Public Opinion and the Portsmouth Conference

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PUBLIC OPINION AND THE PORTSMOUTH CONFERENCE

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PUBLIC OPINION AND THE PORTSMOUTH CONFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

The Russo-Japanese War was brought to a close by the Portsmouth Conference. The idea of a conference was initiated by the two belligerents themselves and by President Roosevelt who offered mediation. The underlying causes in their desire for peace may never be brought to the foreground; however, the study of the events leading to the conference, and the progress and results of the conference bring out pertinent factors which may point out hidden causes for seeking peace. By pointing out public thought as printed in the United States journals of opinion and newspapers, an attempt has been made to show the influence, if any, that public opinion may have had upon the decision of those figuring in the peace plans. If public thought had no influence in this regard this part of the survey may serve as an index of public thought at that period.

This study, then, sets out to find the trend in public thought prior to the peace negotiations, during the Portsmouth Conference and after peace arrangements had been made. The study also attempts to compare the opinion of the American people at one phase of the developments with evidences of public thought at other stages of the negotiations and an attempt has been made to point out conditions which may have caused the American people to shift in sentiment from one of indifference to a definite sympathy toward Japan and
later to an almost hostile attitude toward the Japanese people as is pointed out as the story of public opinion regarding the Portsmouth Conference unfolds.
CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF THE PORTSMOUTH CONFERENCE

During the latter part of the nineteenth century the relations between the United States and Japan had been friendly. Not only were there no serious differences in governmental affairs in that period, but the people of both countries were kindly disposed to each other. The people of both Japan and the United States had had few occasions to demonstrate their good will toward each other; therefore their regard for each other developed into a lukewarm feeling which was taken for granted. Payson J. Treat viewed this mutual sentiment in the following way: "...it may be said that the American people so far as they are informed concerning Far Eastern affairs, were interested in and well disposed to Japan."¹ Interest in the Far East, therefore, did not originate with President Theodore Roosevelt's activities in the war between the Russians and the Japanese; interest in the Far East had begun before the turn of the century which saw the United States emerge as a world power.

The development of the United States as a world power gave impetus to new and varied interests in the Far East. The possession of the Hawaiian

and Philippine-Islands as well as the growth of population and commerce on the Pacific Coast, trade in the Far East and the building of the Panama Canal were, in the eyes of most historians, factors which caused the United States to look toward Asia.\(^2\)

By 1905, the eyes of the American people were focused on Asia for a number of reasons. In looking toward Asia, European politics also came into view because there exists an interdependence between far eastern policies and developments in Europe.\(^3\)

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 did not stand as an isolated policy and may not be fairly judged without considering the events in Europe, the Near East and other parts of the Far East as well.\(^4\) Many countries were indirectly involved in the war. Korea and Manchuria played a large part in the conflict but the more remote pawns in the contest—Hawaii and the Philippines caused the American nation and Mr. Roosevelt to become even more concerned about the war's outcome. Tyler Dennett points out this fact when he tells us that it is a false assumption to think that the Far Eastern conflict was merely a contest for Korea. He wrote:

Korea was one of the pawns, though not so important a one as Manchuria...Morocco...was another, and perhaps we shall conclude that the desire of the American government to protect her possessions in

\(^3\) Ibid.
\(^4\) Ibid.
Hawaii and the Philippines was also a factor in the settlement.  

Formerly the desire to check European aggression in China had resulted in the formation of the Open Door. Economic and military penetration in this area continued to advance to the point that a settlement had to be made. The question that arose from the conflict between the Russian and the Japanese governments was: who will be the undisputed ruler of the Pacific—Russia or Japan? This change of events affected American economic interests directly, and was a possible threat to political and social developments in the future.

The average American was unaware of the importance of Far Eastern events. Mr. Dulles points out reasons why Americans as a whole were uninterested in these matters at the time. He said:

...while the country was still a little intoxicated by its proud status as a new world power and the energetic Mr. Roosevelt was not only prepared but eager to dabble in international politics in other parts of the world, the man on the street found interests near at home more important.  

The American people's attitude toward Japan, then, was one of friendly indifference; but because the public objected to Russian aggression in Manchuria, talk of the "Muscovite Peril" began to spread

5 Ibid.

Even in the conversation of the man on the street.7

In 1903 President Roosevelt had become alarmed because of the Russian advance into Manchuria. Because he feared this action he wrote Secretary of State John Hay concerning Russia. In this note Mr. Roosevelt stated that he would go to any extreme if Russia continued her policy in Manchuria.8 Many thought, however, that Mr. Roosevelt had gone a little too far in his statement. Mr. Dulles said that people would not have backed Mr. Roosevelt in this action. He pointed out that the public was only mildly aroused, and although the press featured such articles as "Is Russia to Establish a Universal Empire?"; "Russia's Conquest of Asia"; and "Shall Russia Dominate the World?"; no vital interest of theirs was at stake in Manchuria. They knew too little about Manchuria and it was too far away.9 Most of the material written in this period shows that the American public favored Japan, however, there is no evidence at the early stages of the negotiations that the public was aroused toward Russia. The sentiment toward Japan had a moral basis: the American public disliked Russia's lack of good faith in not keeping her word in evacuating Manchuria.10

7 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 New York Daily Times
Foreign investors had frequently warned the State Department of the dangerous situation in Manchuria. Journalists, foreign investors and governmental officials had for a long time been aware that possible commercial and political changes might be the result of Russia's penetration in Manchuria. 11

Correspondence continued between Mr. Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hay concerning the Russian advance into China. The President even went so far as to say that the Russian diplomats deceived the United States with "brazen and contemptuous effrontery" while at the same time they attempted to organize China against our interests. 12 America and European powers complained of Russia's penetration into China. In answer to these complaints Count Cassini, the Russian Ambassador in Washington, pointed out that China was already being dismembered by many countries, and because of these prevailing circumstances, Russia would never withdraw from Manchuria. 13

Mr. Roosevelt's policy in the Far East at this time was "enthusiastically endorsed by the people." 14 No transition was necessary when Secretary of State Hay was sent abroad in March for his health. Mr. Roosevelt

11 Dulles, Road to Teheran, p. 86-87
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
had for some time "virtually been his own secretary of state."15 Regarding Mr. Roosevelt's dual position as president and secretary of state, several comments were made: A Japanese minister said, "The president is certainly introducing a new school of diplomacy."16 Whitney Griswold quoted another statement which said that the President laid himself open to knocks which should have been taken by the Secretary of State.17 "Few presidents, said Mr. Griswold, "have exerted such an arbitrary control of foreign policy as Theodore Roosevelt."18 The President shared confidences chiefly with three men: Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, Baron Speck Van Sternbury, and Jusserand.19

Mr. Roosevelt's favor was sought for many reasons. The Japanese government told President Roosevelt of its readiness for his good offices.20 Germany also sought Roosevelt's favor. Germany's policy had been to push Russia along in Manchuria.21 This design of the Kaiser was to help the Czar win Manchuria and to share with him the partitioning of North China in return for Russian concessions in middle Europe and north east to the Berlin to

15 Ibid.


17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.


21 Griswold, p. 94
Bagdad policy and the Drang Nach Osten. The Kaiser knew that this scheme would be detected if he openly became involved in this diplomatic intrigue; therefore he appealed to Mr. Roosevelt through the German Minister, Sternburg, to summon the belligerents to observe the neutrality of China outside the sphere of military operations—that is outside of Manchuria and North China.

Samuel Bemis also stated that the Kaiser was planning an alliance with Russia, so he wanted to win Roosevelt's support for that cause. Roosevelt had let Japan know that he thought that they deserved to have Korea and Secretary of State Hay's note on the "open door" had ignored Korea. Mr. Roosevelt asked one condition for his services: that Japan pledge herself to the doctrine of "open door" in Manchuria. Great Britain stayed clear of these negotiations.

