AMERICAN-RUSSIAN RIVALRY IN THE FAR EAST

A STUDY IN DIPLOMACY AND POWER POLITICS

1895-1914

By

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PREFACE

WITH American expansion Eastward in the last decade of the nineteenth century, the tradition of friendship between the United States and Russia, which had existed for almost a hundred years, gave way to a period of rivalry. This rivalry in the Far East, the subject of the present study, was, in the main, a result of economic competition in Manchuria which began as early as 1895. Following the Boxer upheaval of 1900, relations between the two powers became critical, and reached a climax in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5. They continued in a state of tension during the Taft-Knox administration until President Wilson in 1913 withdrew governmental support from the six-power consortium.

In preparing this study the author has drawn upon diplomatic correspondence in the archives of the Department of State, and Russian Foreign Office material found in Soviet official publications, the *Krasnyi Arkhiv,* and writings of Soviet historians and economists. In addition, private papers, biographies, books, periodicals, and newspapers have been used. Certain diplomatic correspondence in the Department of State, as well as telegrams, despatches, and memoranda from the Foreign Office of Tsarist Russia, appear in these pages for the first time. It may be added that State Department correspondence and records for the period 1906–14 were first opened to accredited students in 1938.

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Chapter I

TRADITION OF FRIENDSHIP

THE United States and Russia stand at opposite poles in respect to cultural background, traditions, and political philosophy. Despite these differences, during a major part of the nineteenth century a peculiar relation of cordiality existed between these powers which gave rise to the "historic tradition" of their friendship. Upon examination, it is found that this tradition has no basis other than the existence at given times of a common enemy and an absence of competing interests. Both countries viewed Great Britain as their actual or potential rival, and friendship between them fluctuated in the degree that rivalry with Great Britain increased or diminished. With the exception of the controversy over northwestern America, which was at length amicably settled, their territorial interests did not conflict at any point. When, however, the United States of America left the frontier behind and entered upon an era of overseas expansion, the earlier friendship of convenience was replaced by reciprocal attitudes of hostility.

In August 1775, England, confident of success in putting down the revolutionary uprising, applied to the Empress of Russia for twenty thousand soldiers to be sent to America to help suppress the rebellion.[1] It was natural that such aid should have been sought in Russia, since at that time Russia was on friendlier terms with Great Britain than with any other important power on the continent.[2] It was also natural that the most autocratic monarchy in the world should sympathize with another monarchy in its attempt to suppress revolution. The subject was discussed at length by the Imperial Council, and the sympathies of Catherine and her ministers were with Great Britain. But Panin, her minister of foreign affairs, who was the pawn of Frederick the Great,[3] led the Empress to believe that for domestic and foreign reasons compliance with British

[1] Frank A. Golder, "Catherine II and the American Revolution," *American Historical Review*, XXI, 92–93.

[2] A. W. Ward and G. P. Gooch, eds., *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, 1783–1919*, I, 134, 135.

[3] Frederick, himself indifferent to the struggle of the colonies, was at outs with England over her attitude in the latter part of the Seven Years' War. He found vicarious revenge in the rebellion of the colonies and impressed on Panin, whose influence with Catherine was great, the inadvisability of granting England's application. P. L. Haworth, "Frederick the Great and the American Revolution," *American Historical Review*, IX, 460–78.

requests would be inadvisable.[4] Catherine therefore informed King George that, although it was physically impossible for Russia to supply him with a mercenary army, she would aid him in any way possible against the American rebels. In 1778, when France entered into an alliance with the new republic, that promise was fulfilled by the assurance of the Empress to the British monarch that as long as he regarded the Americans as rebels, she too would withhold recognition.[5] This assurance was faithfully adhered to, since Russia was the last of the European powers to recognize American independence, long after Great Britain herself had entered into treaty relations with the United States.

The so-called Armed Neutrality which, according to Professor Johnson, was first enunciated in 1752 by Frederick the Great,[6] in championship of the liberal principles of neutral rights, deserves mention as another illustration of a too frequent misconception of Russia's attitude during America's revolutionary struggle. The commonly accepted belief is that Catherine, in order to save the colonies, assumed leadership of this continental coalition against Great Britain which, in her attempts to cut off American trade, was interfering with the commerce of all nations on the high seas. The facts belie this conception. The real author of the doctrine of Armed Neutrality, as already stated, was Frederick the Great. Assisted by French connivance, Frederick, by playing upon the vanity of Catherine, induced her to assume the leadership of a great European league and to issue her famous proclamation of March 1780.[7]

