

BEGINNINGS OF JAPANESE-AMERICAN FRICTION

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JAPAN'S sudden declaration of war against the United States on December 7 has given Americans little opportunity to recall that the antagonism between the two nations is of comparatively recent growth. Until about a generation ago the relations between the two countries had been almost uninterruptedly friendly. Since the middle of the first decade of the present century, however, the traditional Japanese-American friendship has been subjected to serious stresses and strains, and has been preserved on several occasions only by delicate diplomatic negotiation. The growing friction was only temporarily abated by Japan's participation in the first World War on the Entente side along with the United States, but not until 1941 did it finally eventuate in an armed conflict between the two nations.

For more than a half century after the United States naval officer Commodore Matthew C. Perry opened the hermit nation to the outside world, the citizens of his country regarded the Japanese with tolerance, respect and even admiration. Probably neither Japan's unexpected victory over the Chinese in 1895 nor her even more astounding success over Russia in 1905 would have altered these feelings if the Japanese had not begun to offer economic competition to the United States. Conflicts which followed the *Treaty of Portsmouth* in 1905 seriously jeopardized the good will and friendly relations between us and the Japanese.

Our diplomatic relations with Japan at that time were regulated by the Treaty of 1894, Article I of which gave the Japanese most-favored-nation treatment in this country. During the opening years of the twentieth century a vigorous opposition to the generous provisions of this treaty began to appear in the western States. In particular, California, which had attracted more Japanese than any other State, became alarmed over the influx of Japanese laborers and almost in a state of panic, engendered by what they considered an Oriental invasion, energetically demanded federal legislation to exclude them. California labor could not compete with cheap Japanese labor, and California farmers gradually succumbed before the increasing

Japanese monopoly on small farms and truck gardens. The Japanese contrived to secure control over an alarming share of the production of celery, tomatoes, onions and other small vegetables, and taking advantage of their lower standard of living constantly undersold Californians in the market. The agitation against them was systematically carried on by the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League which was organized in San Francisco on May 7, 1905.¹

In that city the resentment against the Japanese took a drastic form in the following year, dangerously imperilling the peaceful relations between Japan and the United States. Acting under a statute of the State of California which authorized school trustees "to exclude children of filthy or vicious habits, or children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases, and also to establish separate schools for Indian children and for children of Mongolian or Chinese descent," the School Board of San Francisco passed an order on October 11, 1906, segregating Chinese, Japanese, and Korean children and excluding them from the public schools. They justified their action by alleging crowded conditions in the San Francisco schools. Out of a total of some 25,000 school children in the city, however, the Japanese numbered only 93; of this small number 25 had been born in the United States and hence were American citizens.² The crowded conditions were obviously not due to the Japanese.

Japan naturally resented this discriminatory measure, and she immediately protested that it amounted in effect to an abrogation by California of Japan's treaty of 1894 with the United States which granted to her citizens "the same privileges, liberties, and rights . . . [as are enjoyed by] native citizens or subjects, or citizens or subjects of the most favored nation." Anti-American sentiment flamed out in Japan against the School Board's order, and Japan's opposition to it whipped up jingoistic sentiment in the United States. Said Congressman Edwin Y. Webb of North Carolina in the House on February 16, 1907:

The free school privilege of California is a gift to the Japanese which they are not compelled by any law, regulation, or ordinance to accept. The only condition which the State attaches to the gift is that, if they do accept it, they must do so in certain school buildings . . . It is the height of Oriental conceit to demand more; it is the climax of Japanese swell-headedness to persist

1. Raymond Leslie Buell, "The Development of the Anti-Japanese Agitation in the United States," *Political Science Quarterly*, XXXVII, 617 (December, 1922).

2. Report of V. H. Metcalf, Secretary of Commerce and Labor, November 26, 1906, 59th Congress, 2nd Session, Senate Document No. 147, Vol. III.

in their demand. (Applause). This insistence in demanding that they be allowed to attend white schools proves their unfitness to enjoy such a privilege. (Applause). The sons of Nippon should be made to understand that notwithstanding their recent victory over decrepit Russia they cannot compel the young giant of the west to abrogate her laws or destroy her customs simply to meet the Japanese caprice or tickle Japanese vanity. (Applause).³

In the Senate a resolution (Senate Resolution 183) was introduced stating bluntly:

That it is the duty of the President of the United States to notify the Government of Japan and notify any foreign Government with whom the question may arise that the public educational institutions of the States are not within the jurisdiction of the United States, and that the United States has no power to regulate or supervise their administration.⁴

The European newspaper press freely predicted war between the two countries.