Prior to the actual offer of good office to the two belligerents, Mr. Roosevelt had on March 9, written to Sir George Tevelyan saying that he had privately and unofficially advised Russia to sue for peace. This action and other diplomatic maneuvering preceded President Roosevelt's official peace proposal. Mention of peace also had been made to King Edward

22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Bemis, p. 491
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
of England. Both the Russian Ambassador, Count Cassini, and the Japanese Minister Koretiyo Takahira had visited Washington, making peace overtures; however, peace negotiations did not seem hopeful because neither of the warring countries wanted to appear to be the first to accept peace measures.

Mr. Roosevelt gave a summary of this situation in his autobiography. In his chapter entitled "The Peace of Righteousness", Mr. Roosevelt wrote:

During the early part of the year 1905 the strain on the civilized world caused by the Russo-Japanese War became serious. The losses of life and of treasure were frightful from all sources of information at home. I grew most strongly to believe that a further continuation of the struggle would be a very bad thing for Japan, and an even worse thing for Russia.

Mr. Roosevelt in his next statement minimized the effects of Japanese victories in the Pacific, by assuming that Russian victory would have a damaging affect on the future. He continued saying "...Japan might have met defeat, and defeat to her would have spelt overwhelming disaster...

The next statement tells of Mr. Roosevelt's peace offer: "I believed, therefore, that the time had come when it was greatly to the interest of both combatants to have peace..."

When Mr. Roosevelt thought it possible to get both to agree to
peace, he sent identical notes to the two powers proposing that they meet through their representatives to see whether peace could be made. Mr. Roosevelt offered to act as an intermediary in bringing about this meeting.  

An article in the *New York Times* from St. Petersburg denied attempts to secure peace. This statement said: "From all information obtainable it is regarded as certain that actual negotiations for peace between the belligerents are not yet underway;" from Paris came a denial that Minister De Lacasse' and Dr. Montono, the Japanese minister, were taking an active part in the negotiations for peace; and Jusserand who had visited the president in Washington said, "I do not think the government of the United States is considering as yet any offensive move toward intervention."  

Efforts between Russia and Japan to settle differences peacefully had never ceased from the outbreak of hostilities. Four different kinds of mediation had been offered. One sought to bring about peace through an international conference; England and France as allies of the belligerents offered mediation; the United States because of its neutral status was a possible source from which many thought mediation might stem; the possibility

36 *New York Times*, April 1, 1905  
that negotiations between the two belligerents themselves might bring peace was also a source of hope to the non-military factors in each government. 39

"I made my first move in the negotiation on their request", Mr. Roosevelt wrote Senator Cabot Lodge. 40 The Japanese in their appeal for peace wanted the United States to act as a "neutral", they wanted to conduct negotiations directly with Russia. 41 Of his action, Mr. Roosevelt said in his autobiography, "I first satisfied myself that each side wished me to act, but that naturally and properly each side was exceedingly anxious that the other should not believe that the action was taken on its own initiative." 42 It was at this time that the president sent identical notes to both Russia and Japan proposing that they meet through their representatives to see whether peace could be brought about by such a meeting.

The Russo-Japanese War had begun February 1904. The sympathetic attitude toward Japan was strengthened by the general belief that Japan had entered the war after suffering much humiliation by Russia. 43 Secretary Root justified the Japanese cause in commencing the war and even praised the Nipponese for their "frankness" and "meticulousness" in minimizing the cause of the controversy. 44

39 Dennett, p. 170

40 Joseph E. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Times (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), p. 382

41 Roosevelt, p. 540

42 Ibid.

43 New York Daily Times.

Although Russia was much larger and supposedly possessed a more powerful military machine, she had lost much in the struggle with the Japanese. It was improbable that she would be more able to defend Eastern Siberia and Northern Manchuria than she had been able to defend Southern Manchuria and Korea.\(^{45}\) Japan, too, suffered tremendous losses from the lack of proper resources and the drain on her men.\(^{46}\) Further continuation of the struggle, thought Mr. Roosevelt, would be a very bad thing for Japan and even worse for Russia.\(^{47}\)

In the spring and summer of 1905, the Japanese military and naval leaders left their posts for Tokyo to insist that the Cabinet make peace.\(^{48}\) Russia's fleet had been annihilated, her army had been disastrously defeated, her railway connections were entirely inadequate; moreover, she was confronted with financial and political distress.\(^{49}\) Although the war map was in Japan's favor, her financial status like Russia's was poor and they had paid dearly for each advance. Russia used French loans and Japan received loans from both Great Britain\(^{50}\) and the United States.\(^{51}\) In a *New York Times* financial section, a report praised Japan's financial situation. It

\(^{45}\) Theodore Roosevelt (revised ed.), p. 583

\(^{46}\) Ibid.

\(^{47}\) Ibid.

\(^{48}\) Griswold, p. 118

\(^{49}\) Brown, p. 178-180

\(^{50}\) The President of the Kuhn Loeb Company was decorated after the War by the King for his cooperation with the Anglo-Japanese alliance. Bishop, p. 381

\(^{51}\) Jewish bankers used war loans to Japan as a means of retaliation for Russia's barbaric anti-Semitism. Griswold, p. 105
also revealed the fact that public opinion played an important part in the stock markets by causing speculators to strive more desperately to speculate which country would be victorious. A one hundred and fifty million dollar ($150,000,000) Japanese loan was floated in New York. The report stated that French buyers were "hedging" to gain from Japan possible losses from Russia. (The article itself stated that this was not a universal belief.)

Considerable hesitation ensued between the writing of the peace notes and the acceptance by the belligerents. The Japanese people thought the time was too early for peace and that the very least to expect for indemnity from Russia would be 1,500,000,000 yen. There was also the general feeling in Japan that unless thoroughly satisfactory terms were reached, there would be no peace. They thought that they should first capture Harbin and Vladivostock. Other Japanese demands involved Sakhalien. They thought Japan should have Sakhalien because therein laid the chief source of fear in insuring supremacy of the Sea of Japan. Sato regarding this said that it merely represented editorial opinions and would do no harm.

52 New York Times, April 2, 1905

53 Vasujior Isikawa editor of the Hoki Shimbun, a Tokyo newspaper as reported in New York Tribune. Some wished indemnity of 5 billion yen from Russia.

54 New York Tribune, August 1, 1905.
He also said, "Some people in Japan might think it is too early to end the war, but the general opinion favors cessation of losses." The Russian case was complicated further by; conflicting messages between Mr. Meyer and Count Cassini; the public's idea of probable peace terms and concessions, and domestic troubles.

The notes to the Czar and the Mikado offered the friendly services of the United States in arranging the time and place of the meeting.

Japan accepted the offer of the President June 10, the Russians sent word of their acceptance two days later, June 12, 1905. Conflict arose regarding the meeting place. Suggestions for possible places were: Paris, the Hague, and Washington. Washington was chosen for the meeting place, but the conference was arranged at Portsmouth, New Hampshire because of inclimate weather in Washington. Further delay was caused by the suspicion of the Japanese that Russia was not sending its top men; someone who could actually carry on negotiations should an agreement be reached. At first President Roosevelt had tried to get the names of the plenipotentiaries and keep it a secret. It was soon disclosed that the Japanese had appointed Baron Komura and Mr. Koretiyo Takahira; the Russians had appointed Count Witte and Baron Rosen.

55 Ibid.


57 Brown, p. 182
The men selected were impressive figures and met with the public's approval. Mr. Takahira was the acting minister in the United States. He had a thorough knowledge of the details. Baron Komura was a Harvard man of much diplomatic experience, having previously been minister to Korea, China, and Russia. Baron Rosen, the new minister to the United States succeeding Count Cassini was well known in the United States having previously spent eight years as Secretary of the Russian Embassy and four years Counsel General in New York. Although disliked by the Grand Ducal party in Russia, Mr. Witte was generally liked elsewhere and had been known as an exponent of peace from his actions in the war of his country and Japan and outward statements by the former finance minister regarding his desire for peace.

