

Anti-China Sentiment in the United States

Many Chinese immigrants came to the western part of the US in the second half of the 19th century. They were mostly men, working in the gold fields of California, but by the last decades of the century, they faced expulsion from cities such as Seattle and Denver. There were over 200 purges in California. In early 1917, xenophobia was at a new high, and a bill restricting immigration was passed over President Wilson's veto.



Poster announcing the democratic passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act

Pressure from Japan and Great Powers

The liberal-leaning Japanese negotiators at Versailles—Baron Makino Nobuaki promised Arthur Balfour, the British foreign secretary, that the Japanese would not protest the racial equality decision at the plenary session if their claims to Shandong were approved. While it is possible that the Japanese were bluffing, the Council of Four approved Japanese concessions in Shandong on April 30, 1919.

Shandong (Shantung)

Located in the northeastern part of China

1898 Germany controlled Shandong

1915 China agreed to give Shandong to Japan

1919 Shandong was given to Japan

1922 Shandong returned to China



Wilson's Goal in Paris & His Failed Promise

Wilson's goal in Paris was to pass the League of Nations. Although Wilson wanted to support Wellington Koo to reclaim Shandong, Japan, and many other great powers disagreed with Wilson. As a result, Shandong was given to Japan. This led to the May Fourth movement in China. National self-determination and territorial integrity, those Wilsonian principles, seemed unrealistic.

Woodrow Wilson &



The Shandong Problem

By WWH Summer 2022 Scholar Tian Liao

The Chinese Communist Party Established in 1921

After Shandong was given to Japan, Chinese nationalists were angry. Some concluded that democracy itself was flawed and wrong for China and that the West would never be China's friend. It was a time of radical change and intellectual ferment. Chinese were impressed that the new communist regime in Russia repudiated old unequal treaties with China. Many Chinese radicals moved towards Marxism.



我們偉大勝利的旗幟毛澤東和斯大林

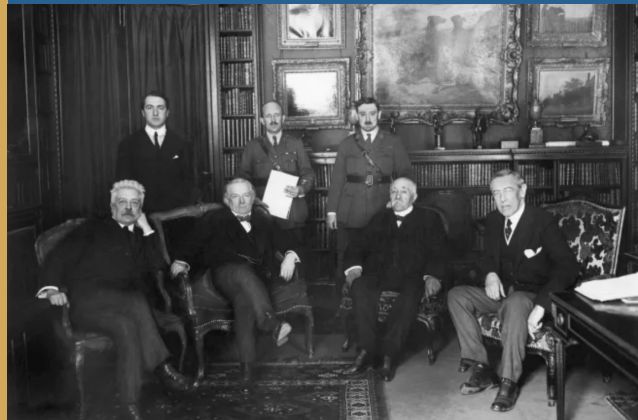
China Felt Betrayed

Li Dazhao, one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party, said, "This time the war in Europe is over. Have we ever dreamed that humanity and peace won the victory...It's just a fake signboard of a robber government. Let's look at what was decided at the Paris Conference, which action had the slightest trace of humanity, justice, peace, and light? No decision was made without robber states sacrificing the freedom and rights of weak nations!"



Wellington Koo, One of the Republic of China's representatives at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919

Koo refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles.



Italian Premier Vittorio Orlando, British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, French Premier Georges Clemenceau, and U.S. President Woodrow Wilson meeting at Wilson's Paris home prior to the signing of the Versailles Treaty

Washington Naval Conference



Japan and China signed a bilateral agreement, the Shantung (Shandong) Treaty, which returned control of the province and its railroad to China.

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