

Leland Stanford's Statement to the President (Modified)

Source: a statement made by Leland Stanford, President of the Central Pacific Railroad Company, to the President of the United States on the progress of the transcontinental railroad, October 10, 1865.

Most white laborers on the Pacific Coast prefer the more profitable mining and agricultural jobs over railroad work. The majority of the laborers employed by us are Chinese, who are a large part of the population of California. Without them it would be impossible to complete the western portion of this great national railroad within the time frame required by Congress.

As a class, the Chinese laborers are quiet, peaceable, patient, industrious and economical—ready to learn all the different kinds of work required in railroad building. They soon become as efficient as white laborers. More practical and economical, they are content with lower wages. They are organized into societies that help to assist each other. These societies, thousands of people strong, are led by intelligent businessmen, who point the other Chinese toward the best employment opportunities...

Leland Stanford's Statement to the President (Original)

A large majority of the white laboring class on the Pacific Coast find more profitable and congenial employment in mining and agricultural pursuits, than in railroad work. The greater portion of the laborers employed by us are Chinese, who constitute a large element in the population of California. Without them it would be impossible to complete the western portion of this great national enterprise, within the time required by the Acts of Congress.

As a class they are quiet, peaceable, patient, industrious and economical—ready and apt to learn all the different kinds of work required in railroad building, they soon become as efficient as white laborers. More prudent and economical, they are contented with less wages. We find them organized into societies for mutual aid and assistance. These societies, that count their numbers by thousands, are conducted by shrewd, intelligent business men, who promptly advise their subordinates where employment can be found on the most favorable terms. [...]

We have assurances from leading Chinese merchants, that under the just and liberal policy pursued by the Company, it will be able to procure during the next year, not less than 15,000 laborers. With this large force, the Company will be able to push on the work so as not only to complete it far within the time required by the Acts of Congress, but so as to meet the public impatience.

Source: http://www.cpr.org/Museum/Chinese_Laborers.html