The American public was eager to begin festivities the moment the representatives arrived. They found Sergyie Witte a colorful figure. He was given credit for "planting seeds of undying friendship with Russia."

The Japanese were the more reserved representatives, the general concept concerning Japanese representatives seemed to be more remote yet not


59 Brown, p. 184

60 Ibid.

61 J. Hapgood, Ambassador Sergyie Inttich Witte Russia's Man of the Hour, Craftsmen, IX (November 1907), p. 157
unfriendly to the American public. 62

Thus the scene for the Portsmouth Conference was set. Russia and Japan had engaged in hostilities which upset and endangered the commercial and political balance of the world. 63 Each country wanted peace, but neither wanted to take the initiative in suing for peace since they thought an action of this kind would admit defeat. 64 It was generally believed that Japan had gained the most ground; 65 yet she had suffered tremendously. 66 Mr. Roosevelt offered to set up a suitable place where the two could negotiate peace. This offer was accepted by both countries and their "impressive" representatives came to the United States.

At this time it may be pointed out that the public was skeptical concerning the success of the conference. An example of a public statement regarding the possible failure of the conference is Mr. Straushey's statement:

The peace conference is about to meet but chances are unfavorable for peace. The Russians who were entirely unable to make war seem now entirely unable to make peace... 67

Mr. Roosevelt shared the skepticism in the effectiveness of the conference in a letter to Senator Knute Nelson of Minnesota when he wrote:

63 Dennett, p. 6
64 Roosevelt, p. 540
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
67 Bishop, p. 401
I have not an idea whether I can or cannot get peace...
I have done my best I have led the horse to water, but
heaven only knows whether they will drink or start
kicking one another under the trough.68

68 Ibid., p. 398
CHAPTER II

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PORTSMOUTH CONFERENCE

The American press was filled with descriptions of the plenipotentiaries, and outward celebrations were held in honor of the delegates. The actual meetings remained secret. No attempt has been made to recapture every detail of the demonstrations in honor of the Portsmouth Conference, only that which seems to reflect public thought printed in the press has been stated here. Some detail has been given to characterize the delegates as it is the belief of many writers that the personalities of the delegates themselves did much to sway public thought.

The most colorful figure in the negotiations was Sergius Witte. He was chosen to succeed Muranieff. In 1903 Witte was forced to resign as Minister of Finance. He had realized before the war that the "aggressive policy of Viceroy Alexieff and M. Bezbrazoff in the Yalu Timber company would eventually drive Japan to war."¹ His relations with Japan had been friendly. He had received an invitation from Marguis Ito to visit their country in 1903. From the time Mr. Witte first set foot on American shores until he left, he was followed by a crowd. He seemed to realize that his task was to win the American people and he sensed that this could be done by

¹ New York Tribune, July 14, 1905
making friends with the press and the crowds. On his arrival, still aboard the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse, he thanked the American newspapers for their hospitality on his first visit. He said that it touched him greatly to realize the vast power of the United States' press. Crowds had awaited from 2:00 a.m. to meet the Russian "man of destiny." Never before has it been in one man's power to ask his sovereign such changes as those which Witte has demanded and obtained from Nicholas II, commented a writer in Outlook.

A typical report in an American newspaper regarding the arrival of the delegates read:

The peace squadron will arrive at Oyster Bay about noon and anchor. Its arrival will be heralded by the firing of an ambassadorial salute of 19 guns for each mission from the Galveston, Mayflower and Dolphin which will be waiting to convey the plenipotentiaries to the Portsmouth Conference. The President will arrive at about one o'clock and receive the presidential salute of 21 guns from all ships in the harbor. The presidential flag will be hoisted on the Mayflower. The Japanese envoys will come abroad and be presented by the acting Secretary of State Pierce. One-half hour later the Russian envoys.

It was generally that the conduct of affairs was of the highest order. The New York Tribune affirmed this belief when it wrote that if there were no definite peace settlement, it would not be the fault of the President.

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2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
4 De Martens, "World Significance of the Treaty of Portsmouth," Outlook LXXXI (November 11, 1905), 603.
6 Ibid., August 6, 1905.
This newspaper also said, "not a single incident marred the perfect smoothness of the arrangements and their execution." 7

Another report said that the plenipotentiaries seemed, by a single handshake, to be imbued with the President's heartiness. (Yet, it added, their faces belied their gay actions). 8 All women were barred from the conference. There was to be no charm and graciousness to soothe irritations. Every possible means was used to seclude the delegates from interference and contacts with the outside world.

The first meeting of the envoys took place on August 5, 1905 on board the presidential yacht, Mayflower, off Oyster Bay, Long Island. The President, not wishing to show favoritism assumed an informal attitude which was considered typical Americanism.

In a toast near the beginning of their meeting, Mr. Roosevelt said:

Gentlemen I propose a toast to which there will be no answer and to which I ask you only to drink in silence. I drink to the welfare and prosperity and the sovereigns and the people of two great nations whose representatives have met one another on this ship. It is my earnest hope and prayer in the interest of not only those two powers, but of all civilized mankind, that a just and lasting peace may speedily be concluded between them. 9

This statement along with other gestures bears out Bishop's quotation about the President. "His conduct during the whole time that the

7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
peace negotiations lasted has been a marvel of tact..."10

The general opinion was that Japan and Russia would fail to agree on peace terms. A message informing all to whom it might concern was received from Russia stating that Russia's envoy knew of no acceptable basis nor of any lines approved by both parties upon which a common platform might be constructed.11 Mr. Witte said that he was coming solely to learn the nature of the proposals which the Japanese were prepared to make.12 Rumors were rampant concerning Mr. Witte's inability to speak for the Emperor, however Mr. Witte insisted that he was empowered to arrange peace within twenty-four hours if the Japanese terms were satisfactory. Although the opinion of most writers was that Japan and Russia would fail to agree on peace terms, it was hoped that the conference would not be a fiasco.

Baron Komura submitted in writing twelve Japanese demands August 19, 1905 at the second session of the conference.13

The twelve demands as reported by Mr. Hershey were:

1. The recognition by Russia of Japan's paramount interests in Korea.
2. An engagement on the part of Russia to completely evacuate Manchuria and to relinquish all territorial advantages in that region which tended to impair Chinese sovereignty or were inconsistent with principles of equal opportunity.

10 Ibid., p. 421 from Outlook, January 1920.
12 Ibid.
3. An engagement on the part of Japan to restore to China all those portions of Manchuria which she occupied, with the exclusion of the regions affected by the lease of the Lia-tung peninsula.

4. A mutual engagement on the part of Japan and Russia not to obstruct any general measures (i.e. common to all countries) which China may take for the development of the commerce and industries of Manchuria.

5. Cession of Sakhalin to Japan.

6. The transfer to Japan of the Russian leases of the Lia-tung peninsula, including Port Arthur and Talien (Dalny).

7. The transfer to Japan of the Russian portions of the South Manchurian railroads (together with its branches) connecting Harbin with Port Arthur and of all coal mines appertaining thereto.

8. The retention by Russia of the main lines or latitudinal section of the central eastern or trans-Manchurian railroad; on condition that it be employed exclusively for commercial and industrial purposes.

9. The demand for a war indemnity or rather reimbursement for the cost of the war. (The amount was not stated but the cost of the war was variously estimated at from $500,000,000 to $1,000,000,000.

