

WISE COURSE

America Applauds Action of President Coolidge in Signing Immigration Bill.

THE American people approve the action of President Coolidge in signing the immigration bill. With a veritable log jam of legislation in Congress, a veto would have made it virtually impossible to pass an emergency act before the expiration of the present law, June 30. The result would have been the creation of a chaotic condition which would have done irreparable harm to the United States.

It was pointed out by the President that a better policy would have been to negotiate a treaty with Japan to take the place of the "gentlemen's agreement" established by Theodore Roosevelt in 1907. Such a course would have enabled the State Department to accomplish the thing proposed by the immigration bill and would have saved the pride of a friendly nation.

However, the parliamentary situation was such that no delay was possible. The immigration act, with its provision for Japanese exclusion, now is spread upon the statute books.

* * *

NO one has doubted the right of the American people to treat immigration as a domestic question. Unquestionably we have the right to say who may come to our shores. America has extended the welcoming hand to millions from the Old World. Recently the conclusion has been reached that barriers must be erected if we are to preserve our nationality.

In the growth of America we have raised the standards of a vast horde of immigrants. We are fast reaching the limits of our power in that direction, and in justice to those already here as well as to the native-born Americans we are compelled to impose the inexorable law of justice.

It was the contention of President Coolidge and of Secretary Hughes that in the matter of exclusion, the delicate questions involved might better have been handled by conference and by treaty rather than by statutory enactment. By giving opportunity for negotiation, the exclusion which has been virtually in effect for years might have been put upon a different basis. However, Congress was not disposed to take advice and the immigration bill, with its provision for Japanese exclusion July 1, will become effective at once.

* * *

IT has been said with some justice that Japan need not take affront at the exclusion section of the bill since that country excludes Chinese and Koreans from settlement in the island empire. Also, as President Coolidge points out, Japanese tourists, students, business representatives, ministers of religion and educators are not subject to the provisions of the new law.

Whether these considerations will have weight is problematical. There is reason to believe that the President accurately judges the situation when he says that the immigration of laborers from Japan would be more easily prevented by inviting the cooperation of the Japanese government.

* * *

TAKEN as a whole, the immigration bill means that America is no longer the promised land for the populations of Southern and Southeastern Europe. The total quota of immigrants has been reduced from 357,801 to 161,990, and preference is given to the Nordic races. The larger numbers hereafter will come from Great Britain and Ireland and from Germany. The Scandinavian countries also are on the favored list.

In a survey of editorial comment in the foreign language press of America, The Literary Digest recently found that many nationalities favored restriction. The Albanians want their people to remain at home and the Belgians regard the new law with philosophical calm. Not a few of the newspapers regard immigration restriction as a real blessing.