Theodore Roosevelt, Antagonistic Peacemaker

Allan Francis Kirk
Loyola University Chicago

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THEODORE ROOSEVELT, ANTAGONISTIC PEACEMAKER

by

Allan F. Kirk, S.J.

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LIFE

Allan Francis Kirk, S.J., was born in Chicago, Illinois, March 21, 1934.

He was graduated from St. Ignatius High School, Chicago, Illinois, June, 1952, and entered Milford College of Xavier University in the fall of the same year. In the fall of 1956 he transferred to West Baden College of Loyola University, Chicago. In June of the following year he received his Bachelor of Arts from Loyola University and in January, 1958 he enrolled in the Graduate School of the same University.

In September of 1959 he began teaching at St. Ignatius High School, Chicago, Illinois. During the summers he continued his graduate studies at Loyola University, Chicago.
PREFACE

Few men who have crossed the scene of American history have left such a lasting impression as has Theodore Roosevelt. He is remembered for the many historic events in which he played a part, often as the central figure. Among these was his mediation at the close of the Russo-Japanese War.

The purpose of this thesis will be to discuss Theodore Roosevelt's motives for becoming involved in this seemingly Far Eastern affair as well as the results of his mediation. In figuring out his motives we shall see Roosevelt in action, and also we shall see the significance of many of the events of the past half-century.

Somewhat antecedent to the central part of the thesis will be a brief discussion of the world situation and background at the beginning of the War. The heart of the thesis, however, will be unfolded in studying Roosevelt's actual part as mediator in the Portsmouth Conference and the motives behind his mediation. Another perspective will be gained from considering Roosevelt's professed foreign policy as part and parcel of his mediation work with the Russians and the Japanese at Portsmouth. The crucial questions that are to be answered are these: were his peacemaking efforts and his policy successes or not, and what is the real significance or Roosevelt's Portsmouth work. In this respect Roosevelt has been judged and rejudged with contradictory results. At first many thought that Roosevelt was eminently successful in his undertakings. The next generation of critics reversed their predecessors' decision
and judged Roosevelt a failure in every respect. Both verdicts were undoubtedly extremes. Theodore Roosevelt's success or failure was not so final a thing one way or the other. This thesis attempts to determine to what degree Roosevelt did succeed with his policy and its implementation at Portsmouth in the summer of 1905.
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CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND, THE CAUSES OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR, ITS PROGRESS, AND EFFECTS

In considering the part Theodore Roosevelt played at Portsmouth, it is essential to have some understanding of the European situation and European interests in the Far East at the time; and a brief look at American Asiatic affairs will complete this important picture.

It may be wondered why a consideration of European and American interests is at all necessary, but the necessity will soon become evident when it is seen just how much the European countries, as well as our own, had at stake in the Far East. All these concerns and claims were endangered by the Russo-Japanese War. In considering Europe we shall stress three countries in particular: France, Germany, and England. Russia, of course, will be discussed later.

So now for a quick look at how these three European nations stand prior to the Russo-Japanese War, both in regard to their relations toward one another and toward the belligerents, Russia and Japan.

The origins of the Russo-Japanese War lie more in Europe than in Asia. Originally the conflict was between Russia and England. More immediately it was between Germany and all the European states which stand in the path of her ambitions. The war itself may fairly be viewed as a symptom of a world-wide disorder, the consequence of which we know only too well. Japan, to be sure, was not without her national ambitions and they are not to be explained away or charged wholly to Europe. But they were only a small part of the causes of the war with Russia. . . . Not until we know the Euro-
pean background are we likely to appraise the immediate causes of the war without assigning to them a disproportionate importance. 1

As Dennett later points out, Europe used the Far East to maintain the balance of power. This precarious balance could no longer be kept in a closed Europe, but the Far East offered virgin territory for the different countries to claim as their own and to play off against one another. 2 The various countries, through the last half of the nineteenth century, had obtained "spheres of influence" in China and other parts of the Far East for just this purpose. China and Japan came within the interests of the European powers who had pity on the poor "savages" of the Orient. France considered parts of south China as her special sphere of influence; Germany extended her orbit through the years; England delighted in Hongkong and other areas. Debts, concessions, favors, all were paid off in Chinese territory.

These countries worked themselves into a regular maze of alliances which finally divided friend from foe in the approaching conflict. France was the ally of Russia; England and Japan signed their first alliance in 1902; Germany and Russia secretly joined efforts in 1904; England and France headed into an agreement in the same year; Anglo-Russian efforts at rapport stretched from 1904 through 1907. Finally, at the outbreak of the War, the chief allies were France and Russia against England and Japan. Germany's two-faced role will be treated later at greater length.

To have alliances on paper is one thing, but the intentions behind such

1 Tyler Dennett, Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War, (New York, 1925), 9.
2 Ibid., 51.
alliances are something different. No matter what any pact or agreement says, each country is looking out primarily for itself and its own advantage. For instance, in the early 1900's Germany was working to get Russia mired in a Far Eastern war so that Russian pressure would be taken off Germany's eastern flank. Kaiser Wilhelm II thought that any peace between Russia and Japan would get Russia permanently emmeshed in the Far East. He also was working to keep England and France out of the War and from any further meddling in the Far East. Thus Russia and Germany, or so the Kaiser thought, would be able to share in the ultimate division of the "Middle Kingdom."

While Germany was conniving in her way, Great Britain was consolidating her position in China and using her Chinese holdings as buffer states for her interests, particularly in India. She was playing China against Russia; but, when China showed herself powerless in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895, England warily turned to Japan as a possible, strong ally.

The United States, also, gradually became involved in the Far East. In considering the Far Eastern policy of the United States it will be necessary to consider it for the present in the most general terms. Theodore Roosevelt's version of American Far Eastern policy will be discussed in the following chapter.

The United States forced her way into China and Japan, and thus into Korea and Manchuria. As early as 1844 the United States opened negotiations with China and, nine years later, with Commodore Matthew Perry's voyage to the East, Japan was opened to foreigners. In 1882 the United States signed a "good offices" pact with Korea. Gradually these separate actions gave birth to the formulation of some sort of policy. By the turn of the century
at least some officials were beginning to wake up to the world role which the
United States was starting to play. Only a very few envisioned the future
greatness of an imperial United States, while most Americans were still fight-
ing the Civil War and arguing about the gold standard. Their vision was con-
fined to this country; in fact, to their own very local situations.

But in Washington America's new role was seen and understood by a few men
such as John Hay, Alfred Mahan, Henry Cabot Lodge, and young Theodore Roose-
velt. Hay initiated the United States' "Open Door" policy in 1899, and he
continued this policy of attempting to get the Powers to agree to respect and
maintain the territorial integrity of China. These "open door" notes were
weak since they had no military force or sanction behind them—and everyone
knew it. The American Far Eastern policy came to be one of strengthening
China while Europe connived at partitioning China. This very partitioning
was a major source of harm to American commercial ventures and other interests
in the Far East. The dividing of the "middle kingdom" would eventually lead
to the destruction of anything like a Chinese nation, but rather it would make
out of China a hodge-podge of foreign colonies. Under such circumstances the
United States would not have any trade with a dying or dead China and she
could not trade with European nations whose Chinese colonies were solely for
the benefit of the mother-country. Thus, the United States could not become
a party to the division of China, and she tried to defend its integrity.

Hay, the great defender of the Open Door, exposed American policy along this
line quite clearly when he wrote Theodore Roosevelt in 1902: "We are not in
any attitude of hostility towards Russia in Manchuria. On the contrary, we
recognize her exceptional position in northern China. What we have been work-
ing for two years to accomplish, if assurances are to count for anything, is that, no matter what happens eventually in northern China and Manchuria, the United States shall not be placed in any worse position than while the country was under the unquestioned dominion of China.  

Along with Sino-Manchurian interests the United States was expanding her holdings in the Caribbean, in the Pacific with the Hawaiian and the Philippine Islands, and by the construction of the Panama Canal. Later the story of American interests under Theodore Roosevelt will continue this picture of the United States in the Far East.

But first the major contestants in the fast-approaching conflict, Russia and Japan, require special treatment. The best way to arrive at an understanding of Russo-Japanese relationships is to see their respective attitudes and designs toward their spheres of influence, Manchuria and Korea, around the turn of the century, for these same spheres of influence would become the causa belli of the Russo-Japanese War. These areas grew in importance just after the Sino-Japanese War ended.

In the years following the Sino-Japanese War Russia had allied herself with China with the result that she came to control large sections of Manchuria. China considered this cession of rights as only covering business administration, while Russia interpreted the lease as giving her full civil jurisdiction. In the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 an international police force entered China with the purpose of bringing relief to the foreign legations in Peking, which were being besieged by the Boxers. Of course Russia was included in

\[3\text{Ibid.}, 135-136.\]
this relief mission, but she prematurely withdrew her forces from Peking and stationed them, in large numbers, in Manchuria. Russia's goals seemed obvious—she wanted Manchuria. But her policy or method was not clear as two distinct and opposing factions were then beginning to face each other in the Russian home government. In 1903 Serge Witte (who represented one side of the Russian government), the Minister of Finance, could write that the absorption of a part of the Chinese Empire was only a matter of time and "our chief aim is to see that this absorption shall take place naturally, without precipitating events, without taking premature steps, without seizing territory, in order to avoid a premature division of China by Powers concerned."\textsuperscript{4} Opposed to Witte's policy of gradual and quiet absorption of Manchuria, a new group of men were gaining the favor and the ear of the Czar. Their plan was to take over Manchuria and Korea quickly and with force, if necessary. Under the leadership of a man named Bezobrazoff this new faction was promoting timber interests and concessions in the Yalu River Valley in North Korea. Soon Witte and his associates were to be forced from the scene and the revolutionary faction was to take over. Part of the latter group's plan was put into effect when Alexeieff, the Russian commander in Manchuria, kept the Russian troops from the Peking mission in Manchuria, the highway to Korea from East Russia. This aggressive policy in Manchuria and Korea angered all the Powers who feared for their own interests, but it particularly frightened Japan who regarded Korea as her very special sphere of influence. The pressure of the

other nations was so great that Russia, at last, had to agree to evacuate Manchuria, and she promised to do this by withdrawing her troops in installments. This agreement of April 1902 would have solved the problem, but Russia had added a condition—China must provide adequate administrative measures in Manchuria. Russia kept alleging that China was not keeping the agreement and the Czar kept adding new conditions. Finally it was evident that China could do little or nothing and so Japan interfered in order to maintain her interests in Manchuria and, particularly, in China. In July 1903 Japan began a series of negotiations with Russia over their mutual interests in Manchuria and Korea. Unknowingly Japan was fighting the divided counsels of Witte and Bezobrazoff.

But just why should Japan have become so involved? Japan's interests in Manchuria have already been alluded to. Much more important than her interests in Manchuria was Manchuria's position as the highway to Korea—and now Russia was threatening to control and isolate Manchuria from all comers. This was an immediate threat to Korea and Japan's designs on that kingdom. Japan's concern with Korea was of much greater moment and much more vital than Russia's. Russia had expanded into Korea for purely commercial reasons, while Japan desperately looked to Korea as a country which could absorb some of her excess population. Japan also had commercial reasons, but more important to her was her absolute need of Korean land. She must have predominant influence in Korea, but she feared that, if Korea would come under the domination of some other power, her own existence in the Japanese Isles would be endangered. In 1898 Japan and Russia had come to a working agreement over the Korean situation with each side firmly defending the territorial integrity of
Korea. Russia's subsequent action cancelled previous arrangements and Japan then opened negotiations with Russia in the summer of 1903. War was not necessarily inevitable, but soon a dangerous impasse was reached. "Russia would admit Japan's position in Korea provided Japan would agree not to fortify the northern border, but in Manchuria Russia would practically exclude Japanese in common with all foreigners, and Russia would not renew the pledge to respect the integrity of China."\(^5\)

Later Japan practically gained complete control and jurisdiction of Korea through two agreements signed in 1904. In the meantime Russia was not unwilling to let Japan have a free hand in Korea if she would promise to stay out of Manchuria; but, neither side would give in to the other. Japan did attempt to come to an agreement, while Russia seemed to do nothing but delay the proceedings and remained intransigent on the status of Manchuria, even to the point of refusing to discuss it. In November 1903 Japanese Foreign Minister Komura summed up the situation as follows:

> The Japanese Government are prepared to admit that the Manchurian question, so far as it does not affect their rights and interests, is purely a Russo-Chinese question; but Japan has extensive and important interests in that region, and the Japanese Government think that in declaring that Manchuria is outside their sphere of special interest, they are at least entitled to ask for a correlative engagement on the part of Russia not to interfere with the commercial and residential rights and immunities belonging to Japan in virtue of her treaty engagements with China.\(^6\)

Still neither side would yield, and finally all hope of a peaceful settlement

\(^5\)Dennett, Roosevelt, 143.

\(^6\)Japanese Foreign Office, Correspondence Regarding the Negotiations between Japan and Russia, 1903–1904, translation (no translator given), (Washington, D.C., 1904), 28–29.
seemed dashed when Witte, the head of the pacifist wing in Russia, was forced to withdraw from the government and his place was filled by a member of the war-mongering, commercial faction. Finally Japan broke off diplomatic relations with Russia on February 5, 1904, notifying Russia that she would take whatever measures seemed necessary to maintain her position and interests. This cautiously worded message was all but a declaration of war. Three days later war did come when Japan struck the Russian fleet suddenly and unexpectedly at Port Arthur. On February 10 Japan formally declared war.

