

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

### THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF JAPAN, CHINA, AND THE UNITED STATES

Viscount Ishii, Chairman of the Japanese Commission to the United States, in his address at the banquet given in honor of the commission in New York on September 29, 1917,<sup>1</sup> not only delivered an address admirable in form and substance, as was to be expected from the representative of Japan, but he took the American people into his confidence, stating that for equal opportunity in China the door must be open, that the door to China is the Pacific, and that Japan and the United States must see to it that this vast highway be open and be guarded by them to all who seek to enter on equal terms the China of to-day and of the future.

In the course of the address he first spoke of the interest that Japan has in law and order in China, an interest hardly second to that of the Chinese, and stated, on behalf of his country, that Japan, far from attempting to undermine the independence and integrity of China, was prepared to maintain them against any aggressor. On this point, he said:

Gentlemen, I assure you that a closed door in China has never been and never will be the policy of my government. The door is open, the field is there. We welcome coöperation and competition all tending to the betterment of the equal opportunity. . . . Much has been written about Japan's policy toward China as being one that sought only the aggrandizement of Japan and the confusion, disruption or oppression of our neighbor. Here again let me reassure you. The policy of Japan with regard to China has always been the same. We want good government, which means peace, security, and development of opportunity in China.

The distinguished representative of Japan paused, as it were, in the course of his address, to state why tranquillity in China was of such importance to Japan, and he put it upon solid ground when he said, as he immediately did:

The slightest disturbance in China immediately reacts upon Japan. Our trade there is large and increasing; it is valuable to us, and China is our friendly neighbor, with vast and increasing potentialities for trade.

<sup>1</sup> *New York Times*, September 30, 1917.

The speaker well knows, and he was well within his rights to state, that equal opportunity for all is really consistent with a special interest and a special advantage to Japan, for Japan is anchored, as it were, off the coast of China. The speaker also referred to the special rights in the territory of China possessed by his country, due in part to geography and to reasons with which he supposed his hearers to be familiar.

Circumstances for which we were in no sense responsible gave us certain rights on Chinese territory, but at no time in the past and at no time in the future do we or will we seek to take territory from China or to despoil China of her rights. We wish to be and always to continue to be the sincere friend and helper of our neighbor, for we are more interested than any one else, except China, in good government there, only we must at all times, for self-protection, prevent other nations from doing what we have no right to do.

*Il faut qu'une porte soit ouverte ou fermée.* The island empire of Japan appreciates that the door must be either open or shut, and is determined, so far as in it lies, that it shall not be shut, even although force must be used to keep it open.

Not only will we not seek to assail the integrity or the sovereignty of China, but will eventually be prepared to defend and maintain the same integrity and independence of China against any aggressor. For we know that our own landmarks would be threatened by any outside invasion or interference in China.

After these remarks by way of introduction, the distinguished representative of Japan stated in no uncertain terms that the distrust which had unfortunately grown up between the two countries was caused by neither, but by the machinations of that country with which Japan and the United States are now at war.

I am endeavoring [he said] to secure your coöperation in this work of revision of a situation built upon misconception and fraud. I am asking you to cast out the devil of suspicion and distrust in order that we who are allies and partners may rebuild the shattered edifice of mutual confidence which means so much as a stronghold for us both. We are neighbors, friends, and allies.

By what means is this to be brought about? Like so many of the precious things in life, it lies so near us that we overlook it.

Next, as to the highway to China.

The Pacific Ocean is our common highway. It is guarded and the highway has been swept by our ships of the pirates of the seas so that our countries' trade may continue and our intercourse be uninterrupted. We guard the Pacific Ocean together with our ships.

Here the Viscount might have stopped, for in things material the greatest guarantee is found. Ships were needed to clear the highway of the evil-minded, and ships are needed to guard it, when clear. But, in his opinion, the good faith of two nations, evidenced by their plighted word, is a greater guarantee than the ships whereof he speaks. Thus, he says:

But more than this and better than the ships or the men or the guns is the assurance of the notes exchanged between your Secretary of State, Elihu Root, and our Ambassador Takahira, in 1908, in which it was mutually agreed and "formally resolved to respect the territorial possessions belonging to each other in the region of the Pacific Ocean."

What are these "scraps of paper"? They are two in number, and so brief that he who runs may read their text, which follows:

*Notes exchanged between the United States and Japan November 30, 1908, declaring their Policy in the Far East*

IMPERIAL JAPANESE EMBASSY, WASHINGTON  
November 30, 1908

SIR:

The exchange of views between us, which has taken place at the several interviews which I have recently had the honor of holding with you, has shown that Japan and the United States holding important outlying insular possessions in the region of the Pacific Ocean, the governments of the two countries are animated by a common aim, policy, and intention in that region.