10. The surrender to Japan of all Russian warships interned in neutral ports during the war.

11. The limitation of Russia's naval force in the Far East.

12. The grant of Japanese subjects to certain fishing rights on the Siberian coast.

Russia's reply to these demands was controlled by her precarious economic military and diplomatic position.15

Maintaining that she was not a defeated nation, Russia refused to consider certain of these points.16 Baron Komura proposed that the articles be taken one by one to see whether a point of agreement might be reached.17

14 Ibid.


17 Hershey, p. 351
Russia positively rejected the following four demands:

Articles five — the cession of Sakhalin, nine — the indemnity, ten — the surrender of all Russian warships interned in neutral parts, and eleven — limitation of Russia's naval forces.\(^{18}\)

The Japanese backed down on the last issue since Russia refused to consider it at all. The Russian envoys stated that Russia would rather continue the war than yield to these conditions.\(^{19}\)

The Japanese delegates had not depended too wholeheartedly upon articles ten and eleven, therefore, after an interview between Baron Rosen and Mr. Roosevelt at Oyster Bay, the Japanese withdrew their demand of articles nine, ten, eleven, and modified article five to have Russia sell the northern half of Sakhalin to Russia in consideration of a sum of money.\(^{20}\)

In a personal note to the Czar delivered by Ambassador Meyer, Mr. Roosevelt urged the Czar to accept the demands and pointed out the inadvisability of continuing war.\(^{21}\)

A confidential note was then sent to Baron Kaneko\(^{22}\) a Japanese...


\(^{19}\) Hershey, p. 354. This sum of money an amount of 600,000,000 was set by Mr. Roosevelt insists Mr. Dillon. The London Times denied that it was set by the President.

\(^{20}\) Bishop, p. 406

\(^{21}\) Hershey, p. 354

\(^{22}\) Baron Kaneko was called by newspaper men the financial and unofficial representative of the Japanese government.
minister residing in the United States without portfolio, requesting that he
ask immediate settlement of his government. Mr. Roosevelt reminded him that
every interest of civilization and humanity forbade the continuance of war for
an indemnity.

The representatives remained rigid: the Japanese representatives
tenaciously holding to their demands and the Russian delegates stubbornly re-
frusing to accept them.

On August 23, 1905, the President again appealed to Japan saying:

Ethically it seems to me that Japan owes a duty to the
world at this crisis. The civilized world looks to her
to made peace; the nations believe in her; let her show
her leadership in matters ethical no less than in matters
military. This appeal is made to her in the name of all
that is lofty and noble and in this appeal I hope she
will not be deaf.

In answer to the President's appeal to Baron Kaneko, Japan expressed
her willingness to make concessions in the amount of indemnity asked but re-
 fused to withdraw the demand for reimbursement of a portion of the cost of
the war.

So grave was the deadlock that followed in the conference that
Baron Komura in a wire to Baron Kaneko said that he considered the last hope

23 Bishop, p. 406
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid., p. 407
26 Ibid., p. 409
of peace gone. 27

President Roosevelt had asked Great Britain to try to influence Japan and Germany to try to influence Russia to accept the peace terms. 28 But Baron Komura was not the only one who had lost hope in the progress of the conference, it was the general belief that Roosevelt had failed. 29 But on the last session which had been postponed from August 28 to August 29, 1905, Baron Komura gave his Emperor's consent to withdraw all demands of indemnity and to divide Sakhalin between Russia and Japan. 30

To many of Japan's friends, the results seemed at first sight to favor Russia, but Japan had secured at Portsmouth all and even more than she had demanded from Russia prior to the outbreak of war. 31

The world was shocked and the disappointed of the Japanese populace showed itself in serious rioting. 32 More will be said of the reaction of the people in these countries in the final chapter of this paper.

The actual signing of the treaty on September 5, 1905 was an anticlimax to this important conference. After the signing the members of the

27 Ibid.
28 It was not disclosed until several weeks after the Treaty of Portsmouth had been signed that on August 12, 1905, an Offensive and Defensive Alliance had been concluded between Great Britain and Japan.
29 Bishop, p. 409
30 Hershey, p. 355
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
Russian mission were scheduled to go to Christ Episcopal Church in Portsmouth where a Te Deum service was to be held. Before leaving, Baron Komura visited his alma mater, Harvard University.

The actual agreements were made in secret but a "public rehearsal" was held in the presence of the secretaries at which the record was made. In this meeting, the Japanese again offered their compromises, met refusal, and finally conceded to no indemnity and to the division of Sakhalin.34

The people of the United States cheered President Roosevelt because, by his actions, the United States had for the first time become a mediator in a foreign conflict. There was skepticism about the final results of this foreign policy and also fear that a new way of life was being ushered in, but the average citizen had no further thought than one of pride toward their leader. The Japanese too felt that their country was on the threshold of a new era. They wanted the world to become aware of the fact that they had arrived, therefore, they disapproved of the terms of peace which did not immediately elevate Japan to the position she thought she deserved. Tokyo reports in American newspapers stated that the public would eventually accept the result of the peace conference however disappointing it may have been.35

The end of the Conference meant rejoicing and congratulations to President Roosevelt in the United States, rioting by the radicals and general
disappointment in Japan and in Russia the peace terms did nothing to allay the existing revolutions.36
CHAPTER III

THE ATTITUDE OF THE PEOPLE TOWARD RUSSIA AND JAPAN

During the Russo-Japanese struggle the United States' attitude was one of benevolent neutrality toward Japan. In the American press Japanese victories were recorded with a fervor "which could hardly have been less neutral in feeling."¹

The public as well as President Roosevelt himself thought that the Japanese cause in Manchuria was one with that of all civilized powers.² Paul S. Reinch in an article entitled "Japan and Asiatic Leadership" expressed a similar belief that Japan was fighting "our" battle. He said that it is a common belief in Germany and France that England and the United States are backing Japan.³ In the same publication a few months later this idea was expressed by Chester Holcombe. "It is not merely a battle between Russia and Japan," he insisted, "it is rather a conclusive struggle between the powers of the Far East and the ambitious lust and greed of the great powers of Europe to


² Ibid., p. 67

determine once and for all the right to existence and the status of (Japan).

Japan was looked upon and admired as a courageous, struggling nation with insufficient man power and supplies to achieve her goal. Americans have been known to champion the "under-dog." American opinion favored Japan who was apparently fighting to check an imperial Pan-Slavism wrote Mr. Reinch in the Political Science Quarterly. An attempt to explain this pro-Japanese feeling was made in an editorial in the New York Times. This article said that the sympathy extended to Japan in their struggle with Russia was in a very high degree a moral issue. The American public disliked Russia's want of good faith in not keeping her word in evacuating Manchuria. We approved and admired the frankness of Japanese in setting forth the objectives for which they went to war. Objectives which our sense of right accepted as justifiable and sufficient. Japan, a nation whose very existence was threatened, was taking measures of self-defense. Japan's pledge to maintain the "open door" was supposedly another outward sign that Japan's cause was one with western interests.

That the Japanese were aware of sentimental feeling toward the

1 Chester Holcombe, "Some Results of the Eastern War", Atlantic Monthly, XCVI (July 1905), p. 30


6 Paul S. Reinch, p. 57


8 Ibid.
United States and also shared this sentiment is evident from the two following quotations from Japanese sources: "America from the beginning to the end, has made no secret of her sympathy for our land."\(^9\) Another Japanese publication the Tanjo referred to American sympathy toward their cause. It stated:

> America is the home of the open door policy and of the maintenance of the integrity of China, and for these great principles Nippon has taken up arms against Russia. America has shared every effort to open Manchuria to the world's commerce hand-in-hand with Nippon. Her commercial treaties with China were signed at the same time as ours. It would be difficult for America to keep herself from showing sympathy with our cause. We are told that the public sentiment of America is completely on the side of Nippon.\(^10\)

In a protest against the "yellow peril" threat an editorial in the New York Times upheld Japan by stating that talk about a "yellow peril" is vain and ill-conceived unless there be a peril in treating yellow races as fellow men, with humanity and justice.\(^11\) The threat of danger, as anti-Japanese sources argued, lay in permitting Japan to make her own peace. If she had her way in making peace, they feared she would aspire to rise against the white race, destroy caucasian prestige in China and India, and eventually overwhelm the white race.\(^12\) Still insisting that there was no "yellow peril",

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9 Edwin Maxey, "Why We Favor Japan in the Present War", Arena Vol. XXXII (August 1904), p. 131

