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Letter From Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson to William Howard Taft, April 27, 1909

Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson

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April 27, 1909.

My dear Mr. President:

I have the honor to acknowledge the letter of April 26th, wherein you express the view that everything possible should be done to bring about a reception of the body of Japanese business men who are to visit this country at the suggestion of our Chambers of Commerce in a manner as cordial and as generous as would correspond with the uniformly handsome hospitality which the Japanese extend to visiting Americans. Careful note is made of your direction that this view govern the activities of the Department in this matter.

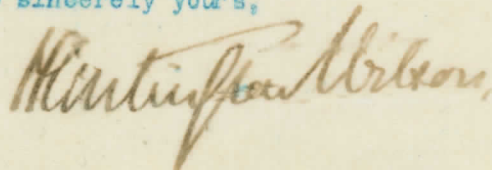
I am happy to assure you that the Department has been making and will, of course, continue to make every effort in this direction. Thus far we have received the representatives of the Seattle, Tacoma, Spokane, Portland and San Francisco Chambers of Commerce and freely discussed the matter with them. It appeared that the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce had been holding aloof, and on the nineteenth instant the President of this Chamber of Commerce telegraphed to his representative who was at the time in Washington, to ask the State Department to urge upon the associated Chambers of Commerce of the Pacific Coast joint action. Believing that the San Francisco Chamber was anxious to co-operate with the Northwestern Chambers the Department accordingly wrote to the Governors of Washington and California asking them to use their influence to cause the various Chambers of Commerce of their respective States to act together. The Governors were at the same time informed of the importance which

the Government attaches to the successful reception of the Japanese visitors. The Department has also referred to the Attorney General the question whether the railroads could legally grant free transportation to the Japanese party. To this inquiry no final reply has yet been received, but we still hope that at least it may be found legal to grant a nominal excursion rate. We have also expressed, through the Embassy at Tokyo, the gratification of the Government at the prospective coming of a body of representative Japanese business men. Continued action along these lines and suitable official entertainment of the party when it reaches Washington, and the possible despatch of a minor official to accompany and make himself useful to the party is all that has occurred to the Department as practicable in furtherance of the policy you approve.

The Japanese party is expected to arrive on the Pacific Coast about next September.

Requesting to be informed of any farther or different steps which might be pleasing to you, I have the honor to be, my dear Mr. President, with great respect,

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William Brewster".

Acting Secretary.