Apparently everyone except the Czar and Russia thought that the war was inevitable. As a confident of Witte, and a man who moved in Russian diplomatic circles for years, has said: "I am convinced that the Tsar deemed himself to be what his foreign friends had proclaimed him, 'the mainstay of the world's peace', and that so long as he was averse to war no other power would dare to risk it. Few men of his temperament who had been continually assured, as he had, that he was the Vicar of God and the recipient of special divine grace would have thought or felt much differently."\(^7\)

But the rest of the world was much more realistic while being predominantly pro-Russian, in the sense of expecting Russia to win and win quickly. The French publication, *La Verité Française*, echoed the thought of much of the western world when it wrote: "God cannot do otherwise than give victory to the Russians, for they are only schismatics, whilst the Japanese are ter-

\(^7\)E. J. Dillon, *The Eclipse of Russia*, (New York, 1918), 283-284.
rible pagans.⁸ Fears of the "Yellow Peril" from Japan and the superiority under God of the white race made the war seem like a crusade, and this is just what the Czar tried to make out of this useless bloodshed. One biographer of Nicholas says that Witte's successor, Plehve, had been working to get this foreign war started so that public attention would be taken away from the disturbed situation at home. The war also played up to the Czar's mystic conception of himself as the saviour of the East and the champion of the white race, the only difficulty being that, though Nicholas might be able to start a war quite easily, he could not end one as easily.⁹

Just as all the Western nations considered Russia as the righteous defender of Western culture against the barbarians of Japan, so they also felt that Russia would make quick work of this upstart little foe. Nobody had beaten Russia for centuries; she was suppose to be eternally unbeatable. But Japan was quite sure of herself and of Russia's real status; she did not jump into a fight with the huge empire without a good hope of success. Actually, as later investigation has borne out, not only was Russia unprepared but she had not the slightest idea of a plan to follow or even to adopt. Japan soon showed that she had been preparing for years and that the whole nation was behind the war effort. She knew what she wanted, and, as she had not been able to get that through peaceful means, she finally resorted to war. The main evidence of her preparedness and long-term planning was her succession of victories on land and, more particularly, on the sea. From the attack on

⁸Dennett, Roosevelt, 61.

⁹Mohammed, Essad-Bey, Nicholas II, Prisoner of the Purple, (New York, 1937), 126.
Port Arthur on February 8, 1904 until the final crushing defeat and annihilation of the remainder of the Russian fleet at the Battle of Tsushima Straits on May 27-28, 1905 Japan wore down Russian resistance and resolution. The sudden and decisive reversal of Russian supremacy changed the opinion of the entire world. It will be noted later what a profound effect this wave of Japanese victories had on President Roosevelt.

But neither was the war wholly to Japan's advantage. Though it was not realized at the time nor for some time after, Japan was on the verge of collapse by the spring of 1905. Her manpower supply was being seriously and quickly depleted. Early in 1905 Japanese agricultural interests complained that any further losses of farmers to the military effort would gravely endanger food production. Also, Japan was getting farther and farther away from her source of supplies and her supply lines were becoming extended and much harder to maintain. Japan's world credit was nearing exhaustion and the war was costing her one million dollars a day toward the end. Foreign bankers were refusing to make any more loans and ninety percent of the war was financed with foreign capital. In the spring the Japanese army and navy commanders returned from the front and pleaded with the home government to make peace. But, on the positive side, Japan still had her people, as a whole, behind her. And she leaned on her alliance with England, for more than moral strength.

Russia's situation was just as precarious for other reasons and it certainly was no better than Japan's. Though Russian man-power was unlimited

and her supply lines were becoming shorter, the negative factors were just as alarming. Her supply line was a one-track railroad, difficult to use, to repair, and to guard. Russia had monetary troubles similar to those of Japan, because foreign interests who were largely responsible for financing the Russian side of the war, were refusing to lend the Czar any more money. More crucially, the war had not diverted the people's attention from the internal unrest, as was clearly evidenced on January 22, 1905, when the Czar's soldiers fired on a mob and killed 500 persons. That "Bloody Sunday" was only the beginning and it showed that the people were discouraged with the home conditions while they felt that the war and the scenes of battle were remote and almost foreign. During the war France, Russia's major moral and monetary support, had become embroiled in Morocco, thanks to the Kaiser, and was unable to give Russia much aid of any kind.

But, while the Japanese military command demanded peace, the Russian high command under General Aleksei Kuropatkin wanted to keep up the impossible fight.

Kuropatkin, who, after the death of the Foreign Minister, Muravieff, deliberately inclined to a conciliatory policy in the Far East, and who possessed the ways and means of knowing the true state of things there, was enthusiastic in his plea for continuing the war in Manchuria and for patience in Russia, while his promises of decisive victory were so confident, so emphatic, so frequent and circumstantial that it would have been rash were the crown to treat them slightly so long as it maintained him at the head of the forces.\footnote{Dillon, \textit{Eclipse}, 299.}

And the Czar secretly, at least, was in favor of the war. He would prefer a military defeat rather than a disgraceful peace, which he was sure would be the result of a peace conference; and, his ministers supported him. Dillon
says that "Nicholas II communicated through his ministers with the principal notabilities, military, naval, and civil, and asked them to give their opinion on the advisability of ending the war. And the vast majority of the answers were distinctly unfavorable."12 The revolutionaries within Russia considered that the war, and thus its continuance, was their opportunity for arousing the masses against the Czar.

This was how things stood when Theodore Roosevelt made his appearance on the scene and offered his services as peacemaker. Japan, on the point of exhaustion, wanted peace on her own terms; Russia did not want peace, but could not long continue the war. Roosevelt was supposed to please both parties.

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12 Ibid.
CHAPTER II

PEACE OVERTURES FROM JAPAN AND THE FIRST STEPS OF ROOSEVELT TOWARD A CONFERENCE

As the war continued the need for peace on the part of both belligerents, as already discussed, became evident. The next need was for a mediator; and, Theodore Roosevelt was to emerge as the mediator, the antagonistic peacemaker.

A look at Roosevelt's general foreign policy is essential for an understanding of his mediation at Portsmouth and the reasons behind it. In the last decade of the nineteenth century Roosevelt, Alfred Mahan, and Henry Cabot Lodge, with other progressive thinkers in government service, were beginning to occupy positions of authority from which they could direct American foreign policy. Theirs was a policy of imperialism; they saw the growing nation as one destined to become a partner with the other great nations of the world. A number of elements went into the formation of this new group. They were intensely proud of their country, so proud of it that they were sure that whatever it did in any way, particularly in an imperial way, must be right. Their righteous, ethical spirit was a reflection of the crusading missionary spirit of the times. They were proud of their Anglo-Saxon blood and heritage, and they felt that many areas of the world would be so much better off if their great heritage could be imposed on them. This imposition could be through peaceful or warlike means, and the latter was considered as good as
the former when necessary.

All these ideas and more were food for Roosevelt's thought and he pounced on occasions for putting them into effect. In the early days he was for America first, last, and always. As he drew into the foreign policy atmosphere he realized that life was not quite so simple as he had originally thought, that there would have to be some sort of peaceful co-existence among nations—even if this had to be bought at the price of war. Roosevelt gradually gained a world view of politics; he began to see that European affairs were often closely and mysteriously related to Far Eastern affairs. He came to see that America's relations with other nations, friendly and hostile, were extremely important. He saw that the United States must enter into international politics and rivalry if she was to take her place among the world powers. It would be a self-centered game but America must play it as well as the other empire builders.

So America must take her part and Roosevelt started his career of directing imperial America during his term as Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1897 and 1898. He continued his imperialistic urgings during his tenure of office as governor of New York; and, when he was shelved into the Vice Presidency, he campaigned for imperialism, but styled it by the safer name of expansion. Thus he advocated the "manifest destiny" of the United States in the modern world. In all this he knew that he had to educate the public to this new concept of American participation in a new world order. Roosevelt spoke glowingly on this subject as early as November 1897 when he said:

As our modern life goes on, ever accelerating in rapidity, and the nations are drawn closer together for good and for evil and
the nation grows in comparison with friends and rivals, it is impossible to adhere to the policy of isolation. We cannot avoid responsibilities, and we must meet them in a noble or ignoble manner, by hiding our heads, hoping to escape them or shirk them, or by meeting them manfully, as our fathers did. We cannot avoid, as a nation, the fact that on the east and west we look across the waters at Europe and Asia.1

Thus Roosevelt expressed his ideas on the subject of the maintenance of the balance of power with the United States taking her proper part and place among the nations. Whether Roosevelt created much new policy is not, at this point, a question of extreme importance. Perhaps he did not, as Philip Jessup suggests: "Probably Roosevelt would have been shocked to discover how little foreign policy he himself created. There was left to him little but to follow the paths which McKinley, Root, and chiefly Hay, had thought out and projected."2 Later some of Roosevelt's more original contributions will be discussed; of course, he did not start by throwing away past achievements and strategy.

In brief, Roosevelt wanted the United States to be "strong enough to safeguard its legitimate interests in any part of the world, and able to play its part in maintaining a balance of global power that would assure continued peace for all nations."3 He advocated armed force, if necessary, particularly if it was necessary to maintain the United States' position as a world power.

1Howard K. Beale, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power, (Baltimore, 1956), 253, "Address before the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers," from New York Sun, Nov. 13, 1897.


3Foster Rhea Dulles, The Imperial Years, (New York, 1956), 228.
As Roosevelt himself put it: "Only the warlike power of a civilized people ... can give peace to the world."  

In applying this policy to the Far Eastern situation Roosevelt was at least consistent if not especially successful. When he finally began to pay attention to Far Eastern affairs it was within this framework that he thought and planned. He paid little attention to the Far East until 1904 when the Russo-Japanese War turned his thoughts and attention to the area. But when he did survey the situation, he immediately realized that the United States had a budding empire to defend in the Pacific. After all, the United States held the Philippine and Hawaiian Islands, and her plans for a canal across the Isthmus of Panama were another part of American Pacific policy.

The keystone of Theodore Roosevelt's Far Eastern foreign policy, as of his general foreign policy, was the maintenance of the balance of power. In the Far East the United States was using the Open Door policy to defend her interests and to maintain the balance of power. Secretary of State John Hay had initiated the Open Door policy, as far as the United States was concerned, with his notes to the powers concerning the territorial integrity of China and, with China, that of Manchuria. Hay had issued such notes in 1899 and 1900, as well as in 1902. These notes were rather idealistic ventures since they had no coercive force nor sanction behind them. As was pointed out above, Hay realized this; he knew that the United States could not enforce these notes; but, at least, these notes were about the strongest possible

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4 Ibid.
5 p. 4.
measure which the United States could take in defense of Chinese integrity and American interests in China. Sooner than Roosevelt, Hay realized the gross inadequacy of these notes, while the former charged into the Far East as the defender of the Open Door, thinking that he could make such a policy effective. But he soon saw, as Hay had, that the United States just could not take any aggressive measures to back up her notes for the public would not support such moves and the situation was not of such vital interest or importance. Roosevelt did as much as he could by declaring American neutrality at the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, and he requested and received meaningless declarations from the belligerents to the effect that they would respect the integrity of China. Each of the belligerents interpreted China in ways that served their own respective interests to the best advantage—which meant that Russia definitely considered Manchuria as being outside of the territorial dominion of China.

While Russia's stand on Manchuria had not changed, and everyone knew it, England's Far Eastern policy was identical; but, most surprisingly, Roosevelt did not realize this. Somehow or other Roosevelt was absolutely certain that British and American interests in the Far East were identical, and he made this a fundamental principle of his foreign policy. His assumption was not only false but costly. While the United States could put down as her chief objectives in the Far East the defense of American possessions and the maintenance of the Open Door for her commercial interests, Britain was more aggressive and forward. She wanted to insure herself against any coalition of the European powers which would isolate her in the East. Britain was using her
dominant position in certain parts of China chiefly as a defense of her colonial empire in India. Britain held Chinese land; the United States did not and never wanted to.

If the above remarks on Roosevelt's foreign policy in the Far East seem rather sketchy, Roosevelt's thought was no less sketchy, at least in the beginning, and unrealistically idealistic. It took a situation, like the Russo-Japanese War, to bring his ideas down to earth; but, even then, as will be seen, Roosevelt had a lot to learn. But when the war did come, Roosevelt's attitude toward the participants was quite realistic. In discussing this facet of Roosevelt's policy the core of this thesis will be approached.

The best way to see and to arrive at an understanding of Theodore Roosevelt's mind with regard to Russia and Japan is to study his remarks and judgments which he expressed concerning these two nations. From this perusal we will be able to understand his reaction at Russia and Japan's aggressive activity over their mutual spheres of influence, Manchuria and Korea. First let us study Roosevelt's view of Russia, and then of Japan.

Roosevelt mirrored current American distaste for Russian Czarism and despotism as well as a distrust of Russia's chronic dishonest and shifty diplomatic methods. Men mentioned Russia's double-dealing in inviting American commercial interests into Manchuria and then almost taxing them out of existence. What angered everyone was Russia's roughshod occupation of Manchuria and her disregard of all foreign interests in that region.

Japan, in Roosevelt's eyes, was an amazing and great little nation. He thought highly of the Japanese people and of the Japanese Government and
shared in the American favoritism of the underdog in the war. Japan amazed Roosevelt by her sudden and uninterrupted victories, and only later did her record frighten him into the realization that Japan might become a real enemy of American interests in the Pacific and the Far East. His attitude toward Japan, as that of the country in general, was based more on sentiment than on facts; but, he realized that Japan was a potential threat to American holdings and interests. He saw that Japan, if left alone, was going to destroy any semblance of a Far Eastern balance of power. Gradually he came around to the position that it would be best for the interests of all concerned if, after the war, Russia and Japan faced each other in a fairly balanced position. Von Sternberg, the German ambassador to the United States, quotes Roosevelt to this effect:

"It is to our interest that the war between Russia and Japan should drag on, so that both powers may exhaust themselves as much as possible and that their geographical areas of friction should not be eliminated after the conclusion of the peace; and that, as regards the limits of their spheres of influence, they should remain opposed to each other in the same way as they were before the war. This will keep them on a war footing and reduce their appetite for other territories."

In the beginning of the war Roosevelt was especially benevolent toward Japan since he considered that she was "playing our game." In Roosevelt's own words we can find a nice presentation of just what he thought of Russia and Japan, and how he introduced his dual policy of treading lightly with a big

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6Dennis, Adventures, 364; Dennis quotes from G.P. XIX, part 1, No. 5992, pp. 112-113, i.e. :Die grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinette, 1871-1914, Berlin, 1927, edited by Erste Hälfte.

stick or his policy of nice words backed up with arms. He wrote to George Meyer, his ambassador at St. Petersburg, along these lines:

Personally, I admire the Russian people; but I think the Russian government represents all that is worst, most insincere and unscrupulous, and most reactionary; and undoubtedly our people who live in Japan are better treated by the Japanese and have more sympathy with them than is the case with those who live in Russia. I like the Japanese; but of course I hold myself in readiness to see them get puffed up with pride if they are victorious ... We must rely upon our fighting power, in the first place, and upon being just and fair in our dealings with other nations, in the second place.

