

CALIFORNIA TAKES FINAL STEP.

OVER THE PROTESTS of President Wilson and Secretary Bryan, the California Legislature has adopted an alien land ownership measure which meets with the disapproval of the Japanese government. The act is now before Governor Johnson, who has promised to hold it up for a limited period in deference to the desire of the national chief executive.

Now that the final step has been taken, it must be confessed that there is a considerable measure of reason in the California attitude. Whether it be politic is another matter and one which future events may be expected to determine.

California has observed the treaties of this country with Japan. There appears to be general concurrence on this point. The objectionable phrase "ineligible to citizenship" was excised from the measure and a leasing clause inserted, permitting the Chinese and Japanese to hold property for certain stipulated purposes for limited periods.

This much was a concession to the administration and in deference to the protests of Japan. Under a strict construction of law, it would appear that the Californians have assumed a position that cannot be too severely criticized.

On the broader proposition of the advisability of barring out the Japanese and Chinese—as is the purpose of any such law, when all is said and done—there may be wide differences of opinion. However, this much is emphatic: California does not want them and there is no treaty binding its hands, it has taken decisive steps to drive them out.

The next move is "up to" the administration. What it will be is not yet definitely known. If it results in a definite settlement of the issue, one way or another, it will be welcomed. This constant unrest is detrimental to the best interests of all the Coast states.