President Theodore Roosevelt and his Secretary of State, Elihu Root, however, resolved to preserve peace by securing the recognition of Japan's full treaty rights. Secretary Root's telegram to our ambassador in Tokyo on October 23, 1906, set the keynote for the Administration's policy. He wrote:

The United States will not for a moment entertain the idea of any treatment of the Japanese people other than that accorded to the people of the most friendly European nations.⁵

To enforce this policy the President summoned the members of the School Board to Washington and persuaded them to repeal the protested order, promising on his part that the United States Government would withdraw the suits which it had already started against the Board in the Federal Courts to test the constitutionality of the order. That was not all, however, for the President realized the urgent necessity of conciliating California by doing something about the Japanese problem there. According to his own later account of the conference in his *Autobiography*:

I explained that I was in entire sympathy with the people of California as to the subject of immigration of the Japanese

3. *Congressional Record*, 59th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 41, part 4, p. 3137.

4. *Congressional Record*, 59th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 41, part 1, p. 297.

5. Raymond Leslie Buell, *op cit.*, p. 624.

in mass; but that, of course, I wished to accomplish the object they had in view in the way that would be most courteous and most agreeable to the feelings of the Japanese . . . In short, I insisted upon the two points (1) that the Nation and not the individual States must deal with matters of such international significance and must treat foreign nations with entire courtesy and respect; and (2) that the Nation could at once, and in efficient and satisfactory manner, take action that would meet the needs of California.⁶

The President could hardly take such action, however, without the cooperation of Congress, and in the Capitol he was bitterly attacked for his alleged submission to Japan. Senator Edward W. Carmack of Tennessee assailed Roosevelt on February 16, 1907:

A foreign power has browbeaten the Government of the United States, and it has browbeaten a sovereign State of this Union into a surrender of its right to control its own affairs. The attitude of this Government toward California has been harsh and turbulent and offensive to the last degree. Its attitude toward Japan has been cringing, obsequious, and almost pusillanimous.⁷

Nevertheless, Congress soon thereafter passed the Immigration Act of 1907, which became law on February 20, and which seemed to give the President the authority he desired.

In the first place, this Act authorized the President to refuse to admit citizens of any foreign country into the United States if in his opinion their admission would adversely affect labor conditions here. Under this authorization, President Roosevelt issued a proclamation on March 14, 1907, "that Japanese or Korean laborers, skilled or unskilled, who have received passports to go to Mexico, Canada, or Hawaii, and come therefrom, be refused permission to enter the continental territory of the United States." This proclamation, which was later changed so as not to name the Japanese or Koreans specifically, thus served to exclude those Japanese who were entering the United States from neighboring countries or from the insular possessions of the United States, but it did not curtail immigration which came to this country directly from Japan."

In the second place, the Immigration Act gave the President power to enter into

such international agreements as may be proper to prevent the immigration of aliens who, under the laws of the United States, are or may be excluded from entering the United States:

⁶ p 413

⁷ *Congressional Record*, 59th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 41, part 4, p. 3098.

power also to regulate any matters pertaining to such immigration. Under the somewhat shadowy authority of this clause, Roosevelt and Root negotiated the Gentlemen's Agreement with Japan. It was probably drawn up in January, 1908, but all the negotiations were deeply shrouded in secrecy. The agreement never assumed the form of a treaty, it was never submitted to the Senate, and Congress apparently did not even know that the negotiations were going on. News of the agreement leaked out only gradually, and the first official announcement came in the Annual Report of the United States Commissioner General of Immigration in July, 1908, which quietly announced that:

an understanding was reached with Japan that the existing policy of discouraging the emigration of its subjects of the laboring classes to continental United States should be continued, and should, by cooperation of the governments, be made as effective as possible.

In the President's annual message to Congress on December 8, 1908, Roosevelt made no mention of the agreement at all,⁸ and in his message of the following year, transmitted on December 7, he merely alluded to it without explaining it. He simply said:

The arrangement of 1908 for a cooperative control of the coming of laborers to the United States has proved to work satisfactorily.¹⁰

Under this Gentlemen's Agreement, as described in the report of the Commissioner General of Immigration in 1908, Japan agreed to prevent her laborers from coming to continental United States. The admission of Japanese from countries adjoining the United States and from the insular possessions of the United States had already been controlled by the executive order mentioned above which carried out Section I of the Immigration Act of February 20, 1907. Under the Gentlemen's Agreement, Japan herself undertook to keep her laborers at home, and to prevent them from receiving passports which would entitle them to enter continental United States. On account of her loss of manpower in the Russo-Japanese war and her post-war economic depression, she was eager to accept this agreement and to keep her subjects at home. She only insisted that if

8. *Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration*, 1908, p. 125.