He [Spring Rice, friend of Roosevelt and in British embassy at St. Petersburg] knows just how I feel on all these matters, and you can talk with him without any reserve. England's interest is exactly ours as regards this Oriental complication, and is likely to remain so.

if peace should come now, Japan ought to have a protectorate over Korea (which has shown its utter inability to stand by itself) and ought to succeed to Russia's rights in and around Port Arthur, while I hope to see Manchuria restored to China.8

In this frame of mind Roosevelt was working his way toward becoming mediator. As will be seen when we come to evaluate Roosevelt's Portsmouth work and its significance, he did not campaign for the job of peacemaker; but, he was available and relatively acceptable to the parties concerned. When the time did come Roosevelt did not charge in as the saviour of Russia and Japan, even though he was eager to work for peace. Though he did want peace, still he did not come onto the Russo-Japanese scene with purely altruistic motives. Among the many reasons which could be presented there are a few which stand out as the more important motives which moved Roosevelt into the position of

arbitrator. Roosevelt was crusading for the maintenance of the Open Door and the territorial integrity of China. Even here he was not particularly idealistic, but rather he was actually looking out for American economic and commercial interests in and with China. Another objective of his was to make sure that neither Russia nor Japan would emerge from the war as supreme victor, as he hoped that each nation would face the other, after the war, on a somewhat equal footing. Another strong motive was Roosevelt's desire to make the United States a prominent world power, and the glory resulting from his mediation would be one way of getting praise for the United States and putting her on the top of the diplomatic ladder. Two other reasons can easily be discerned in Roosevelt's motivation for becoming peacemaker: his own egotism and his fight to maintain the balance of power in the Far East. Perhaps above all other reasons Roosevelt was struggling to preserve that tenuous affair called the balance of power. He wanted neither Russia nor Japan to be supreme in the Far East, and he did not want any other country to come out on top in the checkboard that was China. How practical and how realistic he was in this desire to keep the balance of power will be discussed later. The final reason or motive, which will be discussed here, and one which, by no means, played a small part in Roosevelt's becoming mediator was his personal pride in tackling such a job. Add to this desire, an aspiration common to many men, the fact that Roosevelt was the sort of man he was and one can suppose that the personal element, Roosevelt's egotism, played a more than noticeable part in his Portsmouth work. And so Roosevelt was soon to come into contact with the belligerents who wanted and needed peace. Nobody realized the dire situations of Russia and Japan; and, particularly, neither belligerent realized how badly
off the other was. France wanted peace for at least two reasons: she was becoming embroiled in Morocco and she wanted Russia to stand by her under their Dual Alliance. French bankers were unwilling to loan Russia any more money, since Russia was too great a financial risk particularly after the defeat in the Battle of Tsushima. Whereas a year and a half before she had worked for war, Germany was working for peace now for the Kaiser saw Russia sufficiently weakened and bogged down in the Far East and he was beginning to fear that the revolutionary movement and spirit rampant in Russia would spread westward to Germany. England less urgently wanted peace since she had no special advantage to gain either way—particularly since she was sure that diplomatic support would be the maximum contribution to Japan which she would give under the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. And the United States somewhat nobly wanted peace, not so much because of any vital interests but rather because war was not a nice thing.

But it was one thing to want peace and quite another to go about obtaining it. "Four different methods of peacemaking were advocated: an international conference; mediation through England and France, the allies, respectively, of the belligerents; mediation by the United States; and direct negotiation between Russia and Japan. "Over all hung the shadow of intervention by a concert of Powers." An international conference was feared by Russia and Japan as they both had lost at such meetings; Japan most recently after the Sino-Japanese War in 1895. The other possible ways were speculated on and urged by the interested parties. From the start direct negotiation ap-

peared to be the best way, at least to both belligerents.

Russia actually made the first, though very unofficial, move through the former Minister, Witte. In the early days of the war in 1904 and again in 1905 Witte approached Count Hayashi, Japanese minister at Paris, but his final attempt as his first met with failure. He was told that as he had absolutely no influence in the present Russian government it would be useless to deal with or through him.\(^\text{10}\) The counsels of Japan were, at first, as divided as Russia's but gradually Japan's leaders consolidated to urge peace. In the spring of 1905 Japan approached Roosevelt through Kogoro Takahira, Japanese Ambassador to Washington, but when the former suggested that Japan openly and directly ask for peace his suggestion was rejected.\(^\text{11}\) The French Premier Delcasse suggested to Motono, a Japanese official in Paris, that Russia might be ready to talk peace and Delcasse offered his services as intermediary.\(^\text{12}\) But Japan hesitated to use the services of Russia's ally. At the same time Takahira kept Roosevelt informed of all these happenings, and revealed Japan's leaning toward Roosevelt as mediator.

Meanwhile Roosevelt had not been exactly silent concerning his availability for the role of mediator. As early as December 1904 he had shown himself quite willing, although he never really rushed into the position as might have been expected of a man of his temperament and ideas. In late December 1904 he wrote to Spring Rice: "as a matter of fact I have very definitely

\(^\text{10}\)Dennett, Roosevelt, 43-44.

\(^\text{11}\)Zabriskie, American-Russian Rivalry, 113 note.

\(^\text{12}\)Dennett, Roosevelt, 174-175.
concluded what I intend to do if circumstances permit, so far as this far eastern question is concerned. What was in his mind is anyone's guess. He would still have to wait for the right opportunity.

In the meantime he did not sit idly but he instructed Secretary Hay to send out the open door circulars, which the latter dispatched in January 1904, and again in the spring of 1905. Perhaps his most celebrated move was his warning given early in the war to France and Germany. Dennett lauds this warning in the following words: "We do not see how President Roosevelt could have won his victory for the preservation of the integrity of China in 1905 if he had not first served notice on France and Germany that he was prepared to take the side of Japan if either Power came forward to assist Russia in the partition of the Empire." Roosevelt mentioned this notice in writing to Spring Rice in July 1905:

As soon as the war broke out I notified Germany and France in most polite and discreet fashion that in the event of a combination against Japan to try to do what Russia, Germany and France did to her in 1894, I should promptly side with Japan and proceed to whatever length was necessary on her behalf. I of course knew that your government would act in the same way, and thought it best that I should have no consultation with your people before announcing my own purpose.

What is very noteworthy about this note which Dennett praises so highly is that no record of it has ever been found. No collection of Roosevelt manuscripts, no foreign office, or State Department archive has brought this mon-

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14Dennett, Roosevelt, 336.
umental letter to light. In March 1905 Roosevelt wrote Sir George Otto Trevelyan that he had approached the Russian government, both directly and indirectly, on the subject of peace.16

It was in this same month that Roosevelt and the Kaiser started their somewhat mutual moves for peace. On the initiative of the Kaiser, Roosevelt had sent out the open door circulars of 1904 and 1905. The President did not see that the Kaiser was trying to get England and France out of China so that the Kaiser and his cousin, the Czar, could have China and Manchuria to themselves. The Kaiser's motives were different but about as altruistic as Roosevelt's, while Roosevelt never realized that the Kaiser was playing him for the fool. It would be an involved study in itself to go into the German-American relations as they came to bear on each other during the Russo-Japanese War and the Portsmouth Conference. The Kaiser always imagined that France and England were ready to take the least occasion to start a world congress to settle the war, and he warned Roosevelt of this again and again. Though Roosevelt was as much against such a congress as the Kaiser, he thought the Kaiser was overexaggerating the issue.17 In all fairness it must be admitted that during the Conference the Kaiser did put pressure on the Czar to make peace, but by then the Kaiser was willing to accept peace at almost any price because he feared that the Russian revolutionary spirit might spread into Germany.

While these machinations were going on behind the scenes Japan repeatedly

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16Ibid., IV, 1134, "Roosevelt to Trevelyan," March 9, 1905.

trounced Russia. Immediately after the crushing victory at the Battle of Tsushima, May 27-28, 1905, Takahira ended the round-about method of suggesting peace negotiations and secretly asked Roosevelt to start to prepare the way for actual conferences. Only five days before the Battle of Tsushima Roosevelt had written to Meyer: "As for peace, I also consider that out of the question for the time being. The parties are very far apart both in their estimates of the chances of war and as to what should be done at the end of the war." Two days later he again wrote Meyer: "They (the Japanese) are, however, perfectly confident. . . . The Russians on the other hand are very much elated and will advance nothing in the way of terms which the Japanese would even consider. So I guess that there is nothing to do but watch them fight it out." But by May 31, the day Takahira approached Roosevelt, the situation was such particularly in Tokyo, that Japan was quite willing to lay the foundations for negotiations. The Japanese note to Roosevelt was a very clever and rather amusing document:

The Japanese Government still adhere to the conviction that the peace negotiations, when they come, should be conducted directly and exclusively between the belligerents, but even in such case friendly assistance of a neutral will be essential in order to bring them together . . . and the Japanese Government would prefer to have that office undertaken by a neutral in whose good judgment and wise direction they have entire confidence. You will express to the President that . . . he will see his way directly and entirely of his own motion and initiative to invite the two belligerents to come together for the purpose of direct negotiations . . . and you will make it entirely clear to the President that the Japanese Government have no intention by the present communication to approach Russia either directly or in-

19 Ibid., IV, 1191, "Roosevelt to Meyer," May 24, 1905.
directly on the subject of peace. In this letter Tokyo reaffirmed its purpose in fighting: "The war, from Japan's point of view, is essentially and exclusively one of self-defense. It has never, so far as she is concerned, possessed any element of self-aggrandizement. Accordingly, the demands to be formulated by Japan will only be commensurable with the original objects to be attained."

Roosevelt was amused at Japan's suggestion that he use his own "initiative" but he was above taking offense at Japan's suggestion. Roosevelt immediately proceeded to approach Russia. It was only years later that the world learned that Japan had actually initiated the peace moves. In any event, while Roosevelt sounded out Russia through its Washington ambassador, Count Cassini, the Kaiser began to put pressure on the Czar. Cassini at first brushed off Roosevelt's suggestion as being out of question but he promised to convey the President's message to St. Petersburg. As Roosevelt did not trust Cassini he ordered Meyer, who had recently been appointed to St. Petersburg, to approach the Czar directly. On June 6 Cassini supposedly brought the official reply of his government—a refusal; but on the next day Meyer cabled that the Czar had somewhat coolly accepted Roosevelt's offer. Cassini practically accused the President of lying, and Roosevelt finally had to get Meyer's cable confirmed by the Russian foreign minister, Count Lambsdorff.

On June 8 Roosevelt took the first official step when he publicly cabled

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20 Dennett, Roosevelt, 215.

21 Ibid., 216.
to both belligerents an identical note, inviting them to come together. Japan and Russia replied in the affirmative, the former on June 10, and the latter two days later. In this way Roosevelt began his peacemaking work, which appeared foredoomed. The President had the hardest time trying to convince Russia that he was intervening, in part, in order to prevent Russia from being driven completely out of the Far East. The Russians could not see how any conference could possibly turn a military defeat into a diplomatic triumph. They still thought that the next battle might bring them glorious victory. As for the possibility of victory at the conference table they were soon to see that it was possible, and they later managed themselves so well that the public, for awhile, thought that Russia was the victor in the Portsmouth Conference and the Treaty—and not the victim. Actually, as will be seen, Russia was neither victor nor victim.

But from the very first, chances for an amicable settlement looked bleak and troubles arose long before the two belligerents were anywhere near coming together. The two big questions were the choice of a meeting place and the powers which the delegations would have. In solving these two problems to the satisfaction of both belligerents Roosevelt displayed extreme tact and diplomatic ability, although both countries, in different ways, had completely exasperated him. After much exchange of correspondence Washington, D.C., was finally and mutually agreed on, when Russia suddenly changed her mind. The President had already announced that Washington was to be the meeting place.

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23 Ibid., 1224-1225, in "Roosevelt to Lodge," June 16, 1905.
and he refused to go back on the previous agreement. (Portsmouth eventually was the meeting place because the summer heat of Washington was too oppressive for such work.) He wrote to Meyer: "Explain to Count Lamsdorff and if necessary to the Tsar that I am convinced that on consideration they will of their own accord perceive that it is entirely out of the question for me now to reverse the action I took in accordance with the request of the Russian Government, which action has been communicated to and acquiesced in by Japan, and has been published to the entire world." 24

The Japanese also caused a delay because they feared that the Russians would send delegates with lesser powers than their own would have. Japan wanted to be sure that the Russian officials would have full powers to negotiate and conclude peace, otherwise she hinted that she would be unwilling even to meet. 25 The President tried to call a halt to Japan's tactics when he sent Takahira a message the latter was to relay to his home government:

"Moreover, the President feels most strongly that the question of the powers of the plenipotentiaries is not in the least a vital question, whereas it is vital that the meeting should take place if there is any purpose to get peace. If there was no sincere desire to get peace, then the fact of the plenipotentiaries having full powers would not in any way avail to secure it." 26 In Japan's letter of acknowledgment and acceptance, as in Russia's, she had agreed

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24 Ibid., IV, 1228, in "Roosevelt to Lodge," June 16, 1905.
26 Ibid., in "Roosevelt to Lodge," June 16, 1905.
to send delegates who would have full powers.\textsuperscript{27} Her action may have caused Russia to delay longer than usual, for had Japan been more explicit about her delegates and their powers Russia might have shown herself more willing to meet. As it finally turned out, Russia pointedly said that from the first she had had every intention of sending delegates with full powers—after all, that was what the word plenipotentiary meant. In the end Japan actually sent emissaries with lesser powers than those of the Russian representatives, since the decisions of the Japanese representatives still required the approval of the Japanese Imperial Diet, while the Russian delegates had power to discuss and conclude peace in the name of the Czar.

Through all these preliminary difficulties Roosevelt strove to straighten out the way for eventual negotiations. No other power or person was in such a favorable position as far as the belligerents were concerned. Roosevelt somehow calmly waited for the golden opportunity, though he was not especially anxious that it come his way. American interests were not extremely vital in Manchuria and much less so in Korea, but since America was going to have to take its place among the imperial powers of the world Roosevelt was determined that she should do so in grand style. Furthermore, Roosevelt, as mediator, could implement his policy by stopping a war that had ceased to be "righteous" and he could maintain that utopian balance of power in the Far East, and thus peace in the world.