10 Ibid.

11 New York Times, July 26, 1905

12 Ibid.
the New York Times stated that Japan gave not the slightest indication of undue pride, arrogance or antagonism against the Western world.\textsuperscript{13}

Edwin Maxey in an article previously quoted attempted to explain the underlying causes of American sympathy for Japan. He enumerated the cause for this sentiment toward Japan; yet, he said it was inconsistent with our past friendship toward Russia.\textsuperscript{14} There was a natural sympathy to the weaker opponent; America had given Japan her first look at Western civilization and had influenced that country to the extent that the Japanese had become the "Yankee of the East."\textsuperscript{15} Also American trade in the Pacific could not be overlooked, therefore, she must depend upon Japan. Japan could not afford to abandon the open door, thought Edwin Maxey because by doing so she would alienate herself from her best friends — England and the United States.\textsuperscript{16} This writer, giving a typical example of Japanese sentiment, continued saying that Russia stood for reaction—the triumph of absolutism over the rights of the individual, this was the antithesis of progress for which Japan stood.\textsuperscript{17} This is a sample of but one of many articles showing outward favor of the Japanese cause.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} Maxey, p. 131
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
Count Cassini tried to resurrect American-Russian friendship by recalling the visit of the Russian fleet in American waters at the time of the Civil War. He expressed surprise at our ingratitude.\footnote{Dulles, The Road to Teheran, p. 89} Wharton Baker, presidential nominee agreed with the above statement and pointed out further reasons for championing the Russian cause, as also did Colgate Baker in \textit{Independence Magazine}.\footnote{Wharton Baker, "The Secret of Russia's Friendship", \textit{Independence} LVI (March 17, 1904), p. 649. Colgate Baker, "The Real Japanese Character", \textit{Independence}, LVI (March 17, 1904), p. 641.}

A Russian publication accused the Americans of precipitating the war. \textit{Vyestnik Evropy} of St. Petersburg said that the Japanese without the American press would never have involved themselves so deeply in the struggle with Russia and might have sought an understanding rather than open conflict.\footnote{"Russian Opinion of American Meddling in the Far East", \textit{Review of Reviews}, XXIX (April 1905), p. 456.} \textit{Novye Vremya} also of St. Petersburg said the United States aimed to make China an industrial center ruled by Americans in the form of trusts.\footnote{Ibid.} Port Arthur's \textit{Novy Kroi} said that Japan was not the real opponent, the United States had made Japan its pawn in carrying out Roosevelt's plan that the Pacific Ocean with all of its islands and coasts were the proper sphere of American domination.\footnote{Ibid.}

Russia, of course, objected to outward friendship shown by America toward Japan. Part of Russia's objection pointed to racial and religious...
differences. They protested that white men should stand together against yellow and Christians against heathens. The following report from the New York Times and other similar reports added to the American people’s distrust of Russia. The headlines read: "Jauntily Russia Gives Up Port Arthur." The article pointed out contrasts in character between the defeated Russians and the Japanese victors. It said, "The demeanor of the Japanese officers was all that should be desired; they were politeness itself; and to see them helping the Russians to sort their luggage! The article continued saying that Russia received this assistance contemptuously. The onlookers had sympathy for the Russians until they beheld their costumes "fit for a ball rather than the finale of a tragedy," and until the soldiers pushed the women aside leaving them to await the next slow moving train. "They treat their women like so many beasts." It can be readily imagined what affect this article had on the American housewife.

Despite pleas for American friendship, the feeling in the United States seemed to be that Russian autocracy was farther removed from the spirit of western Europe and the United States than were the Japanese.


24 New York Times, April 1, 1905.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
It was not Russia's propaganda that turned America from Japan. It was Japan herself and Japanese victories which caused enthusiasm toward Japan to wane.\textsuperscript{29} Regarding waning favoritism toward Japan, an editorial in the \textit{New York Times} stated that Americans must still believe that Japan had the better cause, but, it said, when time for sentiment is past and consideration of self-interest again possesses the mind, one favors that which will prove beneficial to himself. Although Russia may have menaced our shipping; and Japan may keep the open door, the American shippers would not be able to compete with Japan's cheaper goods and she would undersell the United States and possess the markets.\textsuperscript{30}

As Japan began to show signs of victory — even while the newspaper battle previously mentioned with Russia was being waged — a shift in opinion toward Russia became widespread. Americans were becoming suspicious of Japanese objectives.\textsuperscript{31}

The American public was warned against the tendency to idolize everything Japanese.\textsuperscript{32} Some of the questions that arose in the public's mind were: would Japan close the open door? Would she respect American interests in China if she were the ruling force in Manchuria?

\begin{itemize}
\item[29] Paul S. Reinsch, p. 57
\item[31] Dulles, Road to Teheran, p. 90
\item[32] Ibid.
\end{itemize}
Mr. Dulles expressed the feeling of most Americans at the time not as "beginning to love Russia more" but the trend was to "love Japan less."\textsuperscript{33}

A new cause for anti-Japanese sentiment arose during the peace negotiations, it was the outward attempt to sway American opinion toward friendship to Russia. Three influencing factors which contributed to the switch in sentiment from Japan to Russia were: 1. the activities of Mr. Witte to "sell" Russia to the American public. 2. the threat to the United States' Pacific possessions. 3. the distrust of Japan created by the Japanese delegates at the peace conference.

Mr. Witte, the Russian representatives at the peace conference obviously tried to "sell" himself and the Russian cause. The Japanese envoys, on the other hand, gave the public the impression of being self-assured and arrogant. The \textit{New York Times} said that Mr. Witte "worked the newspapers like an imperial press agent."\textsuperscript{34} The newspaper even implied that Mr. Witte went too far in his attempt to sway the American public; "Control and more formal publicity", it said, "would have been the better policy."\textsuperscript{35}

In contrast to the outward signs of the Russians to attain the good will of the American public, the \textit{Chicago Tribune}\textsuperscript{36} quoted a Japanese source

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid.}
  \item \textsuperscript{34} \textit{New York Times}, August 5, 1905.
  \item \textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}
  \item \textsuperscript{36} \textit{Chicago Daily Tribune}, July 31, 1905.
\end{itemize}
stating their opinion of publicity seeking. The article said:

We do not seek to obtain public sympathy by such methods. American friendship, if it is sincere, as we believe it is, will not be overturned by the fact that Japan after solemn compact entered into war with Russia, refuses, in pursuance of all international precedent, to make public the negotiations now in progress. When some arrangement shall have been arrived at, so far from losing friendship in this country, we believe the Japanese plenipotentiaries will grow by the stolid way in which we follow this course.37

The New York Times said that strict adherence was not paid to the policy of secrecy, and that it may be that they have received peace which might not have been obtained if their policy has been fulfilled.38

Many statements which manifest waning confidence in Japan expressed fear that Japanese victories would breed a spirit of "self-conciet which will lead her to think that she can conquer the world."39

"Now while I do not give credence to this", said Mr. Roosevelt regarding the affect which Japanese victories might have on the Pacific,"... I must recognize that it has some force."40

Mr. Hull as chairman of the House Committee of Military Affairs declared that if Japan won the war with Russia, she would fight a bloody war with the United States over the Philippines.41 Regarding this rising fear of

37 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Political Science Quarterly, March 16, 1905, quoted from the San Francisco Chronicle.
Japan, the *Political Science Quarterly* quoted the Ogden Standard which said that the Japanese feel quite confident of their ability to defeat the American navy and humiliate our army.\(^42\)

In a letter to J. A. Hull, President Roosevelt wrote:

> It may be that the Japanese have designs on the Philippines. I hope not... but I believe we should put our naval and military preparations in such shape that we can hold the Philippines against any foe.\(^43\)

Mr. Roosevelt also wrote, speaking of the "formidable new power" - Japan, "If irritated she could at once take both the Philippines and the Hawaiian Islands from us if she obtained the upper hand in the sea." Many Americans feared that Japan had its eyes on the Philippines. The editor Kohumin Shimbien stated that this change of attitude in the United States was due to the blunder of a London printer who, in printing a war map, made the Philippines the same color as that representing Japan.\(^45\) Tokutomi Iichiro added, "If Nippon were so wild and foolish as to take that nightmare in the southern seas (the Philippines) off the hands of America, she might be pardoned to suppose that Nippon ought to receive a world or two of thanks from

\(^{42}\) Ibid.