9. *Foreign Relations*, 1908, p. XLVIII.

10. *Ibid.*, 1909, p. XX.

they went abroad, they must receive the same treatment as other foreigners received. This limitation upon the entrance of Japanese laborers into the United States, therefore, did not injure the feelings of Japan. It was a significant attempt to restore and preserve friendly relations between the two countries. As Secretary Root explained in an address before the American Society of International Law on April 19, 1907:

The great question . . . Are the people of the United States about to break friendship with the people of Japan . . . has been happily answered in the negative.¹¹

The Gentlemen's Agreement continued in force until the Immigration Act of 1924 which by excluding from the United States all aliens ineligible to citizenship effectually prohibited all further Japanese immigration.¹²

Soon afterwards another agreement was concluded which established a new high mark for amicable relations between the United States and Japan. This was the Root-Takahira agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes on November 30, 1908, between Secretary Root and the Japanese ambassador, Baron Kagoro Takahira. By these courteous notes Japan and the United States reiterated their adherence to the policy of the open door in China, promised to respect each other's territorial possessions in the Pacific region, and agreed to take counsel together if anything threatened the *status quo* in the Pacific.¹³ The substance of these very important notes was never embodied in a treaty and was never submitted to the Senate, for Congress had already stirred up much bad blood between the two countries. These mutual expressions of good will and friendly purpose, exchanged by pre-arrangement on the same day, went a long way toward removing the suspicions between the two countries and confirming their friendly relations.

Those friendly relations, reestablished so painstakingly and so successfully after the threatened rupture of 1906, survived the political manoeuvrings and diplomatic struggles of the World War and the post-war settlement, until the Washington Conference for Limitation of Naval Armaments and the Immigration Act of 1924 started a new series of diplomatic imbroglios which led to Pearl Harbor.

11. *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. I, part 1, 1907, pp. 284-286.

12. For Japan's understanding of the Gentlemen's Agreement, see the letter from Japanese Ambassador M. Hanihara to Secretary of State Hughes on April 10, 1924, reprinted in "Japanese Exclusion, a Study of the Policy and the Law", by John B. Trevor 68th Congress, 2nd Session, House Document No. 600.

13. *Foreign Relations*, 1908, pp. 510-512.

SEA-GOING MOUNTIES CROSS ROOF OF THE WORLD

PHILIP H. GODSELL

WHEN Sergeant Henry Larsen, Danish-born skipper of the eighty-ton Royal Canadian Mounted Police auxiliary patrol ship *St. Roch*, and his bearded crew put the iron-barked prow of their white-painted craft into the harbour at Sydney, Nova Scotia, in the murky twilight of October 8th, they added a new and stirring chapter to the history of exploration that began in the days of Champlain.

Sailing from Vancouver in June, 1940, the scarlet-coated argonauts spent twenty-eight months of icy hell thrusting their way through ice-filled waters atop the continent, cut off entirely from the outside world save for their two-way radio. And in completing the west to east conquest of the Northwest Passage, and pushing their red-roofed detachments across the top of America, Canada's Scarlet Riders have rounded out a stirring saga of high adventure against a background of eternal ice, unregenerate whalers, buccaneering sea captains and blood-crazed "Blonde" Eskimos.

The opening chapter in the west to east conquest of the Northwest Passage began with the voyage of the buccaneering Captain Klengenberg in the stolen *Olga* to the shores of unexplored Victoria Land and his discovery of the so-called "Blonde" Eskimos up on the Arctic's rim. Fascinated by the stone pots, musk-ox horn bows and skin garments that formed part of the *Olga's* cargo, Stefansson set out on the trail of Klengenberg's Cogmollocks. And five years after the Sea Wolf ate quok and ookchuk in their snow igloos, Stefansson encountered these Tartar-faced savages on the icy floor of the Northwest Passage, and word of the blue-eyed, blonde Eskimos was headlined in every newspaper around the globe.

The rush was on! Soon trading posts and police detachments of galvanized iron, sailcloth, skins and lumber mushroomed from the icy reaches where Klengenberg had pioneered.

First to fall before the copper snow-knives of these "blonde" barbarians were Radford and Street of the Smithsonian Institute. The trouble broke when their Eskimo guide refused to leave at the appointed time and Radford raised his dog whip. Sailing through the air, Ameringnak's barbed harpoon impaled the

wrathful Radford and sent him squirming in his death throes to the ice. As Street leaped for his sled to grab his rifle, the shaggy arms of Otikok closed in a vice-like grip around him. Ameringnak's copper snow-knife flashed in the sun and Street lay dead beside his companion.