Towards this all his efforts had been directed, especially since Japan's communiqué to him on May 31. Since then he had labored tactfully and had

\textsuperscript{27}\textit{Ibid.}, IV, 1224, in "Roosevelt to Lodge," June 16, 1905.
moved toward getting the belligerents together, in spite of the difficulties over the meeting place and plenipotentiaries' powers. No wonder he could exclaim: "Oh Lord! I have been growing nearly mad in the effort to get Russia and Japan together. Japan has a right to ask a good deal and I do not think her demands excessive; but Russia is so suddenly stupid and the Government is such an amorphous affair that they really do not know what they want."  

Roosevelt's last move before the first meeting of the delegates was to try and secure an armistice between the belligerents. The Russians wanted one as they feared that Japan would only continue to nibble away at Russian territory during the negotiations. Actually Japan did begin to occupy the island of Sakhalin during the early part of the conferences. Roosevelt failed to get the armistice but he was not surprised at his failure, as he pointed out to Henry Cabot Lodge: "At Russia's request I asked Japan for an armistice, but I did not expect that Japan would grant it, although I of course put the request as strongly as possible. Indeed I cannot say that I really blame Japan for not granting it, for she is naturally afraid that magnanimity on her part would be misinterpreted and turned to bad account against her."  

Finally all the delegates gathered and Roosevelt welcomed them aboard the Presidential yacht, the Mayflower, where he tactfully arranged for a standing

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28Ibid., IV, 1258, "Roosevelt to Whitelaw Reid," June 30, 1905.

29Ibid., IV, 1272, "Roosevelt to Lodge," July 11, 1905.
buffet luncheon and then toasted the Japanese and Russian emperors in such a way that no violation of protocol could possibly be conceived.

Roosevelt left the belligerents alone: the success or failure of the Conference was dependent on them. At last the Portsmouth Conference had begun on a calm if not an especially hopeful note.
CHAPTER III

THE CONFERENCE AND THE TREATY

It may seem an unnecessary break in our narrative to discuss the personalities of the actors in this drama, but actually such an explanation, in the case of the Portsmouth Conference, goes a long way towards explaining the proceedings and final outcome of that Conference. For this reason some time shall be devoted to these men and their part in the Portsmouth Conference. As Tyler Dennett says: "The personal equation entered so largely into situations that one is often reminded of how quickly the relations of states resolve themselves into personal relations."¹ The dominant personality of course, was Theodore Roosevelt, who directed the "show." Roosevelt was the informal way of avoiding the regular diplomatic channels and of depending on his friends for his diplomatic business and errand-boy footwork. Perhaps his method was more effective than the usual rigid diplomatic course. In a way it was forced on him by the death of John Hay, his Secretary of State. Neither Hay nor his successor, Elihu Root, took any part in the Portsmouth Conference; but, even if Roosevelt had not had to be his own Secretary of State he probably would have run roughshod over the regular procedure. Whatever might be said, pro or con, concerning his method, it was effective—from the dispute over the place of meeting and the powers of the delegates to the signing of the Treaty.

¹Dennett, Roosevelt, 42.
Once the dispute over the powers of the plenipotentiaries had been settled, the respective governments finally published the names of their representatives. The former Minister of Finance and "peace-party" man, Serge Witte, was the first Russian delegate. His assistant was Baron Roman Rosen who had recently been appointed to succeed the difficult and lying Count Cassini as Russian Ambassador to the United States. Baron Jutaro Komura was appointed first Japanese plenipotentiary, with Kogoro Takahira, the Japanese Minister to Washington, as second delegate. As mentioned before, Witte and Rosen actually had fuller powers than their opponents, Komura and Takahira, but the dynamism of the Russian delegates, and particularly that of Witte, was to be far more effectual than any powers.

Serge Witte was a member of the old guard and definitely not one of the Czar's favorites. He had fought for the peaceful penetration of Manchuria when the Court and the Czar backed those who wanted military force used for commercial expansion in that territory. Witte had left the government and, as has already been seen, he worked for peace as much as he dared; but, the Japanese rebuffed him as being a man without influence. In the end the Czar was almost forced to choose Witte as the others to whom he had offered the job had refused, fearing that only failure at Portsmouth and disfavor at home would reward their efforts. No one wanted to take on such a thankless job, except Witte who said: "If the Czar will ask it of me personally, I shall be ready to go to America."² Witte's condition was accepted and he found himself the first plenipotentiary, a man without friends, the enemy of the Czar and

²Quoted in Essad-Bey, Nicholas II, 159.
the military set and the revolutionaries at home, as well as of the vast majority of the public in the United States and in other parts of the western world. As Witte said to one of his confidants: "I have been chosen not so much to render a service to my country—as figuratively speaking—to stumble and break my neck. They really want to go on with the war. It is calculated that the chances of my striking up a peace on really acceptable conditions are superlatively slight, and that in all possibility, therefore, I shall fail. Then I shall be dead and buried." The Czar's one instruction to Witte was: "Not one square inch of Russian soil, not one kopek in tribute." Witte came to his almost hopeless task with some schemes and plans in his mind:

I resolved to base my tactics on the following principles: (1) Not to show that we were in the least anxious to make peace, and to convey the impression that if His Majesty had consented to the negotiations, it was merely because of the universal desire on the part of all countries to see the war terminated; (2) to act as befitted the representative of the greatest empire on earth, undismayed by the fact that that mighty empire had become involved temporarily in a slight difficulty; (3) in view of the tremendous influence of the press in America, to show it every attention and to be accessible to all its representatives; (4) to behave with democratic simplicity and without a shadow of snobbishness, so as to win the sympathy of the Americans; (5) in view of the considerable influence of the Jews on the press and on other aspects of American life, especially in New York, not to exhibit any hostility toward them—which conduct was entirely in keeping with my opinion of the Jewish problem.

I took great care to treat all the Americans with whom I came into contact with the utmost simplicity of manner. This behaviour was a heavy strain on me as all acting is to the unaccustomed, but it surely was worth the trouble.

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3Dillon, Eclipse, 298.

4Quoted in Essad-Bey, Nicholas II, 159.

5Witte, Memoirs, 139-140.
And it does appear that Witte had early won the impressionable Roosevelt to his side. Roosevelt expressed his pleasure at Witte's appointment, though he later gave his opinion of the head Russian delegate in less joyous terms: "Witte impressed me much while he was here, but by no means altogether pleasantly. . . . he also impressed me with being very much more concerned for his own welfare than for the welfare of his nation, and as being utterly cynical, untruthful and unscrupulous."7

The other plenipotentiary for Russia, Baron Rosen, received kindlier handling from Roosevelt, though Witte did not think too much of his colleague. In his Memoires Witte wrote of Rosen: "He had the mediocre intelligence of a Baltic German and the manners of a perfect gentleman."8 As will be seen, Roosevelt called Rosen into his confidence at the crucial moment of the Conference. Rosen was efficient and he did his job well; but, since he was the second delegate, and that to the showman Witte, he is often passed over without much mention. After the Portsmouth Conference Rosen continued as Russian Ambassador to Washington, to the real pleasure of President Roosevelt.

While much can be said and written about the Russian delegates, the Japanese, though just as able and schooled in the tactics of diplomacy, drew less attention to themselves and their part in the Portsmouth Conference. As Jutaro Komura, the first Japanese plenipotentiary, and Kogoro Takahira, his assistant and the then Japanese Minister to Washington, insisted on absolute

7Ibid., V, 61–62, "Roosevelt to Spring Rice," Nov. 1, 1905.
8Witte, Memoires, 136.
secrecy concerning the conference sessions, they kept aloof from the press. Though they were silent concerning themselves Roosevelt wrote in high praise of them and their conduct. He admired the Japanese in general and expressed his special admiration for these two representatives of the Japanese Government.

These "big four" generally respected Roosevelt in his efforts to secure peace, though Witte and Rosen both expressed the opinion that they did not see why Roosevelt felt that peace was so imperative for Russia.9

But these were not the only persons to play important parts in the Conference. A few words must be said about Theodore Roosevelt's "Tennis Cabinet." In a way the delegates or plenipotentiaries discussed above were the puppets in the show while the members of Roosevelt's "Tennis Cabinet" were the men who pulled the plenipotentiaries' strings. As most people do not pay attention to those who manipulate the strings, but only watch the puppets, so many might pass over these minor characters when, in reality, they are almost more important. If the personal element enters between Roosevelt and the plenipotentiaries, it enters much more between Roosevelt and his "Tennis Cabinet." Perhaps the easiest way to approach a discussion of this "Cabinet" is to take Roosevelt's various relations with each country and see the men who are involved. Thus the influence of the "Tennis Cabinet" will be brought out.

Mention has already been made of Count Cassini, the Russian Ambassador to Washington. Roosevelt could not work with this man, mainly because he was sure that he could not trust him. The President finally by-passed Cassini alto-

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gather and worked directly with Ambassador George Meyer at St. Petersburg. Later Baron Rosen would succeed Cassini much to the relief of Roosevelt, but until he did, and even afterwards, Roosevelt depended on George Von Lengerke Meyer, whom he had sent to St. Petersburg. He had removed Robert S. McCormick, a politically valuable person but a diplomatic failure, and had sent Meyer to Russia with the remark: "Now, at St. Petersburg, I want some work done, and you are the man to do it. It happens to be the only embassy at which I do want work done just at present." Ambassador Meyer was really the only man in the official diplomatic service whom Roosevelt used. And Meyer did not fail Roosevelt. As will be seen, it was Meyer who handled the Czar so well during the crucial days of the deadlock in the Conference.

The President had a similar connection with the Japanese in the person of Baron Kentaro Kaneko. Kaneko had been educated in the United States, at Harvard, and he knew American ways. It is a bit surprising that he did not play up to the American press, as Witte did; but, he served as a valuable go-between in ways which the diplomatic code would have ruled out for anyone of an official rank. Roosevelt wrote to him after the Conference: "You have rendered me invaluable assistance by the way in which you have enabled me to know, and also by the way in which you have enabled me to convey to your own government certain things which I thought it desirable to have known and which I hardly cared to forward through official channels." As in the case of Russia when Roosevelt by-passed Cassini and Witte, for the latter at least

11Quoted in Dennett, Roosevelt, 36, "Roosevelt to Kaneko," Sept. 11, 1905.
considered himself by-passed, so the President had no contact with the American Minister to Japan, Lloyd C. Griscom.

Diplomatically England's relation to the United States was somewhat similar to that of Russia. Roosevelt did not find himself able to work with Sir Mortimer Durand, the British Ambassador to Washington, though he found him a nice old man and quite sociable. Likewise, Roosevelt sidestepped his own Ambassador to the Court of Saint James, Whitelaw Reid. And yet Roosevelt would complain bitterly when Britain would not send him the man he wanted when all the while he refused to work through their representative in Washington, and his in London. The man whom he wanted in Durand's place was really the root cause of all his indirect methods in dealing with England. Sir Cecil Spring Rice was a very close friend of the President, a charter and intimate member of the "Tennis Cabinet." "Springy's" admiration for Roosevelt was sincere, even if, or perhaps because, he could say: "If you took an impetuous small boy on to a beach strewn with a great many exciting pebbles, you would not expect him to remain interested for long in one pebble. You must always remember that the President is about six." Often Roosevelt would ask Spring Rice to come over for a few days, a unique request when we remember that Spring Rice was attached to the English embassy in St. Petersburg. Spring Rice definitely was valuable; he was almost the only line of communication between Washington and London, and quicker than any more direct channels. Ironically

12 Witte, Memoirs, 166.

Spring Rice was made British Ambassador to Washington only after Roosevelt had left the White House.

France, too, is another example of the Rooseveltian diplomacy in action. The French Premier, Delcassé, was a persona non grata to Roosevelt. This was due no doubt in part to the Kaiser's whisperings into the President's ear about Delcasse's and England's plans to form a congress of nations to settle the War. Fortunately the French Premier resigned on June 6 so that left the President completely free to deal with France through another member of his "Tennis Cabinet" Jules Jusserand, the French Ambassador to the United States.

Another "Tennis Cabinet" member was Hermann Speck Von Sternberg, the German Ambassador to the United States. Again, Roosevelt seldom made much use of his representative at Berlin, Ambassador Charlemagne Tower. "Speck," as Spring Rice and Jusserand, though attached to foreign governments, was loyal to his friend and performed invaluable service to Roosevelt as well as to the Kaiser and Von Bulow, the German Imperial Chancellor.

A word in passing about others who were silent partners to the President would include such men as Melville Stone, correspondent for the Associated Press, and John C. O'Laughlin, special correspondent for the Chicago Tribune. Another type of Rooseveltian diplomacy was offered by Secretary of War, Taft, when the latter concluded the highly secret Taft-Katsura Agreement on July 29, 1905. This agreement, concluded in the dog days of the Portsmouth Conference, almost gave United States' approval to Japan's dominion over Korea, while the Japanese declared that they had no designs whatsoever towards the Philippines.

With all the "machinery" set up for smooth running the Conference was
ready to start, and start it did shortly after Roosevelt got the delegates together at Oyster Bay before they set out for Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The sessions had been switched to Portsmouth because of the extreme summer heat of Washington.

In all there were twelve major sessions and a few private meetings between Komura and Witte. The first eight meetings constitute the first part of the Conference, and the final four the last part during which Theodore Roosevelt intervened directly. After the welcome on August 5, there was a short delay until August 10 when the first formal session was held. At this time Japan presented her terms of peace;

I. Russia to acknowledge that Japan possesses in Korea [sic] paramount political, military, and economical interests and Russia to engage not to obstruct or interfere with any measures of guidance, protection, and control which Japan finds it necessary to take in Korea;

II. Russia to evacuate Manchuria within a specified period and to relinquish all territorial advantages and all rights of occupation and all preferential and exclusive concessions and franchises in that region in impairment of Chinese sovereignty or inconsistent with the principle of equal opportunity;

III. Japan to restore to China Manchuria subject to the guarantee of reform and improved administration;

IV. Japan and Russia reciprocally to engage not to obstruct any general measures common to all countries which China may take for the development of the commerce and industries of Manchuria;

V. Russia to transfer and assign to Japan the lease of the Liaotung Peninsula;

VI. Russia to assign to Japan the Harbin–Port Arthur railway;

VII. Russia may retain and work Trans–Manchurian railway subject to condition that the same is to be employed exclusively for commercial and industrial purposes;

VIII. Russia to cede to Japan Sakhalin and the appurtenant islands;

IX. Russia to pay to Japan an indemnity sufficient to cover the actual expenses of war;
X. Vladivostock to be dismantled and to be made essentially a commercial port and Japan to have the right to station a con-
sul there;

XI. The naval strength of Russia in the Extreme East hereaf-
ter not to exceed _____ tons;

XII. Russia to surrender to Japan as lawful prizes all vessels of war which sought asylum in neutral ports in consequence of in-
juries received in battle and were there interned;

XIII. Russia to grant to Japanese subjects full fishery rights along the coasts and in the bays, harbours [sic], inlets, and rivers of her possessions in the Japan, Okhotsk, and Bering seas. 14

Such were the terms which surprised others besides the Russians, as al-
most everyone expected the Japanese terms to be much more moderate and in ac-
cord with their totally different and supposedly more altruistic pre-war aims.