\(^{43}\) Ibid.

\(^{44}\) Ibid.

the American press." Mr. Blakeslee thought that cause for the change in the public's regard for Japan was due to Russian diplomacy. He wrote:

The Russian diplomacy was particularly successful in so pleading its case to the American government, through its chief executive, and the American public, through the press, as to arouse the vague but none the less disquieting fear that Japan might one day occupy both Russia and the Chinese coast of the Asiatic Pacific and next descend upon the Philippines, Guam, Hawaii, and finally upon the Pacific slope of this continent.

The peace terms were another cause for the cooling attitude toward Japan. The public did not trust Japanese secrecy and suspected that Baron Kaneko was acting contrary to the Japanese claim of secrecy in negotiations. They also distrusted his visits with Mr. Roosevelt which were supposedly purely personal in nature.

Japan had received all that she had sought; if the war was actually fought to keep Russia out of Southern Manchuria and Korea. In addition, Japan obtained Dalny, Port Arthur, Chinese Eastern Railroad, and Southern Saghalien which is rich in coal, iron ore, oil, fisheries, and is situated advantageously in a controlling position of the La Perouse Strait and the Japanese Sea. In contrast to Roosevelt's former spirit, he remarked to Senator Cabot Lodge in June of 1905; "Japan now has Port Arthur, Korea, and

46 Ibid.


48 Ibid., p. 230
the dominance in Manchuria. I feel that the less she asks for in addition, the better it would be. Many shared the Nation's opinion that the Japanese claim for an indemnity was unwarranted.

The printing of four thousand five hundred copies of "Report on Japanese Naval Medical and Sanitary Features of the Russo-Japanese War" indicated somewhat of a kingly attitude toward the Japanese. Secretary Root advised Ambassador Meyer to continue friendly offices in behalf of the Japanese government and its subjects.

The fifty-ninth Congress praised Roosevelt's work but were concerned more with results. "If half that is told of Japanese intentions as to merchant marine is true, then an activity will issue on the Pacific Ocean which will astonish the world."

In the final analysis both of the belligerents were seeking their own interests. The New York Times said that both combatants were on trial and that the actuating motive of Japan and Russia was substantially identical.

The article placed little confidence in the conference when it said that whoever was victorious, the United States would be the looser.
In general, the nation favored the peace terms. The Midwestern Springfield Republican considered the moral aspects of the terms; it said: "Russia has saved its kopecks and Japan has lost, but whose is the moral prestige and advantage for the gain and loss"? It went on to say "...on the face of things it is certain that Russia succeeded in presenting to Japan the moral victory and that this opportunity of winning the moral victory had been seized in the possible view that it may be worth more than the material victory. Sentiment in the West was not so clear cut. A feeling of distrust had become evident even at this time, but all were not in agreement against Japan on the Pacific Coast.

Although the American public generally favored Japan's yielding and although the public was satisfied with the treaty, Japan never again regained its status in the sentiment of the American public.

Things had gone as they did because Japan had, by the terms of the Portsmouth Treaty, thrown off the European balance of power. Therefore, Nippon became the center of the world's diplomatic activities.

The Japanese felt that they had been victorious and thought that they were entitled to their peace demands especially all of Sakhalien and an

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56 Ibid.

indemnity to cover the cost of war.58 Upon hearing the unofficial announce-
ment of peace, riots broke out in the Tokyo streets.59 These riots were a
form of protest against the peace terms and against the United States, the
scene of the peace negotiations. This situation probably developed because
the Japanese people were not in a position to know the dangerous losses
involved in continuing the war.60 The violence in Tokyo and the discontent
in St. Petersburg, were only that which might have been expected.61

59 Theodore Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt, (New York: Charles
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE PORTSMOUTH CONFERENCE

In this chapter an attempt will be made to state the effects of the conference upon the minds of the people of the United States and incidentally, the effects of the conference as shown by reactions in Russia and in Japan. In Chapter II, the terms of the conference were outlined. The conference had not been a fiasco since the immediate aim was the cession of hostilities.

Reviewing the final day of the conference, we find Witte with a cabled ultimatum from the Czar which read: "Tomorrow must be the last conference. I prefer war to humiliating concessions to Japan." 1

Mr. Witte told the Japanese envoys what the cable had said and added: "Russia will not pay indemnity in any form. We will agree to divide Sakhalin Island. That is the last word of my emperor." 2

To this Baron Komura replied: "That proposal is not acceptable. But we will waive the indemnity and keep Sakhalin." 3 When Mr. Witte responded that Russia would cede only one half of this island, the startling answer by

1 Chicago Daily Tribune, August 30, 1905.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.

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Baron Komura: "We agree", caused a great silence to fall over the conference room.¹

The war had ended, but as is the case in most wars, the peace terms represented a major mental and diplomatic battle. The results of the conference were yet to be seen. Neither side had yielded and neither was wholeheartedly pleased with the outcome of the events. Rejoicing following the negotiations was the American reaction. This feeling was not shared by the parties concerned -- citizens of Russia and Japan. The Chicago Tribune stated that "no one was satisfied except Roosevelt."⁵

The end of the war was a great boon to Europe. Europe welcomed the end of the war for her own sake. Except in official circles and in St. Petersburg and Berlin, the news that the peace will be made will be received throughout Europe with unbonded satisfaction and rejoicing.⁶ It is with a sensation of intense relief that France rejoices. In Europe and America the success of the Portsmouth Conference was the theme of conversation in clubs, cafes, and on the street. The European countries were afraid lest the tension which had reached a head in the form of a Russo-Japanese War in the East, might spread throughout Europe. Many countries had indirectly sided with either Japan or Russia. The Moroccan Crisis again had become serious and the fact

¹ Ibid.
⁵ Ibid.
⁶ Ibid.
that Russia now would be able to place a large force on her western frontier made the outlook for future developments brighter.\textsuperscript{7} Word regarding the end of the war and also the Offensive and Defensive Alliance between England and Japan removed the threat of the war spreading in the West.\textsuperscript{8}

The cause of Japan's unexpected withdrawal of her demand for an indemnity was attributed to the pressure placed upon Japan by Great Britain, but that this was the immediate cause for the sudden end of peace negotiations was denied. The \textit{Chicago Tribune} said that it was untrue also.\textsuperscript{9} Although England earnestly desired peace principally because of the European crisis in order to curb the Kaiser's adventurous spirit, Japan would not sacrifice her own interests in this way.\textsuperscript{10}

Let us now turn to the reaction to the end of the conference in Russia. Officially, Russia was sorry the war ended.\textsuperscript{11} There was not so much rejoicing in Russia as in America on the morning after the news was received in St. Petersburg. A report said that there was little difference on the streets of that city, few flags flew and no one, except the newsboys,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{8} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{9} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{10} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
were anxious to discuss the matter. A Russian soldier is quoted as voicing the opinion of many when he said that the war should have gone on and Russia might have done better. "The strategic position", he thought, "was more favorable than it had been the previous year."13

The victory in Japan stimulated a new spirit throughout Asia. For the first time in four hundred and fifty years an Asiatic power had defeated and turned back a European force.14 This reaction came after much reflection, since the immediate reaction in Japan was marked with riots and mass meetings.15 Five christian churches (four of them American) were damaged or destroyed by the rioters. Martial law and strict press regulations had to be established which lasted until November 29, 1905.16 Ill feeling in the form of riots and protests were witnessed mostly in the larger cities of Tokyo, Kobe, and Yokohama.17 The Mikado was petitioned to refuse to sign the treaty and continue the war.18 There were also demands that the ministry resign,

12 G. F. Wright, "Russia After the War", Nation LXXXI (October 12, 1905), p. 295.
13 Ibid.
16 Ibid., p. 249.
17 Ibid.
and offices of newspapers that had supported the government were wrecked reported Arthur J. Brown. Special precautions were taken to protect the American legation located between a police station and Marquis Ito's residence. The newspapers were unanimous in declaring the terms unsatisfactory and humiliating and the end of the war a "disgraceful surrender." Court circles were intensely disgusted with the peace terms. Mr. Griscom in Japan wrote to Mr. Roosevelt testifying the fact that the terms were ill-received in Japan. Mr. Griscom wrote:

A large section of the press demanded and confidentially expected the cession of Vladivostok and the Russian maritime provinces, as well as the island of Sakhalin, and the payment of a thousand million dollars indemnity. Even the more reasonable conservative classes expected the cession of Sakhalin—It may be truthfully said that outside the government, nobody in the Empire expected that Japan would be obliged to accept the terms which it is now understood are contained in the treaty of peace.

