

# JAPANESE QUESTION DISCUSSED

## President Roosevelt and Pacific Coast Senators Confer on Proposed Legislation Against Nipponese.

## Chief Executive Urges Congressional Delegation to Use Their Influence Against Antagonistic Laws.

WASHINGTON, Friday, Jan. 22.—The Japanese legislation question in California was the subject of a conference yesterday between President Roosevelt and Senators Frank P. Flint, Republican, of California, Charles W. Fulton, Republican, of Oregon, and others. The President urged the necessity of California's congressional delegation using their influence as freely as possible against legislation that might be resented by Japan.

The President talked cautiously with his visitors yesterday. He went so far as to say he taught nothing pending in Congress or any of the differences between himself and Congress were of half the importance of the Japanese-California question.

Senator Flint and other Californians have told the President plainly that, while they are willing to help him, they do not place much confidence in the figures of the government as to the decreasing number of Japanese in this country.

### Facts Dispute Figures.

The facts dispute the figures, they declare, and they add that the Japanese are taking possession of whole towns.

The President advised his California visitors that he would like to see a fair trial given to the promise of the Japanese to decrease the number of their citizens in this country, and if this trial shows that there is no decrease, then he will no longer use his influence, even after he goes out of office, to prevent hostile legislation.

Senator Fulton, of Oregon, after his talk at the White House, said that the feeling as to the Japanese in Oregon was not as acute as in California.

"Japanese and Chinese children attend the same schools as white children in our state," said the senator.

The fact that there was recently sent to Congress by President Roosevelt a report by the general staff of the army, which became public yesterday, recommending fortifications for San Pedro, Cal., harbor, was made the basis for suggestions of a possibility of trouble with Japan.

At the war department this inference was given a most explicit denial. There it was said the general subject of improving San Pedro harbor had been under consideration more than two years, beginning before there was any thought of any dispute between the United States and Japan.

### National Military Problem.

It was taken up as a national military problem involving the necessary protection of the southern coast, and without reference to any particular enemy.

Formal legislative authorization for an investigation and report as to the advisability and necessity for coast fortifications for protection of San Pedro harbor was taken May 21, last. President Roosevelt sent to Congress the report of the general staff on the subject which was accompanied by estimates of the cost of the site and fortifications, aggregating \$3,655,269 for big guns, submarine mines and land accessories.

Under the head of "Ease of Conquest," the report says that recent investigation discloses that, assuming there were no effective naval opposition, an effective Oriental navy could within a few months of time, and before its hostile intentions could be strongly suspected (formal declaration of war not being made) land on the Pacific Coast an expedition of an established minimum of about 100,000 men, and such a force could be augmented by the end of two months more to a total of possibly 300,000.

"The ease with which San Pedro harbor, unfortified and through it the entire Los Angeles country, could be seized is apparent," says the report.

### Three Divisions.

From a defensive point of view the report points out that the Pacific Coast country is divided almost into three grand divisions. While each division in itself is for defensive purposes, they are so related to one another as to readily permit the occupation of any enemy.

At the same time the board points out the ease of retaining possession and the conclusion is reached that "sea, mountain and desert combine to make the position of the invader, once he has taken possession of the Los Angeles country in force, well nigh impregnable."