At first Roosevelt was reticent with regard to Japan's terms, particularly the indemnity and the cession of Russian territory.15 Only later did he express his approval of Japan's receiving an indemnity and territory. The American public, particularly, were taken aback by Japan's demand for the recognition of her complete domination over Korea, her demand for an indemnity for the costs of the war, and also her demand for territory. The Japanese stand on Korea was completely unexpected as she had so long professed such high motives concerning the Hermit Empire. Actually official circles felt otherwise, as was seen in the Taft-Katsura Agreement. Japan, no doubt, added a number of fairly innocuous proposals which she could later magnanimously withdraw; but, still four of the proposals met with Russia's disapproval. These dealt with the limitation of the Russian Navy, the return of interned ships, the indemni-

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ty, and the cession of Sakhalin. Even before the Russians attacked these demands Witte cleverly made the suggestion that Japan and Russia enter a mutual agreement which would insure their respective interests in Korea, Manchuria, and even in China. But Komura as well as Lamsdorff, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, turned down this proposal; and, Witte turned back to the proposals for peace. Actually within two years Japan and Russia were to follow Witte's proposal of a mutual interest pact. In the first eight sessions the other terms were easily adjusted to the satisfaction of both parties, and Japan hinted that the clauses about the interned ships and the limitation of the Russian Far Eastern fleet could be just as easily solved as they were not of extremely vital importance. But the provisions concerning the indemnity and the cession of Sakhalin were a big question mark. Neither side would yield on these matters, and by August 18 it looked as if Roosevelt's early fears of failure were soon to be realized. By this time Roosevelt was ready to support Japan in her demands for money and land: "I think I can get the Japanese to abandon two of the proposed articles. But there will have to be some indemnity under some name, and it is madness for the Russians to expect the Japanese to give up Sakhalin, which they have taken."16 Russia's tactics had made the Japanese refuse to agree to an armistice, and in the meantime Japan had begun to occupy Sakhalin.

It was at this time, after August 18, that Theodore Roosevelt personally and quite directly intervened in the Conference. Some criticize him for this action, but the representatives of both sides had asked him for advice in the

crisis; and, apparently, his previous and indirect influence on the Conference had not been very effective, particularly as the first part ended in complete stalemate. The last four sessions of the Conference, including some special extra meetings, makeup the second part and are almost a unit in themselves.

The stalemate over the indemnity and the cession of Sakhalin probably would have ended the Conference had not Roosevelt actually intervened when he did. Japan's "extra" proposals concerning the limitation of the Russian Navy and the treatment of interned Russian warships were easily disposed of, leaving the two big problems unsolved and without a solution in sight. A brief consideration of these two issues is necessary for an understanding of their significance and weight in the closing sessions, as well as Roosevelt's influential part in the Conference crisis.

The cession of Sakhalin was considered by most to be practically a fait accompli, especially as Japan had begun to occupy the island; but, the Czar would not compromise in the least—"Not one square inch of Russian soil." In addition to the plain fact that Japan actually was occupying Sakhalin, another element was heavily in Japan's favor—Sakhalin Island had been under Japanese sovereignty until some thirty years previous to the Russo-Japanese War. The Russian delegates' views of the cession of Sakhalin were not exactly those of the Czar, for as Rosen put it:

As regards the first of these points we had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that in the presence of irremediable facts and conditions this point could not be successfully carried in its en-

tirety, and that we should be empowered to consent in this re-
gard to such concessions as circumstances might render neces-
sary. We had, indeed, to take into consideration the fact that
the Japanese had already invaded Sakhalin, that our small garri-
son, largely outnumbered, had surrendered, and that in case of a
continuation of the war, we should unquestionably be deprived of
the possibility of reconquering the lost territory on the island,
the Japanese having by the destruction of our fleet secured abso-
lute command of the sea. The question, therefore, reduced itself
to this: whether it would be justifiable to render the conclusion
of peace dependent on our adhering uncompromisingly to this point
of our instructions, a question which we both agreed could only
be answered in the negative. 18

And Witte at this time expressed his mind to the Czar through Lamsdorff:

I believe that after the Conference, when the world learns what
happened there, the peace-loving public opinion will recognize
that Russia was right in refusing to pay a war indemnity, but
it will not side with us on the subject of Sakhalin, for the
facts are stronger than arguments. As a matter of fact, Sakha-
lin is in the hands of the Japanese, and we have no means to re-
cover it. Consequently if we wish the failure of the Conference
to be laid to Japan, we must not refuse to cede Sakhalin, after
having refused to indemnify Japan for her war expenditure. 19

On August 22 the Czar replied: "In view of this His Majesty has ordered
you to cease further conferences with Japanese delegates, if the latter are
not empowered to desist from the excessive demands which they are now making.
Thus the negotiations are being broken off because of the intractability of
the Japanese as regards the question of indemnities; we must stop then and
there. Under these conditions, the further discussion of the altogether inad-
missable cession of Sakhalin becomes unnecessary." 20 This reply from the Czar
was not altogether unfavorable in regard to the cession of Sakhalin, but the

18 Rosen, Forty Years, I, 263.
19 Witte, Memoirs, 155.
20 Quoted in Witte, Memoirs, 155.
Czar hinted at his playing the one issue against the other. Regardless of how much more flexible the Czar seemed he was not joking about breaking off the conferences.

The issue of the indemnity evoked an even more unequivocal answer from Nicholas than had the cession of territory. As has been seen, Roosevelt, at first reticent about the indemnity, later came out openly in its favor. In late July there were chances that Russia would readily agree to pay some money for prisoner upkeep as well as other expenses. At that time in writing to Baron Kaneko, Roosevelt cautioned the Japanese about the term "indemnity": "I had word from France that Witte has said he would not pay an indemnity. I have received another cable stating that he said he would not pay an indemnity but would consider paying at least part of Japan's expenses in the war. I suggest therefore that great care be used about the word indemnity and that if possible it be avoided."22

Meanwhile the Czar's intransigence did not help to quiet the European powers who started talking about a world congress to settle what Portsmouth, apparently, could not do.23 It was at this crucial moment, August 18, that Roosevelt began his direct intervention by asking Baron Rosen to come to Oyster Bay to talk over the situation. Simultaneously with the President's action Witte proposed a compromise to the Japanese. Its exact nature is not known but it dealt with Sakhalin and reimbursements.24 On the 19th Rosen saw Roose-

23Dennett, Roosevelt, 251, 265.
24Ibid., 250-251 and note 1.
velt and the latter proposed a compromise very similar to that which Witte had made on the 18th. The President suggested that Sakhalin be divided and the Russians pay a sum for the land which they would receive. Roosevelt thought that this would give time for all to cool down since the money matter would be taken care of after the Portsmouth Conference.

This was the moment when, to all the previous reasons mentioned for peace, there was one more strong motive added: Theodore Roosevelt's determination to get peace. Add to this determination the fact that all the neutrals wanted peace, including France who would give no further help to Russia particularly since she herself was getting embroiled in Morocco. Furthermore France looked hopefully to Russia for aid against Germany in the West and in Africa. Meanwhile Germany wanted peace and she feared that the revolutionary spirit rampant in Russia would spread to her own home territory. Another interested party, England, wanted its ally, Japan, to stop fighting; while the United States hated war and wanted the balance of powerful peace restored in the Far East. Add all these facts together and peace is seen to be inevitable. Besides all his national and international interests, Roosevelt's personal pride was beginning to play no small part in his exertions for a successful conclusion to the Conference.

The President began his direct action on August 18 with his request that Rosen come to confer with him. By the 21st the situation looked no better, with the Czar refusing to yield an inch of ground or a kopek of money no matter what it was called. On the 21st Roosevelt cabled Ambassador Meyer in St. Petersburg to approach the Czar and tell him Roosevelt's view on the situa-
tion. Roosevelt spoke frankly about Japan's revised demands and ended by saying that he hoped that the Czar would have similar wise views. At the same time Roosevelt sent Jusserand and Von Sternberg a copy of his letter to the Czar and asked their help in persuading the Czar to yield. He also wrote to Baron Kaneko along these lines for communication to his home government urging the Japanese to make peace and not to make it appear as if Japan were fighting solely for the indemnity. He quickly sent a second message to Kaneko the next day, August 23, reiterating his stand on Japan's apparent fight for an indemnity. On the 23rd he also wrote to Ambassador Durand, to Meyer, and to Herbert Peirce, an assistant secretary of state, who was to inform Witte of the President's views. Then the only thing he could do was to sit by and wait for the results of his first direct action.

On August 23 Meyer was able to obtain an audience with the Czar and deliver Roosevelt's message. This direct action with the Czar was the only way to get his true opinion as his underlings, Cassini and Lamsdorff, were afraid to approach the Czar and to deliver Roosevelt's messages. This is just another proof not only of how effective but also how necessary was Roosevelt's indirect diplomacy. Meyer gave the President an account of his meeting with the Czar, who no doubt, meant this meeting to be his ultimatum; but, Meyer cleverly interpreted this ultimatum in a more favorable light. The Czar had, at

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26 Ibid., IV, 1309, "Roosevelt to Kaneko," Aug. 22, 1905.
27 Ibid., 1312-1313, "Roosevelt to Kaneko," Aug. 23, 1905.
last, begun to yield. He would allow the Japanese to keep the southern half of Sakhalin and would pay a reasonable amount for its retrocession and for prisoner upkeep. Meyer wrote to the President:

Closed with the Emperor two hours, at the end of which time he informed me of the terms on which he would conclude peace. Acceptance of the eight points substantially agreed upon by the plenipotentiaries at Portsmouth, (no?) payment of war indemnity but a liberal and generous payment for care and maintenance of Russian prisoners but not such a sum as could be interpreted for a war indemnity, withdrawal of Japan's claims for interned ships and limitation of naval power in the Pacific, Russia to possess north half of Sakhalin while Japan to retain southern half (that portion which formerly belonged to Japan.)

When the plenipotentiaries met on August 23, little being known of the Czar's latest message, Witte made a startling offer to Komura; Japan should retain all of Sakhalin and receive no indemnity. Komura refused, and this was just what Witte had hoped he would do, for it then appeared that the Japanese were clearly fighting for the indemnity. As Japan could not have peace with an indemnity she would have war without one. Meanwhile, before the next Conference session, Roosevelt wrote to Meyer to clear up the situation that had resulted from messages between Washington and Meyer, and also to put pressure on the Czar for immediate action for peace.

On the following day, August 26, the Conference met for what appeared to be its last session. Witte had made it appear that the Japanese were fighting

29Dennett, Roosevelt, 257.
30Zabriskie, Rivalry, 126-127, 134 note.
only for the indemnity, and he was prepared to make it appear as if Japan were the sole cause of the Conference's failure. At this session Witte proposed less than he had three days previously when it had been all of Sakhalin and no indemnity to Japan; now it was the division of Sakhalin and no indemnity. After this last offer Witte threatened to break off the negotiations immediately. By the 27th, after a week of Roosevelt's efforts, the Conference seemed to have gained nothing. The situation was no better than before. The Czar, it is true, had begun to yield but nothing much had come of his slightly more favorable attitude. Actually, as far as he was concerned, Nicholas did not mean to yield at all. He was as adamant as ever. So direct negotiation, on the President's part, had seemed to accomplish little; and, as his only alternative, he now started to exert more intensive indirect pressure.

All of his efforts to move England to exert pressure on Japan seemed a failure, but on the 27th England released for publication the very recent renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. This was, at least, indirect aid. On the 27th Roosevelt cabled the Kaiser:

Peace can be obtained on the following terms: Russia to pay no indemnity whatever and to receive back north half of Sakhalin for which it is to pay to Japan whatever amount a mixed commission may determine. This is my proposition to which the Japanese have assented reluctantly and only under strong pressure from me. The plan is for each of the contending parties to name an equal number of members of the commission and for themselves to name the odd member. . . .

These terms which strike me as extremely moderate I have not presented in this form to the Russian Emperor. I feel that you have more influence with him than either I or anyone else can have. . . . Can you not take the initiative by presenting these terms at once to him? Your success in the matter will make the entire civilized world your debtor.32

32 Ibid., IV, 1317, "Roosevelt to Kaiser," Aug. 27, 1905.
But all to no avail. Meyer wrote Roosevelt on the 26th and on the 27th reiterating the Czar's categorical replies. The end seemed at hand, but Roosevelt still did not give up. Had he done so the Conference might have broken up days before. The President appealed once more to the Japanese and he approached the Kaiser again. He also sought French aid through Jusserand. Meyer's cables, mentioned above, were only strengthened by the Czar's communiqué of August 28 sent to Witte through Lamsdorff: "Send Witte my command to end the discussions at all hazard tomorrow." 

But by this time, Witte was, perhaps, catching a little of the enthusiasm of Roosevelt. He too wanted peace. From the first he had considered his mission next to hopeless, but he seemed to want to show everybody that he could make the best of an impossible situation. Whether peace or more war Witte was destined to failure in the eyes of many Russians, particularly the Czar. So why not peace? Witte, as it were, reversed his superior's position:

But Witte, now in sight of the goal, would not be trifled with in this way any longer. He took things into his own hands and decided on his responsibility that he would not carry out the Emperor's instructions and break up the conference. It cost him a great effort to make this resolve. Here is an extract from the message in which he announces it to Lamsdorff: 'Congruously with the instructions received we would break off the negotiations tomorrow and make due communication to the President. But in view of the letter received from the President which has been forwarded in extenso, and which calls for a reply from his Majesty, I consider it inadvisable to end the sittings before that reply has come. I will try, therefore, unless the Japs raise difficulties, to postpone the final sitting until that reply has come. With the Japs I think we have finished, but to break off before his

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33Ibid., V, 8, in "Roosevelt to Lodge," Sept. 2, 1905.