While a Mounted Police patrol sailed north from Halifax to investigate their disappearance, two more whites were reported missing along the white reaches of the Northwest Passage. Leaving their log mission at Fort Norman, Fathers Rouvier and LeRoux headed across the polar divide to carry the Cross to Klengenberg's Cogmollocks. Two years later a grease-stained note signed by D'Arcy Arden at Fort Norman, telling of Eskimos arriving at his post on Great Bear Lake wearing a crucifix and a bullet-riddled priest's soutane, reached N. W. M. P. headquarters at Edmonton, sending Inspector Denny LaNauze on a ten thousand mile patrol to the roof of the world to arrest the killers and bring them back to Calgary for trial.

But the malign gods that guarded the Northwest Passage were not yet satiated. Next to lay down their lives on its blizzard-swept reaches were Otto Binder of the Hudson's Bay and Corporal Doak of the Mounted. Both fell before the bullets of a youthful Cogmollock arrested for participation in an Eskimo blood purge that had stained these ice-fields with the blood of nine fellow tribesmen.

When I stepped ashore at Herschel Island in the summer of '23, the trial of the Eskimo murderers was in full swing. From Edmonton Judge Dubuc, with lawyers, Mounted Police escort and hangman, had travelled 2,500 miles through the wilderness to bring the white man's law to the land of the midnight sun. While bemused Eskimos stood in the dock wondering what it was all about, I headed east aboard the *Lady Kindersley* to push a string of Hudson's Bay posts still further across the Northwest Passage.

As the sun dropped behind the rock-walled inlet of Tree River, near the Coppermine, a month later, I despatched Pete Norberg and Otto Torrington in the 20-ton *El Sueno* to rear still another trading post on King William's Land, graveyard of the 129 men of the Franklin Expedition. Not till a year later did I hear from Pete again. Then a trail-worn note told how he had found four hundred unknown Eskimos in the shadow of the North Magnetic Pole, discovered relics of the lost Franklin party on Adelaide Peninsula, reared a trading post of sailcloth

and lumber in the heart of the Northwest Passage—and done a thriving trade in white fox skins.

Back at Herschel Island was enacted the final scene in the Arctic's first murder trial to make the lonely passage safe for pioneering whites. Through the purple half-light of a frigid February dawn four fur-clad Mounties crunched with measured step towards the "bone house", the Eskimo murderers slouching apathetically between them. The door slammed ominously. Across the dismal wastes drifted the death dirge of a slinking wolf. Four grey-faced men tramped back. Doak and Binder had been avenged!

With the Cogmollocks tamed, and red-roofed Mounted Police posts scattered across the roof of the world, the last link in the west to east conquest of the Northwest Passage was forged when the 80-ton *St. Roch* thrust her way through the graveyard of the Arctic and berthed in Sydney's harbour.

Heading north from Vancouver two years before, the copper-sheathed and iron-barked patrol ship followed the abandoned route of the Yankee whalers; headed past the fog-haunted Aleutians, now threatened by the slant-eyed sons of Nippon; on through Bering Straits, where Soviet Siberia and America face each other across the narrow fifty-six mile channel, and ploughing through the ice-pack around Point Barrow pulled into Herschel Island's harbour. Picking up Dad Parry as cook, and the genial Constable "Frenchie" Chartrand to round out his eight-man crew, Skipper Henry Larsen headed east along the icy sea trail blazed by the prow of Klengenbergs's stolen *Olga*.

Caught in the ice-pack off the west shore of Victoria Land, their round-bottomed ship lifted bodily out of the sea, the marooned Mounties ate their first Christmas dinner in a fantastic world of bottle-green ice near Fort Collinson which, as Fort Brabant, I established back in '23. Cut off from the outside world save for their two-way radio, with knife-edged blizzards howling their unending refrain, and mercury freezing in the thermometer, the Mounties relieved the dark monotony of Arctic night hunting caribou and polar bear, trapping fluffy white foxes, and by dog-team trips to take census of seal-hunting Eskimos huddled in their blubber-lit igloos along the rim of the Polar Sea.

Spring brought a horde of slant-eyed Cogmollocks in queer skin swallowtails with their ice-shod komatiks and fan-shaped teams of huskies from the heart of treeless Victoria Land to

overrun the marooned craft and gaze wide-eyed on the wealth of wood and metal, treasures of untold value in this world of ice and isolation.

Rounding the southern shore of Victoria Land, Larsen headed the *St. Roch* over the sunken hulls of the H.M.S. *Frebus* and *Terror*, lost with the ill-fated men on the Franklin Expedition—hulls which the Eskimos tell me can still be seen on the floor of the Polar Sea when the ice-pack parts and the storm-tossed seas are free of ice.