The conference marked the beginning of a new attitude toward Japan in the United States. This attitude was partly due to a deliberate policy of Witte to win the good will of the American people. His memoirs tell how he set about doing this and succeeded. Witte said, "...the press in its

19 Ibid.
20 Treat, Diplomatic Relations Between United States and Japan, p. 248.
21 Ibid.
22 Chicago Daily Tribune, August 31, 1905.
23 Ibid, Diplomatic Relations Between the United States and Japan, p. 248.
turn was instrumental in bringing about a complete change in public opinion of the country in favor of my person and the cause I upheld.  

The end of the war also caused a marked change in the public on both sides of the Pacific. Japan thought Roosevelt responsible for their loss of indemnity. The American people suspected the foreign policy of Japan and were aroused over the Japanese immigration problem. Americans were alarmed by military success and by internal changes within Japan which abolished the Shogunate and built up military leaders instead of civilians. This situation caused more and more comment in the United States as facts became known. At first because of the great distance between Japan and the United States, the American people paid little attention to internal Japanese affairs or rumors of Japanese aggressive policy. This foreign policy had a slow growth but its constant reiteration in the American press could not fail to influence public opinion. 

When the treaty was signed, sudden change in attitude toward Japan developed and some papers openly doubted the wisdom of having a strong and independent Japan in Asia. Then arose fantastic tales of both nations. In Canada the

25 Ibid.


27 Ibid., p. 187.

28 Interpretation of American Foreign Policy, Harris Foundation Lectures, p. 130.
people were told to fear Japanese invasion of British Columbia. France was alerted against possible attack on Indo-China, sites of attack in South American, Mexico, and the Pacific coast were pointed up. Mr. Felicien Challaye in Revue de Paris was one of few who held that Europeanization had not changed the Japanese. Many writers shared Colgate Baker's opinion that the Japanese "... (They) seemed to accept western civilization but they have accepted merely its mechanism and not its ideas. They are playing a part, the better to carry out the strengthening of their own nation." Arthur Brown quoted other sources of distrust of Japan printed after the war. One source said that either Japan or the United States must recede from its position. Japan's friendliness toward the United States, it said, exists only in the meaningless conventional phrase of diplomatic usage in the propaganda of Japanese statesmen and American peace-at-any-price advocates. Some reports warned against Japanese troops in the Philippines numbering 55,000 when in reality there were only 8,000 Japanese inhabitants there.

American missionaries in Japan tried to patch up misunderstandings by attemption to interpret Japanese actions. Mr. Brown suggested that

29 Treat, Japan and United States Relations, p. 188.
31 Ibid.
32 Brown, p. 408.
33 Ibid., p. 407.
Americans ward off possible difficulties by refusing to countenance some of the reports that were current.  

Elihu Root, who succeeded Hay as Secretary of State commented that during all that period there never was a moment when the government of Japan was not frank, sincere and friendly, and most solicitous not to enlarge but to minimize and do away with all causes of controversy. There were those who were still kindly disposed to Japan yet the sentiment was so great in the opposite direction that several warnings had been issued in the foreign dispatches that the United States press should suppress feelings and affect a neutrality which they may not have felt in order to keep its influence in the two countries.

The war had ended. The reason for its end was not obvious. Mr. Millard advanced the idea that the war may have been brought to a close because Russia and Japan felt that the world was becoming uneasy about their continued occupation of Manchuria and they may have thought it wise to reiterate allegiance to the open door and the territorial integrity of China.

Many doubted whether Japan really expected to obtain what she

34 Ibid.
36 "Good Manners Toward Japan and Russia", World's Work VIII (May 1904), p. 4725.
actually did.\textsuperscript{38} A. Stead thought Japan's action of yielding was a mark of shrewd statesmanship.\textsuperscript{39} While others thought the withdrawal of claims of indemnity not an act of statesmanship, but a necessity since continuing the conflict would have made it appear that Japan launched the war for money. Many felt that both had gained and both had lost and it was also generally believed that neither had forced to accept humiliating terms. Many matters were left to be adjusted later,\textsuperscript{40} and there even existed the fear that war might break out again between Russia and Japan even after the peace.\textsuperscript{41}

By Roosevelt's suggestion to Kaneko that Japan withdraw the indemnity issue, the United States was involved more in the actual peace making, since this item represented the most important clause in the peace treaty and since this was the issue that almost caused a stalemate in the conference proceedings.\textsuperscript{42} In an article entitled "The Menace of Japanese Success", the author regretted the fact that this country had aligned itself with Japan rather than with Russia because, he thought by siding with Japan the United States could take the initiative in the development of the

\textsuperscript{38} Brown, p. 187.

\textsuperscript{39} A. Stead, "The Peace and After", \textit{Review of Reviews} XXXII (November 1905), p. 599.

\textsuperscript{40} Millard, p. 280.


resources of Manchuria, Korea, and China.43

Whatever the future outcome of the conference, the acclaim received by Mr. Roosevelt following the conference was tremendous. Commentaries on President Roosevelt’s participation in the negotiations reflect the feelings of the people regarding the settlement as well. President Roosevelt was compared to Tiberius Gracchus because of his efforts to bring about peace by C. S. Dana in Review of Reviews.44

Roosevelt like Gracchus is a man of rare boldness and undoubted courage. He is also energetic, aggressive, persistent, and determined. His honesty, like that of Tiberius, is the rugged sort that knows no taint of suspicion and permits no compromise with laggards and evildoers.45

Other comments said:

The American president’s auspicious act has taken a high and permanent place in the history of human endeavor.46

The President, by his well-meant efforts to establish peace has merited well for humanity and made a noble use of his exalted position and far-reaching influence. For he has created a wholesome precedent which even though it cannot be followed by and but exceptionally worthy leaders of men, is none the less a welcome innovation.47

44 C. S. Dana, Review of Reviews XXXI (March 1905), p. 375.
45 Ibid.
And in *Literary Digest*:

In spite of the risk that was taken in involving the United States in an 'entangling alliance' many American papers whose policies are opposed to the president admit he took the proper course on this occasion.\(^8\)

The Record Herald claimed:

The part played by the president in the negotiations has been the occasion of editorials enough to fill all of our pages. Without regard to party or section, the papers praise him for his skill and tact in holding the conference together until an agreement could be reached.\(^9\)

There were but few dissenting notes. *Harper's Weekly* said:

The president has the personal renown of having brought about the conference, but too little is known of the circumstances of his intervention. He will be lauded by the multitudes for having assisted in breaking the deadlock, but he entered upon this delicate task in a manner to impugn his partiality and with a scheme which had no chance of acceptance. On this it is not necessary to dwell now. The rejoicing of the hour is, that further slaughter has been averted, and that the old world has composed its differences in the new.\(^50\)

President Roosevelt besides congratulating the delegates themselves sent his thanks to the Kaiser which said:

I thank you most heartily for your congratulations and wish to take this opportunity to express my profound appreciation of the way you cooperated at every stage in

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\(^8\) *Terms of Peace,* *Literary Digest* XXI (September 9, 1905), p. 335.