34Quoted in Dillon, Eclipse, 310.
Majesty's answer is received would, I fear, be to offend the President. 35

The delay was useless insofar as it was expected to produce any effect on the Czar, but it did give both sides time to go over the issues at stake. The final session met on Tuesday, August 29, and the Japanese faced a Witte who was now assuming an aggressive position. He presented a note to the Japanese delegates which stated that Russia would not pay any indemnity but that she would pay a reasonable sum for the prisoners' upkeep, and that:

Toutefois Sa Majesté l'Empeur, afin de donner un nouveau témoignage de son sincère désir de contribuer au rétablissement de la paix en Extrême Orient, consent à céder au Japon la partie sud de l'île de Sakhaline, à condition que la partie norde reste en la possession de la Russie, sans aucune compensation.

En présentant ce projet à la consideration des Plénipotentiaires du Japon, les Plénipotentiaires de Russie ont l'honneur de déclarer, sur l'ordre de leur Auguste Maître, que ce projet forme la dernière concession que la Russie puisse faire dans le but unique d'arriver à une entente. 36

The Japanese could take it or leave it. Since Witte's attempt to make the Japanese look as if they were fighting in the Conference and on the battlefield just for an indemnity, the Japanese had done little and had little opportunity to make their position look better. It now appeared, thanks largely to Witte, that the success or failure of the Portsmouth Conference itself hinged

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35 Ibid., 309.

36 Quoted in Dennett, Roosevelt, 277, the following is a translation of the above part of the Russian ultimatum to Japan, Aug. 29, 1905:

His Majesty, the Emperor, so as to offer yet another token of his sincere desire for peace in the Far East, consents to the cession of the southern part of Sakhalin to Japan without any other compensation, on the condition that the northern part remain a possession of Russia. . . . In presenting this offer for the consideration of the Plenipotentiaries of Japan, the Russian Plenipotentiaries have the honor of stating, on the order of their August Master, that this offer forms the last concession which Russia will be able to make for the sole end of arriving at an agreement.
on the Japanese. After all had not the Czar graciously consented to yield when he did not have to; and, this even though he had been more yielding a few days before in his offers. Finally the Japanese replied, according to an eye-witness, as follows: "At last Komura, in a well-controlled voice, said that the Japanese Government, having for its aim the restoration of peace and the bringing of the negotiations to a successful conclusion, expressed its consent to Russia proposal to divide Sakhalin in two, without indemnity being paid. Witte calmly replied that the Japanese proposal was accepted and that the line of demarcation would be reckoned at the fiftieth degree."37

Thus peace was procured and the amount of money was later arbitrated with Japan receiving twenty million dollars for prisoner of war expenses. Japan had received all that she had really wanted, and Russia faced Japan in the Far East, as Roosevelt had wanted. The final compromise was Roosevelt's, though it is true that Witte or Komura, according to some, made similar proposals of which Roosevelt was completely unaware. However, Roosevelt's efforts and the dealings of the plenipotentiaries among themselves were not the only factors that entered into the final results. As has been mentioned, Roosevelt constantly sought the aid of other countries in procuring peace. It is not out of place here to go into some of these Rooseveltian foreign relations, as they are another phase of Roosevelt's mediation at Portsmouth. The President's somewhat unique method of communications has already been described. Let us

37Foster Ehea Dulles, The Imperial Years, (New York, 1956), 275.
see what this system actually achieved with two other countries which specially enter into the Portsmouth scene, Germany and England.

It is quite evident that Roosevelt never suspected the Kaiser's real motives in the Far East; he did not attribute any but the most altruistic motives to the Kaiser. Roosevelt could write to Spring Rice: "There is one thing I am a little puzzled at, and that is why excepting on disinterested grounds the German Emperor should want Russia and Japan to make peace; he has done all he could to bring it about." 38 And Roosevelt could also thank the Kaiser for his help and his standing by the President, but he did not have the slightest inkling of either the never-ratified Treaty of Björkö of July 24, by which the Kaiser hoped to ally himself with the Czar, nor of the meeting between the Czar and the Kaiser on August 28. At this latter meeting the Czar agreed to pay, during the next five years, $500,000,000 to Japan. Apparently neither Roosevelt nor any of the Japanese at Portsmouth had any knowledge of this agreement. With this reported meeting the debate at Portsmouth appears under a new light. 39

If Germany and the Kaiser mystified Roosevelt, the English and their policy were even more of an enigma to him. The President was absolutely sure that England's and our aims in the Far East were identical. This point and the available evidence to the contrary has already been presented. Actually England's motives were not identical with ours; they were of a quite different nature. All through the negotiations Roosevelt asked Spring Rice to procure

38 Roosevelt, Letters, IV, 1286, "Roosevelt to Spring Rice," July 24, 1905.
39 Chicago Tribune, Sept. 9, 1905, 1.
immediate aid from his home government for the effecting of peace, and the
President often hinted at his suspicions of England's insincerity in the cause
of peace, protestations to the contrary notwithstanding. 40

Tyler Dennett pictures the somewhat confusing diplomatic cross-currents
at this time when he says:

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that President Roosevelt had been wrong in his interpretation of British policy. England desired peace but Lansdowne [the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs], having watched Roosevelt through the first stages of the Moroccan crisis, and having observed his willingness to assist the Kaiser out of an impossible position by urging on France the international conference, had little confidence that the President understood Europe well enough to make a durable peace in the Far East. Certainly no fact was brought out in this letter [Spring Rice to Roosevelt on English policy] which adequately explained why Lansdowne with all propriety might not have expressed to Japan his disapproval of some of the demands which were being advanced. One comes to feel that perhaps the Kaiser was not wholly wrong in his assertions that France and England would have been glad themselves to be the peacemakers. 41

Be that as it may, Roosevelt was disappointed at Britain's response to his
requests for assistance. As for the Moroccan affair, while the Kaiser hoped that Roosevelt would side with him in the eventual Algeciras Conference, which convened in January 1906, Roosevelt reluctantly stepped in and ultimately aided with the British interests. In the end, as has been mentioned, Britain at least indirectly helped Roosevelt by the timely announcement of the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Dennett also points out that the British Foreign Office had no intention of partitioning China and had not the slightest hint

41 Dennett, Roosevelt, 214.
of Japan's dire need for immediate peace. This latter point, surprising as it may seem, may explain much of Britain's seeming procrastination and inaction in influencing Japan to make an early peace.

Just as the Russian Imperial meeting of August 28 may point to the Czar's yielding, so also as Howard Beale points out that, come what may, Japan, from the beginning, had had every intention of making peace:

[Spring Rice reported that the Czar confessed that he was tricked into peace] Admiral Charles S. Sperry of the United States Navy agreed. 'I have now in my files,' he said, 'a letter from our Naval attaché in Tokyo who names the official in the Foreign Office who told him the Japanese envoys had orders to make peace before they left Tokyo, with or without either indemnity or territory.'

This last discussion of the relations of Theodore Roosevelt with Germany and France, and the account of the behind-the-scenes activity by Russia and Japan have not been inserted with a view to belittling Roosevelt's work at Portsmouth. In the following chapter his part will be examined more minutely. The above facts have been included, without too much comment, to give the complete picture rather than for any other reason.

The title of this chapter, is: "The Conference and the Treaty"; but, in Chapter IV we will discuss at length the actual treaty and the results and significance of Roosevelt's work in securing the successful outcome of the Portsmouth Conference. Suffice it to say here that the Treaty of Portsmouth, which was finally signed on September 5, 1905, gave Japan substantially all that she had fought for and all that she could justly expect and ask for.

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42 Ibid., note.

This was not at first apparent as can be seen from some of the immediate re-
actions to the Treaty, but time has shown this to be true.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS, IMMEDIATE AND ULTIMATE, OF THE CONFERENCE AND THE TREATY

The purpose of this final chapter is to continue the discussion of the Treaty which was the final fruit of the Portsmouth Conference. This will be done by a discussion of the reception which the Treaty received, particularly in Japan and Russia, as well as by seeing other repercussions to the Treaty, and the Treaty's effect on world politics and alignments.

More closely connected with the purpose of the thesis will be the discussion, after some mention of later results of the Portsmouth mediation, of the success or failure of Theodore Roosevelt's mediation, particularly as considered in the light of his foreign policy, and the results of his peace conference work. An attempt will then be made to ascertain the significance of his Portsmouth work.

If Japan's initial demands had surprised the American public in particular, the peace treaty itself was to hold even more of a surprise especially for the Japanese people. Apparently the Japanese Government had not prepared the Japanese nation for anything like what the final terms included. Whatever may have been the Japanese Government's initial stand on an indemnity, the fact is that, from the first, the Japanese people had been sure that Japan would receive an indemnity which would cover the expenses of the War. As has been seen the indemnity was one of the two big issues in the Portsmouth Con-
ference, and the Japanese people just did not understand that the situation at Portsmouth meant that the Japanese delegation there would have to compromise. The Japanese people had fought as a nation, as a single unit, and they were quite aware that they could not stay in the field much longer. While they did not understand that the only alternative to no peace was war; they knew that they could not stand much more war. The peace the delegates made was not made "at any price" but it was made at a just price, and that necessary price was the indemnity. But when no indemnity was forthcoming, the Japanese public showed their displeasure with violent anti-American demonstrations in the bigger Japanese cities.

Roosevelt could write to his daughter, Alice Lee Roosevelt: "It is enough to give anyone a sense of sardonic amusement to see the way in which the people generally, not only in my own country but elsewhere, gauge the work purely by the fact that it succeeded. If I had not brought about peace I should have been laughed at and condemned. Now I am overpraised."1 But he could also write about the Japanese public's reaction to his friend, Baron Kaneko: "It seems to me that it would be well for the Japanese to point out, or at least to lay stress on, the enormous amount they have won. As you know, I have taken the same view of the indemnity business from the beginning, and I think this is utterly trivial compared to what Japan has secured. I think this ought to be pointed out publicly."2

What was it that the Japanese had acquired or maintained through the Treas-

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2Ibid., 2, "Roosevelt to Kaneko," Sept. 2, 1905.
In the words of Roosevelt:

The Japanese are now having trouble with their own people at home, and Griscom has just cabled us that there is heavy rioting in Tokyo and a tendency to attack all foreigners. Why in the world the Japanese statesmen, usually so astute, permitted their people to think they had to get a large indemnity, I cannot understand. If they had in the beginning blown their trumpets over the immense amount they were getting; if they had shown how Korea was theirs, Manchuria in effect theirs, Port Arthur and Dalny theirs; how they have won a triumph which since the days of Napoleon has only been paralleled by Germany in 1870—if they had done all this I think they could have made their people feel proud instead of humiliated.3

But the Japanese people really forgot or never considered the cession of all Liaotung Peninsula and all the rights on the Southern Manchurian Railway as an indemnity, as Florinsky well points out.4 Quincy Howe summarizes the situation:

The rulers of Japan, however, had their people under control and knew that they had not done too badly. They had their alliance with England and their agreement with the United States. They had gained their first substantial foothold on the Asiatic mainland. They had defeated a major European power and had thereby gained a unique prestige among some Asiatic peoples and had fired others with similar nationalistic ambitions. They had won precious experience, too—difficult to measure, perhaps, but difficult also to underestimate. What they had lost was best expressed by a Japanese diplomat in London who told one of his British colleagues: 'We used to be a nation of artists; our art was really very good. You called us barbarians then. Now our art is not so good as it was, but we have learned to kill, and you call us civilized.'5

If there was a reaction in Japan to President Roosevelt and the United States, there was also a reaction to the Japanese Government and the Japanese

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3Ibid., 15, "Roosevelt to Von Sternberg," Sept. 6, 1905.

4Michael T. Florinsky, Russia, A History and an Interpretation, (New York, 1953), II, 1278.

nation in our country. There were as many authorities as there were views with regard to American public opinion and the Portsmouth Conference. As has been seen, Witte was intent on changing America's view of Russia and turning it completely pro-Russian, whereas it had previously been quite pro-Japanese. Witte believed that he had not only turned Roosevelt from his pro-Japanese attitude, but that he had also turned the whole American public to Russia's side. Some authors, in writing about the Portsmouth Conference, agree with Witte. As for Roosevelt, he says that he never changed his regard for Japan: "I was pro-Japanese before, but after my experience with the peace commissioners I am far stronger pro-Japanese than ever."6

As regards the supposed reversal in public opinion, two exhaustive studies of the Portsmouth Treaty and Conference answer wholly in the negative—there was no great reversal; there was no significant reversal at all.7

According to Thorson: "The Results summarized in this paper derive from an intensive analysis for the period of the Portsmouth Conference of the editorial policies of some fifty representative newspapers from all sections of the United States and of all the major periodicals of the day. This makes clear that there was no shift of American public opinion of the kind or degree claimed."8 And Tupper and McReynolds summarize the situation:

6Quoted in Beale, Roosevelt and the Rise, 310, "Roosevelt to W. W. Rockhill," Aug. 20, 1905.


8Thorson, American Public Opinion, 444.
The Treaty of Portsmouth of 1905 does mark a turn in the tide of American sentiment toward Japan, but the turn was not as noticeable as we have been led to believe. Rather than a reversal in attitude at this time, it was a lessening of our exaltation in Japanese progress with a tremor of skepticism in the expression of American approval. We still were enthusiastic for Japan, but not to so high a degree. It was financiers, merchants, and those who were especially interested in seeing Manchuria returned to China without reservations who opposed Japan through their influence on terms of the treaty. But it would be a mistake to believe that public opinion had suddenly jumped from Japanophilia to Japanophobia.9

If there were somewhat vocal reactions in the United States and Japan, Russia's immediate reaction was the very opposite.

The Russian masses greeted the news of peace with characteristic stolidity, and presumably with a feeling of relief not devoid of gratitude to America. The liberals and radicals were not completely happy; many of them were hoping that continued defeat would lead to a full-blown revolution. Members of the war faction were deeply angered by Roosevelt's intervention. They still believed that they needed only one more campaign to turn the tide of defeat and redeem their tarnished honor. Petitions urging continuance of the conflict poured in on the government, some of them from the clergy.10

To the mass of Russian people the War had been fought in far-off places for a cause that meant nothing to them. They would rather have peace than war, but even the terms of that peace did not particularly interest them. Nicholas's reaction was somewhat more vocal in that, as has been seen, he did not want the war to end as it did. He was never convinced that a conference table could turn a military defeat into a diplomatic victory. The Czar's response to Witte was hostile and cool. He cabled him on August 30: "Do not sign the conditions of peace until amount for keep of war prisoners is fixed and rati-

9Tupper & McReynolds, Japan in American Opinion, 17.