"It was hell at times," admitted Captain Larsen, telling of the next eleven months when his crew were marooned for their second winter only twenty-five miles from the Magnetic Pole, and a hundred and forty miles north of the post Pete Norberg had established for me on King William's Land. "Often," he added, "we never expected to get out again."

Here the Mounties investigated the case of Eskimo Joshie who abandoned his mother, wife and four children to smother to death when their snow igloos collapsed about their ears. As a raging blizzard piled mountainous drifts upon the puny dwellings, Joshie's brother had fought his way to Joshie's igloo to warn him to move his family. But Joshie, thinking only of his own skin, seized his belongings and abandoned his unfortunate family to a frigid death. Tunnelling through frozen drifts through eight days of gruelling labour in cold that congealed the blood in their veins, Mounties brought out the frozen and emaciated bodies of the victims. Charged with criminal negligence, Joshie was arrested, but a wireless message from the *St. Roch* informed Ottawa that he'd passed to the Eskimo equivalent of the Happy Hunting Grounds ere he could be brought to trial.

Here, in the shadow of the Magnetic Pole, Constable Chartrand, life and soul of the trip, succumbed to the hardships of the voyage. "We buried him silently in the Arctic night among the blizzard-swept rocks of Pasley Bay," Larsen recalled with tightening throat. "The boys gathered rocks and raised a large cairn in his memory overlooking the ice-locked bay."

Under a black cloud of despondency the *St. Roch* shouldered through a lead on the last lonely lap of her long voyage. It's a part of the trip Larsen doesn't care to dwell on. Through polar mists they espied the ghostly carcass of Captain Ross's *Victory*, abandoned a hundred and ten years before; long the mecca for Stone Age Eskimos who'd travel a thousand miles afoot to load up dog-drawn komatiks with barrel hoops and

scraps of wood and metal. But the sea-going Mounties didn't confine themselves to hunting, and taking an Eskimo census. They combed the frozen and indented coastline by snowshoe and dog-team, probing Eskimo memories for suspicious ships, strangers, or aeroplanes that might have been seen prowling the land that God forgot.

It didn't take the lesson of Pearl Harbour to remind Larsen and his crew that the aeroplane had shrunk distances, destroying the Arctic's aloofness, bringing embattled Europe into close proximity with those untrodden shores through the bomber bridge *via* Greenland and Iceland. For Nazi eyes hadn't overlooked Canada's despised Arctic as a back door into the Dominion. Forged credentials gave Colin Ross, Nazi master spy, access to the most guarded secrets of this Land of Cain and sent him north, after five trips through the United States, to the very peak of ice-bound Baffin Land—looking for German "living space", and bases from which to launch an attack on Canada.

Pushing through this blizzard-flailed land of eternal ice where pre-historic musk-oxen still roam, and gaunt Eskimos are often driven to cannibalism, the scarlet-coated adventurers met the cannibalistic and portly first lady of the land. Politely licking the grease from the seal meat ere handing it around, Atakutaluk opened her cavernous mouth in a friendly laugh and explained how she'd escaped starvation that had destroyed the rest of her tribe. She'd simply knocked her husband and three children on the head, consigned them to the stone meat pot and devoured them. It was just a case of necessity! And the cannibal lady's new husband, who's helping her adorn her igloo with a new family to replace the one she'd so unceremoniously disposed of, proudly pointed to the blue marks around her mouth as proof she'd actually eaten human flesh.

Buffeting through icy reaches, strewn with the skeletons of ships and men where explorers since the days of Columbus and Cartier have sought the storied Northwest Passage to the Orient, and only Raold Amundsen succeeded, the crew of the sturdy little craft nosed at last into Pond's Inlet, lonely post at the northern peak of Baffin Land, to be hailed by Mounties and traders. The gap in the Northwest Passage twixt west and east had been bridged at last!

Picking up Constable Doyle to replace the unfortunate Chartrand, Larsen headed the ice-battered prow of the *St. Roch* south on her last 3,000 miles between glacial Baffin Land

and Denmark's war orphan across the way where President Roosevelt's prompt action spoiled Hitler's hopes of using Greenland as a base to blast at Canada and the U. S. A.

To Nova Scotians who watched the ice-scarred *St. Roch* nose her way quietly into Sydney's harbour the moment was historic. But to those who've traversed these northern trails, it merely rounded out the work of foot-slogging Mounties, priests and traders who'd sacrificed their lives to blaze that trail across the roof of the world.