

# "Restrictions of Immigration" Iowa Newspaper Article, May 9, 1900

## RESTRICTIONS OF IMMIGRATION

*Proposed Bill In the Interest in the Interest of Organized Labor*

New York. May 9. — A conference of representatives of District Assembly 49, Knights of Labor; District Assembly 75 and 220 of the Brooklyn Central Federation of Labor and Central Labor Union 3, of Brooklyn, was held Tuesday evening in this city to devise means to secure legislation to restrict immigration and amend the Chinese exclusion act so as to include Japanese in its provisions. The call for the conference, began by saying that ag army of foreign laborers are flocking to these shores and are crowding into occupations that are already overstocked, thus inflicting great hardships upon American workmen. It is declared that the large proportion of these aliens merely birds of damage and do not intend becoming citizens. Delegate William Allen, of District Assembly 49 said the object of the conference was to see what could, be done to restrict the immense immigration that is pouring in.

“We read that strikes are breaking out all over the country,” he declared, “but the obstacle to their success is that there is a large amount of unemployed labor that is ready to step in and fill the gaps. This unemployed labor is caused by the great Immigration that flows In, and as long-as the employers can get these newcomers they will never yield to the demands of the strikers for an advance of wages or reduction of hours of labor. Last year several employers took immigrants from Ellis Island to fill the places of strikers. That there are more men even In the skilled trades than there is demand for, is seen from the fact- that some unions have raised their Initiation fees to the prohibitive figures of \$100 and \$125, and several unions have closed their books and will not admit any one to membership, on any terms. So I do not see how trade organizations would oppose the movement for the restrictions of immigration. It is in fact an outrage upon our workmen to allow aliens to come in and take away their work or compel them to accept starvation wages, and it is an outrage upon aliens to let them come here until there is work for them.”

Delegate Allen then submitted a rough draft of the proposed bill. It prohibits any, alien entering the United States to engage in any occupation who does not intend to become a citizen, or who Intends to engage in any congested occupation, or to take the place of a striker or locked out workman, or to work for less than, the prevailing rate of wages. The bill requires the commissioner of labor statistics to collect all information on industry and trade and to send it to the immigration bureau and United States consuls. All Intending immigrants must apply for certificates to the consuls, who will furnish certificates or not, according to the information they receive as to the demand for labor or the congestion of labor in this country. The bill finally proposes an amendment to the Chinese exclusion act, providing that all laws now in force prohibiting the immigration of Chinese or persons of Chinese descent be amended so as to include Japanese in its provisions. A committee was appointed to draft a bill and submit it for consideration to the various central labor organizations, and to report.