10Thomas A. Bailey, America Faces Russia, (Ithaca, N. Y., 1950), 203.
fied by me after you have notified it. Nikolai.\(^{11}\) When Witte came home he was automatically made a count, but in the end exile and punishment were to be his reward. As for the rest of Russia the Czar was sitting on dynamite and he knew it. In January 1905 Russian soldiers had slain five hundred Russians who were agitating for reform. This forced the Czar to make some concessions on paper, but things went from bad to worse as is seen in the failure of the Duma in its sessions which finally ended in dissolution. The revolutionaries always wanted more and the Czar never really gave anything.

Between September and May the Government was gradually acquiring control of the situation and was able to adopt increasingly repressive measures. The last two months of 1905 were characterized by atrocious persecutions and bloody executions, especially among the Siberian exiles. Upon Witte's return from Portsmouth he was placed at the head of the Government and succeeded at the close of the Algeciras Conference in securing a loan in Paris and London. Thus strengthened financially and no longer entangled in the Far East, the Russian Government felt strong enough to dissolve the Duma by imperial decree July 21, 1906. So far as immediate success was concerned the reform movement had been a failure. Beginning as a moderate reform led by patriotic members of the professional and relatively privileged classes it had passed by rapid stages into a more and more revolutionary movement in which economic purposes increasingly threatened to overshadow merely political measures.\(^{12}\)

The real revolution was yet to come. The Revolution of 1905 passed quietly enough, but this was not the only occurrence in Russia connected with the recent war. Russian Far Eastern foreign policy underwent a change as a result of the war and the Conference. Russia could no longer expand in the Far East; as will be noted, the idea of Russia facing Japan turned out to be an illusion. Japan was supreme while Russia had to turn eyes towards the Balkans and the

\(^{11}\)Quoted in Dillon, Eclipse, 310-311.

\(^{12}\)Dennett, Roosevelt, 290.
Near East where Russia began to crowd her recent ally, Germany.

If Russia could no longer expand into the Far East such was not the case for Japan. Mention has been made of some American reactions to the Japanese, but this was further increased by the immigration problem in California and on the Pacific coast in general. This was not a new problem by any means. The Japanese had hoped in the last days of the nineteenth century to be able to expand and settle some of the excess population in the United States; but the sudden influx of cheap Japanese laborers into the American market around the turn of the century aroused American commercial and labor interests. In 1900 Japan had voluntarily agreed to limit her immigration, particularly of unskilled labor, into this country. This quieted both sides for the next few years, and attention was mutually drawn to the Russo-Japanese conflict and away from the immigration problems. But near the close of the War in February 1905 some California papers started the anti-Japanese agitation by appealing to the Chinese Exclusion Law of 1882 which had gradually been strengthened since its initial passage. They held that this federal law also applied to the Japanese, and the California State Legislature bolstered this agitation by passing an anti-Japanese resolution demanding that the Federal Government act against further Japanese immigration. Next pressure was exerted to expel the Japanese from the public schools, particularly in San Francisco, the center of the agitation. Segregation was demanded against the "Yellow Peril", and the climax of the agitation was reached in 1906 after the great earthquake. This disaster cut down available school space and in October the
schools were ordered to send all Orientals to a special school. Simultaneously in California, legislation was introduced against the Japanese but it was dropped largely due to the pressure of the president. At this time Roosevelt sent a federal investigator to study the situation, but before anything positive could be done the Japanese Government quite rightly expressed her extreme displeasure over American discriminatory moves.

The president was just as anxious as the Japanese to settle the whole affair. Roosevelt's words to Henry Cabot Lodge during the early stages of the agitation show how he was invoking, when and where possible, his dual policy of soft words with a strong arm behind the words:

I am utterly disgusted at the manifestations which have begun to appear on the Pacific slope in favor of excluding the Japanese exactly as the Chinese are excluded. The California State Legislature and various other bodies have acted in the worst possible taste and in the most offensive manner to Japan. Yet the Senators and Congressmen from these very states were lukewarm about the navy last year. It gives me a feeling of contempt and disgust to see them challenge Japanese hostility and justify by their actions any feeling the Japanese might have against us, while at the same time refusing to take steps to defend themselves against the formidable foe whom they are ready with such careless insolence to antagonize. How people can act in this way with the Russo-Japanese war going on before their eyes I cannot understand. I do all I can to counteract the effects, but I cannot accomplish everything.14

The Federal Government offered two more or less immediate solutions: the "Gentlemen's Agreement" of 1907 and Roosevelt's sending the United States fleet around the world, 1907-9.

Under the Gentlemen's Agreement negotiated in February 1907, the Japanese

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Government promised to keep a closer watch on the passports issued to prospective immigrants to the United States; it also promised "not to issue passports to laborers, skilled or unskilled, except to those who have been domiciled in the United States, or to families of such persons." These were the major points of the Agreement, and it was bolstered by consequent federal laws, which remained in an uneasy state of effectiveness until 1924. The federal proviso to a general immigration bill read as follows:

That whenever the President shall be satisfied that passports issued by any foreign government to its citizens to go to any country other than the United States, or to any insular possession of the United States or to the Canal Zone, are being used for the purpose of enabling the holder to come to the continental territory of the United States to the detriment of labor conditions therein, the President may refuse to permit such citizens of the country issuing such passports to enter the continental territory of the United States from such other country or from such insular possessions or from the Canal Zone.

In the light of this Japanese-American agreement California promised to re-adjust the school situation.

It is beyond the scope of this present study to go much farther afield in these Japanese-American affairs. Incidents continued to occur; but, a calm though uneasy peace was maintained, possibly because neither side wanted to show its full hand and start any wide scale trouble.

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16 Ibid., 360

17 Quoted in Tupper & McReynolds, Japan in American Opinion, 30-31, from Congressional Record, 59th Congress, 2nd Session, XLI, Washington, 1907, 2809 (part 3) and 3216 (part 4).

18 Ibid., 35.
Partly to insure the United States against any such danger Roosevelt took the second measure towards smoothing over Japanese-American relations. Through the years immediately following the Russo-Japanese conflict there were constant war scares. Besides initiating the fortification of the Philippines and other American possessions in the Pacific, Roosevelt at last revealed his plan for sending the whole United States fleet around the world, particularly into the Pacific Ocean and past Japan. Though there were many motives for his action, the most obvious to many was his wish to overawe Japan with a show of American naval power. He also saw the tactical advantages for the navy itself in such a voyage. This display was intimately tied up with another pet project of Roosevelt's, the Panama Canal. He hoped that pressure would be forthcoming to finish the Canal, when it was seen that the fleet would have to travel all the way around South America in order to reach the Pacific. Also pressure would be exerted for a larger navy, another Roosevelt hope and dream.

Roosevelt thought it was best to send the fleet in peace, and he belittled any cries of danger in leaving the Atlantic coast unguarded. As to the problem of money for sending the fleet around the world, Roosevelt merely said that he had enough appropriated funds to send the fleet half-way and then the fleet could stay there if Congress would not raise money for the return journey.19

Whether Roosevelt's move in sending the fleet around the world was wise or not is still disputed. No untoward incidents happened and Japan greeted the fleet with sincere respect and courtesy. At the same time, however, Ja-

19Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt, II, 66.
Pan was concluding her entente with Russia—a agreement Roosevelt thought never should or would come about. Whether Roosevelt's action fired the rising Japanese military class to military and industrial rivalries is not known, but this set was gradually dominant on the Japanese scene after this period. Be that as it may, Roosevelt was well pleased with his action and its immediate results seemed good enough.

Further attempts at a Japanese-American rapprochement were taken in 1908 with the Root-Takahira Agreement of November 30. Supposedly this agreement was to preserve the Open Door in China and Manchuria; it was to keep the "status quo." Almost without realizing it the Roosevelt administration had negated its work at Portsmouth. By this time Japan had made very deep inroads into Manchuria and had begun to exclude all foreigners—the very thing Roosevelt had tried to avoid by maintaining the balance of power in the Far East.

More repercussions will be studied later. For completeness' sake, it can be mentioned that all through this period Roosevelt had to handle a similar situation with regard to the Chinese who finally boycotted American goods.

Already some of the reactions to the Portsmouth Treaty and thus to the mediator, President Roosevelt, have been discussed, namely the reactions of the two belligerents Russia and Japan. Now it will be well to consider reactions and commendations or condemnations of Roosevelt from other people and other sources. This is not the place to give an estimate of Roosevelt, but only to record what others thought or at least said to him and about him.

Of course there were the usual and expected congratulatory notes from the rulers of Japan and Russia, and the other interested powers sent the usual letters of congratulation and praise. Roosevelt, as was to be expected, took
these messages in stride and realized that much of the adulation was skin deep.

He wrote on August 31, 1905 to Douglas Robinson:

That was an awfully nice letter of yours, old fellow, and I deeply thank you for it. But don’t you be misled by the fact that just at the moment men are speaking well of me. They will speak ill soon enough. As Mr. Loeb remarked to me today, sometime soon I shall have to spank some little brigand of a South American republic, and then all the well-meaning idiots will turn and shriek that this is inconsistent with what I did with the peace conference, whereas it will be exactly in line with it, in reality.20

Besides the crowned heads of states and their statesmen, others wrote to Roosevelt about his work at Portsmouth. Joseph Bucklin Bishop, Roosevelt’s close friend and early biographer, wrote of the President’s herculean efforts and attempts at procuring European aid.21 In one place this “canonizer” of Roosevelt writes: “It may be said with truth that he was himself the Conference, for he was its guiding and controlling force. Its final agreement was the one which at the outset he had told both the envoys and their governments that they should make. . . . By persuading those governments to accept his views, he won success in the end, for it was under direct instructions from Tokio [sic] and St. Petersburg that the envoys came together. That this is an accurate statement of the case is clearly revealed by the President’s messages and letters at the time.”22

Both Sergei Witte and Baron Roman Rosen were grandiloquent in their praise of the President. Further testimony to the President’s achievement was had in

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21 Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt, I, 375.

22 Ibid., 405–406.
his receiving the Nobel Peace Prize which included a check for almost $37,000. With the money he started a foundation for promoting the cause of industrial peace. Though not much came of this foundation, the money was put to good purposes during the First World War for war relief.

However, not all were pro-Roosevelt, while many were in the praise of the President, and rightly so, there were those who thought that Roosevelt's intervention was not only wrong but that it was a collosal failure. Of course, it is always easy to find ex post facto critics and seers, but this does not mean that there were none to criticize at the time of the Portsmouth Conference. Some thought that Roosevelt was unfair in procuring peace, that he was cheating one or the other of the belligerents.23

And while Roosevelt was being congratulated or condemned, the rest of the diplomatic world was not sitting by weaving olive-branch crowns for the hero of Portsmouth. Chancellories were busy figuring out what Portsmouth meant for them. Some of the new alignments were expected and others were surprises. However, what Roosevelt did at Portsmouth, about which more will be said later, had noteworthy repercussions on the so-called balance of power.

As France saw Russia going down in the Far East she realized that Russia would never be able to give her substantial aid in the West or the Near East, but as she needed an ally she turned to England whom she joined in the Entente Cordiale in April 1904, during the War. This could be called the beginning of Franco-British good relations. France also turned to placate Germany, her next door neighbor as a potential good friend or a formidable enemy.

23Beale, Roosevelt and the Rise, 311-312.
Mention has already been made of Germany and Russia's renewal, as it were, of their good relations through the meeting at Björkö on July 24, 1905. Germany and Russia were friends, though the Kaiser was playing the Czar for the fool more than the latter realized. The Kaiser played a clever cat-and-mouse game by appeasing the Czar and then by getting him more than ever entwined in the Far East. While the Kaiser was sincere enough in soliciting the friendship of the Czar, still he was perfectly pleased to see the Czar tied down to a long and hard war far from western Europe. It was only when the revolutionary spirit in Russia threatened to spread to Germany that the Kaiser quickly and wholeheartedly worked to get the Czar to stop his war with the Japanese. And, after the Russo-Japanese war, Russia turned from the Far East to become a cause of great anxiety to Germany when the Russian foreign policy makers directed their efforts to the West. To the dismay of Germany, Russia and England entered into an alliance in August 1907.

But the very thing which Roosevelt had worked against at Portsmouth happened in 1907 when Russia and Japan joined in signing three treaties. Witte, at a low point in the Conference, had suggested such a move and had seen its necessity.24 Russia and Japan signed further treaties of alliance and mutual support in 1910 and 1912. Thus one of Roosevelt's major reasons for taking part in the Portsmouth Conference was done away with.

Another notable change occurred when former enemies, France and Japan, became allies and entered into a pact in June 1907. By all of these alliances and counter-alliances Great Britain, Russia, France, and Japan,—the major con-

24Witte, Memoirs, 176.
testants in the recent conflict,—were united. It was almost a complete dip-
plomatic reversal from pre-war days. The balance of power which Roosevelt had
fought to keep was a myth. Japan had superseded Russia as the dominant power
in the Far East; they were not facing each other as the mediator had planned.
In fact, the two former enemies were not only not facing one another, they
were together in facing everybody in the Far East. Bertrand Russell somewhat
glumly sums up the situation in these words:

Japan's rise to supremacy in the Far East put an end to the
ambitions of European Powers in China, and thus removed from the
sphere of their mutual bargaining the last important region that
they had left unappropriated. Henceforth, the planet was mapped
out, and a gain to one State could only be secured at the expense
of some other. This intensified rivalries, and made adjustments
more difficult; the expansive forces which had found their outlet
in imperialism were compelled to operate, no longer in distant un-
developed regions, but nearer home, and in direct competition with
neighboring nations. Though statesmen foresaw the result, they
lacked the will and the intelligence to prevent it; impotently,
though not blindly, they drifted to catastrophe.25

Was Russell prophesying that catastrophe of catastrophes, Pearl Harbor?
Be that as it may, many point to Portsmouth as the beginning of Japanese-American
rivalry and hostility, which ended in the sudden attack, one very similar
to that on Port Arthur, on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Though Roosevelt remained as
pro-Japanese as ever, he did give way to the repeated war scares that were
aired in the years following the Russo-Japanese War. He ordered, as already
noted, further fortifications for United States possessions in the Pacific.
In July 1907 he confided to Root, his Secretary of State, that: "In France,
England and Germany the best information is that we shall have war with Japan

25 Bertrand Russell, Freedom versus Organization, 1814-1914, (New York,
1934), 424.
and that we shall be beaten. 26 Though the United States readily acknowledged the fait accompli in Japan's position in Korea and Manchuria, the United States did not expect Japan to isolate Manchuria as she effectively did in November 1905 or to take over Korea as she did through the protocol with Korea of November 17, 1905. However, the Taft-Katsura Agreement of the previous July had all but stamped the United States' signature to the Korean transfer.