\(^9\) *Peace as the American Editors See It,* *Public Opinion* XXXII (September 9, 1905), p. 337.

the effort to bring about peace in the Orient. It has been very pleasant to work with you toward this end.51

Another comment which hints of a suspicion of Roosevelt's motives in seeking peace is a comment made in a letter to the editor of Nation.

Roosevelt as peacemaker was not averse to war. He interfered because he feared that Japan would further humiliate Russia and would become too powerful in the East to suit the comfort and convenience of the invaders of the Orient from the West.52

The awarding of the Nobel Peace prize to President Roosevelt is a much truer index of the feeling of the general public toward the president for the part he played in the Portsmouth Conference.

The Treaty of Portsmouth had been signed and the war ended. Japan's only temporary set back by the outcome soon began to re-establish herself in her new role of dominance of the Pacific. Russia, strangled by internal affairs was relieved by the cessation of hostilities and concentrated on mending her internal affairs.

The United States having gained a higher status in the world's eyes by her role as mediator between two warring countries now had two parts to play—one of maintaining her position in the Pacific and quieting anti-Japanese sentiment particularly on the western coast of this country.

This year marks the forty-sixth anniversary of the signing of the Portsmouth Treaty. The newspapers show a reversion in public opinion—

51 New York Tribune, September 1, 1905.
52 Nation, September 14, 1905.
which incidentally has changed many times in the ensuing years. The Chicago Daily News recalls that the anniversary of the Portsmouth Conference occurs on the eve of the signing of the peace treaty officially marking the end of the war between the United States and Japan. One is tempted to ask whether there is any relation between the two events. Might the second peace treaty have been avoided by a more effective Portsmouth Treaty? To answer this question would necessitate ones assuming the role of an arm-chair strategist. Yet it can be seen that in the reporting of the conference forty years afterwards, the writer treated the subject in light of present day public opinion. Thus "playing up" the fact that Russia was the defeated nation and Japan was the victorious diplomat because of the fact that public favoritism has once more shifted toward Japan and away from Russia.

So far, the changes in public opinion have been discussed because the policies of state are today largely directed by what people believe. Their opinion may be based upon error and misinformation, but if they believe them sincerely, they act upon them. This is especially true of a democracy.

It is not enough to consider the official relations between states. It is imperatively necessary to understand what people are thinking about their neighbor.

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54 Treat, Japan and United States Relations, p. 194.
55 Ibid.
CONCLUSION

The Japanese had entered into open conflict with Russia for a cause which in the minds of the general public was just. Russia was considered to be the aggressor ascending from the North on its comparatively tiny neighbor who, because of her smaller size, was thought to be the weaker country. Because Japan had never entered into open conflict with a world power, the world thought Japan would soon be overpowered. The fact that Japan was able to make considerable advances against Russia was soon apparent to the rest of the world. The war was bloody and costly and the finances of both countries suffered to the extent that both were willing to negotiate peace. This peace conference was made possible by the invitation for their representatives to meet in the United States.

At this time, the people of the United States felt that Japan had fought for a just cause and were more kindly disposed to Japan than to Russia. The opinion was that Japan had undertaken a war beyond her own strength. This caused a feeling of sympathy to develop in favor of Japan.¹ The Literary Digest survey said that at the outset of the war, no paper favored any other policy than one of neutrality, but an overwhelming number

openly expressed their full sympathy for Japan. The press generally hailed every Japanese victory and did not disguise its hope that Russia would be quickly and decisively defeated. Time had come when the American people "were constrained to say to Russia that they could no longer trust her."

The Americans had lost faith in Russia until the energetic Sergius Witte set about winning over the United States press to the Russian cause. His efforts along with some adverse criticism of the Japanese delegates were so successful as to win for him and the Russian cause the friendship of many Americans. Therefore, as the peace negotiations were in progress, American public opinion had diverted from the Japanese cause to that of Russia.

Japan's holding out for an indemnity to cover the cost of war caused unpopularity, and even the delayed withdrawal of their demand for an indemnity, which was considered a diplomatic victory by some writers, did nothing to win back American friendship toward Japan. Some sections of the Japanese population reacted to the peace negotiations in riotous protests against America — the scene of the negotiations. The overthrow of the Shogunate and the increased militarization of the Japanese nation was an


3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

anti-climax to the feeling already held in the hearts of the American
people. Skepticism and suspicion of the Japanese victories, ambitions and
further aims had already spread throughout the country to the extent that
Japan was not trusted by the American public. A writer in the *Fortnightly
Review* affirmed this statement when it said that the Japanese undoubtedly
suffered from revulsion of public opinion through their military capabili-
ties. Japan's victories became a drawback to her because the nations of
the world began to look askance at her wondering where her strength might
lead her. There was a decided tendency for the world to transfer their
fear of Russia to Japan.

When the Japanese demand for payment of an indemnity threatened
to cause a stalemate in the Portsmouth Conference, Russia was urged to yield.
The *Chicago Tribune* said that John D. Rockefeller had been asked to give
Russia the money to pay the indemnity and end the war. This paper also
said that President Roosevelt wrote Witte asking him to yield a few days
after meeting with Mr. Kaneko, a Japanese statesman, whom he had asked to
withdraw the demand.

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6 Payson J. Treat, *Japan and the United States 1853-1921*,

7 A. Stead, p. 652-653.

8 Ibid., p. 654.


10 Ibid., August 22, 1905.
Despite Russia's persistence in refusing to grant Japan an indemnity for the cost of war, many thought the diplomatic victory belonged to Japan. The Chicago Tribune expressed this idea when it said speaking of Japan:

...showing far reaching statesmanship of highest order and with a magnanimity that has no parallel in history, victorious Japan through her plenipotentiaries agreed this morning to make peace with Russia.11

The Japanese government did yield by withdrawing their demand, but writers did not agree as to who had achieved the military victory nor the diplomatic victory. Most writers agree that both won certain aspects and both lost in other respects. Nevertheless, the fighting ceased causing repercussions in both countries.

The Russian reaction was summarized in the London Times which said that perhaps never in Russian history had the newspapers so boldly and clearly expressed the plain truth of the situation. Still quoting a Russian newspaper it said:

Can we ever forgive this regime which brought Russia so low that she should have to rejoice because she was not compelled to pay an indemnity and which since August 19, has begun to recede into the past. Russia will never forget this shameless war.12

Conditions in Japan are summarized in the following statements, the first by Count Okuma:

Conditions before the war are liable to repetition instead of removing any causes of future disputes the

11 Chicago Tribune, August 30, 1905
12 Times (London), September 7, 1905, quoting from St. Petersburg.
the settlement left the conditions exactly as they were before hostilities began.13

And from the London Times:

...more sober sections, commercial organs, pointed out that the objections to the war have been fully attained, and if it is to continue to fight will expose Japan to reproach of sacrificing the lives of people either for money or aggressive purposes, whereas the world's desire for peace and the dictates of humanity are now satisfied.14

There was a general feeling of chagrin through Japan.15

Writers state that those most pleased in the outcome were the European countries which wanted hostilities to cease in order that their security be assured; and the United States which rejoiced over the diplomatic victory on the part of their President and the definite establishment of the United States as a world power.

In the nine years between the Russo-Japanese War and the World War, while doubt existed in the minds of the people, relations were friendly and correct. A good understanding and the traditional friendship prevailed.

The time will come, wrote Payson J. Treat, when public opinion will make and unmake ministers.16

13 Times (London), September 8, 1905.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
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The thesis submitted by Bernadette Long has been read and approved by three members of the Department of History.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

[Signature]
[Date: Jan 28th, 1952]

Signature of Adviser