential in California, because its membership included many prominent Californians, such as Frank M. Angellotti, a California Supreme Court Justice between 1915 and 1921; James Rolph, Jr., mayor of

San Francisco between 1912 and 1931; and Angelo J. Rossi, mayor of San Francisco between 1931 and 1943. Hiram Johnson, who served as governor of California between 1911 and 1917 and became a powerful U.S. senator between 1917 and 1945, and James D. Phelan, who was mayor of San Francisco between 1897 and 1902 and U.S. senator between 1915 and 1921, were also members.³⁴

The fourth supporting organization of the CJIC, the California Department of the American Legion, which chose "aggression of Orientals" as one of the first matters to be considered at its first convention in San Francisco, had been anti-Japanese from its foundation. It did not change its attitude after the passage of the 1924 immigration law.³⁵ Although its actual membership never exceeded 4,000 in the 1920s, politicians could not ignore the united voice of the veterans.³⁶

This study focuses on those groups in the American private sector, in cooperation with some Japanese, that tried to promote positive U.S.-Japanese relations, primarily through their efforts to modify the Japanese exclusion clause, during the years between the enactment of the law in 1924 and the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. While foreign policy in these years is often characterized as nativist and isolationist, it is important to note that there were strong voices in the private sector trying to promote cordial U.S.-Japanese relations within the generally hostile atmosphere. American society in the 1920s was characterized by its nativistic and exclusionistic mood, and the immigration law of 1924 was a part of that environment. But, at the same time, we cannot ignore the forceful parallel trend of internationalism, which advocated peaceful international relations. This intellectual trend was manifested in a movement within the private sector to modify the exclusion clause. Except for short periods of time during the Manchurian and Shanghai incidents, and for the years of the Sino-Japanese War, the 1930s were characterized by an isolationist mood and, since most other groups in the United States did not pay much attention to U.S.-Japanese relations during these years, voices from the private sector increasingly influenced American attitudes toward Japan. It is important to note that even after the Manchurian crisis of 1931, when internationalism became increasingly unpopular, these businessmen's internationalist voices grew stronger and continued to advocate cordial U.S.-Japanese relations. An examination of their activities reveals that the non-official sector played a significant role in

defusing U.S.-Japanese tensions during the critical period following 1924 by suggesting an alternative peaceful vision of U.S.-Japanese relations. This study also looks at the exclusion debate in Japan. Examination of the debate in Japan shows how widely and seriously the immigration issue was discussed in Japan, and demonstrates the interplay between the exclusion debate and other disputes regarding U.S.-Japanese relations. Further, by focusing on issues such as the regional variations in opinion on exclusion legislation, this study situates the debate over the exclusion question in the broader context of American racism and anti-racism. The examination of those issues will reveal the complex ways class and economic interests cut across racist predispositions. As a whole, this approach to the topic enables us to reexamine our prevalent views of American society in the 1920s and 1930s.