A lull came in Japanese-American hostility by the signing of the Japanese-American Arbitration Treaty in May 1908. In time, however, men such as Secretary of State Knox would take over and they would reverse the policies of the Roosevelt administration. The gradual defeat of Roosevelt's Portsmouth plans caused just as much by new faces and ideas at home as by the machinations of the foreign offices throughout the world, will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter; and, further reasons for the disintegration of Rooseveltian hopes and policies will be advanced.

As was said in the beginning of this chapter, more closely connected with the purpose of this thesis will be the discussion of the success or failure of Roosevelt as the mediator of the Portsmouth Conference. This estimate will be attempted by considering the President's work at Portsmouth and his foreign policy contrasted with their results after the Conference and the signing of the Treaty. After this attempt at an estimate of Roosevelt at Portsmouth a further judgment will be ventured concerning the significance of his work there.

Previous attempts, expert and amateur, to evaluate Roosevelt and his

Portsmouth work have been as varied as the people making them, though they have fallen roughly into two classes and periods. As Howard K. Beale points out:

While he was alive and during the years following his death, literature on Roosevelt tended to reflect the popular admiration of his contemporaries for his handling of international problems. Then the tide turned and a series of studies appeared that questioned both his wisdom and his ability as an international statesman. His importance in events in which he unquestionably participated was denied. His veracity in telling of other events and his part in them was questioned. It seemed now time to ask whether the early admiration or the later depreciation or perhaps a third more balanced view was the soundest.27

Howard Beale goes on to give his judgment of Roosevelt, his "third more balanced view." Beale admits that ultimately, if not almost immediately, Roosevelt's plans at Portsmouth failed. The reasons which Beale adduces to support his statement are: the growth of Chinese nationalism; the Russo-Japanese pacts of 1907 and the following years; the post-Portsmouth Japanese exclusion policy against foreigners, particularly Americans, in such Japanese holdings as in Manchuria; the sudden reversal of Roosevelt's policies by his successors; the growth and strength of the military faction in Japan; and, Roosevelt's lack of understanding of China and Chinese nationalism.28 Beale also discusses why Roosevelt's major aim in preserving the open door and reinsuring the balance of power was not realized. He sums up part of his estimate of Roosevelt and his contemporary imperialistically-minded advisers by saying:

"They had not forecast the total nature of modern war. They

27Beale, Roosevelt and the Rise, ix.

28Ibid., 332-334.
had placed faith in a balance of power that could never be kept in balance. They had not divined that seeking safety through being more powerfully armed than rivals would only stimulate an armaments race in which no nation ever kept far enough ahead of its opponents to feel secure. They had refused to take seriously other methods than armed force in establishing international stability. In underestimating the destructiveness of modern war, they had overlooked the grim necessity of finding methods of organizing the world's will to peace so that there would be no war.29

But, as Beale admits, Roosevelt and his advisers could not have foreseen all of these eventualities, and at the time they acted as best they could with their knowledge of the circumstances. They were in power and they used their power as they saw fit.

Another expert on foreign policy, Samuel Flagg Bemis, dryly writes that "President Roosevelt received the Nobel peace prize and the plaudits of the world for his conspicuous diplomacy, but because it did some harm and no good to the United States; therefore it was another blunder, the third blunder of American policy in the Far East."30 (Bemis considered the acquisition of the Philippines, the Open Door policy, and the Knox proposals to neutralize China, the other great blunders of American foreign policy in the Far East.)

Somewhat more kindly, and fairly, Thomas A. Bailey judges Roosevelt's difficult position as peacemaker: "Was Roosevelt's mediation a serious mistake, as some have charged? Would not Japan have collapsed if he had not stepped in? And would not a dominant Russia have been a better guardian of the Open Door than Japan has since then been? These questions cannot, of

29Ibid., 458-459.
course, be answered with finality. But as one viewed the problem in the year 1905, there was much to be said for the balance of power idea."31

Of course, others, as Bishop and Dennett, reveal a thoroughly pro-Roosevelt frame of mind. As was said before, an attempt will be made to come to an estimate of Roosevelt at Portsmouth and his policy as he worked it out there, as judged by the results of the Conference and the Treaty.

And unfortunately, a point often passed over is the actual obtaining of the meeting and the peace at Portsmouth. Was not this act an achievement of note? The obvious answer is: yes. It can be said without exaggeration that Roosevelt did initiate the negotiations; that he did work with great tact and skill through the preliminary negotiations preparatory to the Conference; that he did open the actual Conference with the greatest finesse; that he did intervene at the crucial moment of the Conference and work to bring peace; and, that his was the compromise ultimately agreed upon for the resolution of the Conference stalemate. A mere catalogue of his efforts as shown in his correspondence from the 21st to the 28th of August shows that he was really working for peace. As far as the delegates were concerned it was Roosevelt who maneuvered affairs towards peace. It was Roosevelt's compromise, independent of any other, that was the salvation of the Conference. Again, Roosevelt was the one, to a large degree, who actually did achieve peace at Portsmouth.

This is not to say, however, that Roosevelt charged in as the wholly selfless peacemaker. If the Japanese fooled the public by their seeming altruism in fighting the war, Roosevelt was never secretive about his motives as

peacemaker. Dennett notwithstanding, Roosevelt expressed his purpose in becoming the peacemaker to Senator Hale in 1906:

While my main motive in striving to bring about peace between Japan and Russia was the disinterested one of putting an end to the bloodshed, I was also influenced by the desirability of preventing Japan from driving Russia completely out of East Asia. This object was achieved, and Russia stands face to face with Japan in Manchuria. But the internal condition of Russia is now such that she is no longer in any way a menace to or restraint upon Japan, and probably will not be for a number of years to come. . . . It seems to me that all of this necessitates our having a definite policy with regard to her; a policy of behaving with absolute good faith, courtesy and justice to her on the one hand, and on the other, of keeping our navy in such shape as to make it a risky thing for Japan to go into war with us.33

Other positive gains achieved by Roosevelt in the Portsmouth Conference are upholding the diplomatic reputation of the United States, as well as his own reputation. Roosevelt's determination was one of the major ingredients in the latter days of the peace talks. He wanted peace, pure and simple; but, he also wanted to keep the United States' reputation as an important and a world-minded nation before the powers. What part his personal desire played is the part anyone's pride would play with perhaps a little more because of the type of person that Roosevelt was. Another positive note in Roosevelt's Portsmouth work is that, had he failed, even if the War had continued, eventually some sort of concert of European powers would have stepped in. The obvious result

32Dennett, Roosevelt, 4. "He was not tempted to sacrifice the interests of either Asia or Europe to the political or economic advantage of the United States. From the Peace of Portsmouth his country derived no material advantage of any sort. Indeed, we shall be led to observe the singular absence from Roosevelt's policy of any great concern for the commercial interests of the United States."

of such action would have been the division and partition of China and Chinese nationalism might have taken decades to build up again, whereas, unknowingly so far as Roosevelt was concerned, Chinese nationalism was given half a chance by the Portsmouth Treaty.

But when we consider Roosevelt's foreign policy as he applied it at Portsmouth we run into a somewhat more negative picture. His old policy was one of soft words and a strong arm; and, as applied to the Far East, this included the maintenance of the Open Door and the integrity of China as well as that of Manchuria.

Taking each of these points, the points at issue in the Far East, we can see that Roosevelt did not procure a single one of them. The Open Door, particularly in Manchuria, was slammed shut almost before the ink on the Portsmouth Treaty was dry. If it had not been for the sudden upsurge of Chinese nationalism China would have become the European playground of the East. As it turned out Roosevelt's misguided policy toward China was to anger the Chinese to the point of establishing a boycott against United States goods. It does seem strange that just what Roosevelt was fighting for so energetically was precisely what he did not obtain.

His work at Portsmouth and his foreign policy as judged by the results appear definitely a failure. If this is so and the facts say that it is—was Roosevelt a success or a failure as mediator? Granted that he obtained the peace, a peace is supposed to be something permanent, permanent to a degree anyway, and this peace would not turn out to be very permanent. Some of the reasons for his failure such as the growth of Chinese nationalism, the Russo-Japanese alliances, Japanese exclusionism in Manchuria, the reversal of many
of Roosevelt's policies by his successors, the growth of the military faction in Japan, Roosevelt's misconception of Chinese nationalism, and so on, have already been discussed. But most of these developments were largely unforeseeable by Roosevelt in July and August 1905.

Admittedly Roosevelt clearly misunderstood China. His first and obvious mistake in her regard was not even providing for her at the conference table; after all, he was fighting for her integrity and rights. Part of his attitude toward China, one of neglect, was due to his basic attitude to all nations whom he considered to be "backward." In part Roosevelt was moved to this attitude, because of his troubles over Chinese emigration to America. Further, Roosevelt was all for the maintenance of China, but this meant the old order, and thus he just could not see how the new nationalism in China could work for the good of the country. Roosevelt wanted the Manchu Dynasty to do what it no longer was able to do. Roosevelt completely "missed the boat" here but he could have done nothing else, given his background and frame of mind.

As for Roosevelt and the Open Door, he saw by 1910, at least, that, on paper, the Open Door was a nice policy; but, that when force on our part was necessary for some non-vital interest the Open Door had to go by the board. Thus his stand on the Open Door changed over the years and, if not too realistic at first, soon enough became so.\(^{34}\) Similarly the balance of power is a nice thing on paper but its implementation was quite another matter. And the further changes in alliances could hardly have been foreseen as nations usually do not advertise their secret alliances or their hidden motives for enter-

\(^{34}\)Roosevelt, Letters, VII, 190, "Roosevelt to Taft," Dec. 22, 1910.
ing such pacts.

Basically Roosevelt's dual policy itself led to trouble. He wanted nice words which are good but not always so effective, and strong arms which, of course, are an everpresent element of modern diplomacy. The concept of the world as a comparatively small unit was developing, and so was the concept and the cruel reality of global war. But, after all, Roosevelt's policy was not unique with him, for it is, basically, the policy or practice of all countries in the shrinking world of today. For the United States of that day it was new, and Roosevelt was presenting it to the nation and the world.

One may speculate on the "might-have-beens" of history, but that is not history. Given the man, Theodore Roosevelt, with his ideas on policy, on war, on civilization, on defense; and, given the position that he was in, the highest in his land, the question of his success or failure largely lies in his sincerity or lack of it in his part in the Portsmouth Conference. Here is one place, in particular, where Roosevelt must be taken, to a great degree, on his word. He said that he wanted peace and he gave his reasons for wanting it. He was honest in revealing all of his motives. He formulated his policy with these motives in mind and directed his work at Portsmouth according to his policy and his motives. The personal element in Roosevelt's motives and policy played a large part, particularly large as the man was Theodore Roosevelt. "The trouble lay not in his abilities, but in his values and in the setting in which he worked."35 But was Roosevelt so guilty here? He was, to use a trite phrase, a man of his times. His errors were those of many in similar posi-

35Beale, Roosevelt and the Rise, 462.
tions of responsibility. Where he erred, as in Chinese policy, others would not have perhaps; but, they might have erred and made serious mistakes where he made none. All in all then, one can well call Theodore Roosevelt the antagonistic peacemaker. He did obtain peace, at least for awhile; but, he also unknowingly set the scene for the proximate overthrow of the open door policy and he paved the way for the death of the balance of power in the Far East. Actually the peace which Roosevelt maneuvered did not satisfy the interested parties but rather antagonized them and aggravated an old and dangerous international situation. These and many other factors have already been discussed before, and from these we can see that Theodore Roosevelt was the peacemaker, the Antagonistic Peacemaker.

With this attempted estimate of Roosevelt in mind the next and final question of this thesis is reached—of what significance was Roosevelt's Portsmouth work. As in evaluating Roosevelt's role at Portsmouth there were as many opinions as evaluators, so here the judgments are as varied as those proffering them. For instance, Dennis says: "Thus as we look on the treaty of Portsmouth, we find that it did not provide a solution of the problems of Far Eastern policy. It merely defined them in a new sense and with fresh opponents."  

36 Latané writes: "Surely no series of events could be cited that would illustrate in a more dramatic way the fact that the old world order had passed away and that the system known as the balance of power in Europe, which had hitherto dominated the affairs of this globe, had been superseded by a new world order. . . . For a hundred years prior to the rise of Japan, we had the

36 Dennis, Adventures, 420
European balance with the United States as the only detached power. Now Japan had entered the picture in the world balance of power. Dennett would combine Roosevelt's general policy and his Portsmouth work, more than many others, to show the significance of the latter:

This was the big contribution of President Roosevelt to Far Eastern policy. As a precedent for the future it was the largest contribution ever made, worth a thousand diplomatic notes. It was not a permanent contribution, for it did not have the support of the American people and the next Administration lapsed into the old traditional policy of expecting something for nothing, of standing back until some other Power made the effort, and then demanding a share in the fruits of victory. This, however, detracts nothing from the credit of Roosevelt for having done his honest, manly, modest best. President Roosevelt set the precedent in American history that the United States should pay for its privileges on the mainland of Asia.

To make broad, general statements about Roosevelt's initiating the Japanese-American hostility of the first half of the twentieth century is foolish. To accuse Theodore Roosevelt of great infamy or great success would be to contradict the facts. Roosevelt, guided by his ideas on policy, handled the situation as he saw fit. Though the consequences of Portsmouth brought a negation, to a large degree, of much of Roosevelt's policy, still many of those consequences were in the making long before Roosevelt became the antagonistic peacemaker.

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38 Dennett, Roosevelt, 332.
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The thesis submitted by Allan F. Kirk, S.J., 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.

January 9, 1962
Date

Signature of Adviser