Believing that a frank avowal of that aim, policy, and intention would not only tend to strengthen the relations of friendship and good neighborhood, which have immemorially existed between Japan and the United States, but would materially contribute to the preservation of the general peace, the Imperial Government have authorized me to present to you an outline of their understanding of that common aim, policy, and intention:

1. It is the wish of the two governments to encourage the free and peaceful development of their commerce on the Pacific Ocean.
2. The policy of both governments, uninfluenced by any aggressive tendencies, is directed to the maintenance of the existing status quo in the region above mentioned and to the defense of the principle of equal opportunity for commerce and industry in China.
3. They are accordingly firmly resolved reciprocally to respect the territorial possessions belonging to each other in said region.
4. They are also determined to preserve the common interest of all Powers in China by supporting by all pacific means at their disposal the independence and integrity of China and the principle of equal opportunity for commerce and industry of all nations in that empire.
5. Should any event occur threatening the status quo as above described or the

principle of equal opportunity as above defined, it remains for the two governments to communicate with each other in order to arrive at an understanding as to what measures they may consider it useful to take.

If the foregoing outline accords with the view of the Government of the United States, I shall be gratified to receive your confirmation.

I take this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration.

K. TAKAHIRA

Honorable ELIHU ROOT  
*Secretary of State*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON  
November 30, 1908

EXCELLENCY:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of to-day setting forth the result of the exchange of views between us in our recent interviews defining the understanding of the two governments in regard to their policy in the region of the Pacific Ocean.

It is a pleasure to inform you that this expression of mutual understanding is welcome to the Government of the United States as appropriate to the happy relations of the two countries and as the occasion for a concise mutual affirmation of that accordant policy respecting the Far East which the two governments have so frequently declared in the past.

I am happy to be able to confirm to Your Excellency, on behalf of the United States, the declaration of the two governments embodied in the following words:

1. It is the wish of the two governments to encourage the free and peaceful development of their commerce on the Pacific Ocean.
2. The policy of both governments, uninfluenced by any aggressive tendencies, is directed to the maintenance of the existing status quo in the region above mentioned, and to the defense of the principle of equal opportunity for commerce and industry in China.
3. They are accordingly firmly resolved reciprocally to respect the territorial possessions belonging to each other in said region.
4. They are also determined to preserve the common interests of all Powers in China by supporting by all pacific means at their disposal the independence and integrity of China and the principle of equal opportunity for commerce and industry of all nations in that Empire.
5. Should any event occur threatening the status quo as above described or the principle of equal opportunity as above defined, it remains for the two governments to communicate with each other in order to arrive at an understanding as to what measures they may consider it useful to take.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurance of my highest consideration.

ELIHU ROOT

His Excellency  
BARON KOGORO TAKAHIRA  
*Japanese Ambassador*

After referring to the agreement, evidence alike of statesmanship and good will, Viscount Ishii continued:

Gentlemen, Japan is satisfied with this. Are you? If so, there is no Pacific Ocean question between us. We will coöperate, we will help and we will hold, each of us, what is guaranteed under that agreement.

Viscount Ishii and the people of Japan for whom he speaks can rest assured that the people of the United States answer "Yes" to his question.

JAMES BROWN SCOTT.

#### FELLOWSHIPS IN INTERNATIONAL LAW

In 1914 the Conference of American Teachers of International Law referred certain matters relating to the study and teaching of international law to a standing committee of the American Society of International Law consisting of Messrs. Philip Marshall Brown, Amos S. Hershey, Charles Cheney Hyde, Harry Pratt Judson, Robert Lansing, Jesse S. Reeves, James Brown Scott, Alpheus H. Snow, and George G. Wilson. A report of this committee in 1916 showed that a considerable number of the recommendations of the Conference had been or were about to be carried out. At the April, 1917, meeting of the Society the Committee at its request was discharged; but it may be advisable to call to attention the following recommendations and action.

The Committee recommended that fellowships in international law be established under the following regulations:

1. These fellowships shall be awarded only to graduate-students holding the equivalent of a bachelor's degree from an approved institution. The stipend attached to such fellowship shall be \$750.00.

Special fellowships may be awarded to teachers in international law or related subjects. At least one year of previous teaching in international law or related subjects, or its equivalent in practical experience, is required. The stipend attached to such fellowship shall be \$1000.00.

2. The qualifications of candidates shall be approved by the Standing Committee on the Study and Teaching of International Law and Related Subjects of the American Society of International Law.

In general a knowledge of the elements of International Law and a good knowledge of history is necessary, and it is desirable that at least two modern languages be furnished. Other special previous preparation will be considered.

The student shall report to the Committee twice during each year.