This proclamation was sent to Great Britain, Spain, and France, the three European belligerents, but not to America, the fourth belligerent. To this unfriendly attitude may be added the fact that during the entire Revolutionary War, Russia, while freely allowing the use of her ports to European powers which were at war, refused this right to American warships—this despite Russia's repeated professions of neutrality. Again, in December 1780, the Continental Congress, having voted adherence to the Armed Neutrality, sent Francis Dana as envoy to St. Petersburg,[8] with instructions to "engage her Imperial Majesty to favor and support the sovereignty and independence of the United States," to obtain the admission of the United States as a party to the conventions of the League of Armed Neutrality, and to propose a treaty of amity and commerce which should be "founded on principles of equality and reciprocity and for the mutual advantage of both nations and agreeable to the spirit of the treaties existing between the United States and France." [9] As a result of both

[4] Ward and Gooch, *op. cit.*, I, 134–35.

[5] Willis Fletcher Johnson, *America's Foreign Relations*, I, 96–97.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 101–02. See also Haworth, *op. cit.*, p. 476.

[8] Dana, at that time secretary to John Adams in Paris, was discouraged from going by Benjamin Franklin, and urged by Adams to set out at once for St. Petersburg. Samuel Flagg Bemis, *The Diplomacy of the American Revolution*, p. 114 n.

[9] John C. Hildt, "Early Diplomatic Negotiations of the United States with Russia," *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science*, XXIV, 31–32.

French and British intrigue, combined with Catherine's lack of sympathy and her desire to retain English friendship, Dana, after two years of futile efforts to obtain an audience with the Empress, was finally refused a reception and in disgust returned home.[10] With the conclusion of peace in 1783 between Great Britain and her one-time colonies, the desire of the United States for friendly relations with Russia diminished.[11]

Gradually, however, relations between the two countries improved. Before the turn of the century both had arrived at a state of tension with France, and Russia had made an unsuccessful attempt to bring the United States into a coalition, the object of which was the complete isolation of France.[12] Cordial relations between the Russian and American Governments came into existence only with the accession to the throne of Alexander I, in 1801. The Emperor had been a fervent devotee of liberalism in his earlier years and was a great admirer of his contemporary, Thomas Jefferson, with whom he frequently exchanged letters.[13] In 1807, through the alliance of Alexander and Napoleon, a shift took place, with the consequent declaration of war by Great Britain against Russia and the interdiction of the latter's trade.[14] As Russia had been completely dependent upon Great Britain for commercial transportation, she was now compelled to look to another carrier nation as a substitute, and turned toward the United States.[15] In 1809, official diplomatic relations were established between the two governments, Emperor Alexander appointing Count Pahlen as minister to the United States, and President Madison designating, with the Senate confirming, John Quincy Adams as American minister to St. Petersburg.[16]

Adams, who was graciously received at the Imperial Court, opened negotiations for a commercial treaty with Russia which, because of her delicate relations with Great Britain, she refused to consider seriously. Although no treaty was entered into, relations between Russia and the United States continued on a friendly basis.[17] This friendship on the part of Russia was, however, of little benefit to America except in relation to

[10] Johnson, *op. cit.*, I, 99–100.

[11] Bemis, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

[12] Hildt, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–35.

[13] *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (issued under the auspices of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Assn. of the U.S., 1903–4), XI, 103, 106, 291; XII, 395: Michael Pavlovitch (pseud.), *R.S.F.S.R. v. Imperialististicheskom Okruzhenii: Sovetskaia Rossiia i Kapitalisticheskaia Amerika* (R.S.F.S.R. in Imperialistic Encirclement: Soviet Russia and Capitalistic America), p. 6.

[14] Benjamin Platt Thomas, *Russo-American Relations, 1815–1867*, p. 10.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] Department of State: *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, III, 298; subsequently referred to as *Foreign Relations*. United States diplomatic correspondence, with no source indicated, is to be found in the archives of the Department of State, Washington.

[17] In the war with France that was pending, Great Britain and Russia would be allies; it was impolitic, therefore, to grant America any commercial rights which were not extended to Great Britain. Johnson, *op. cit.*, I, 273–74.

commerce in the region of the Baltic Sea. It had no effect upon the policies of Great Britain and France, whose disregard of neutral rights [18] became more obnoxious as the Napoleonic struggle increased in fury.

While Russia and Great Britain were at war, and the former was dependent upon American vessels for her trade with other countries, friendly relations continued to exist between the United States and Russia. But in 1812 Napoleon invaded Russia and, as a result, Alexander made peace with Great Britain. During this fateful year, however, the United States and Great Britain entered into war ostensibly over the question of neutral rights.[19] As conflict between the two great carrier nations meant ruin for Russia's commerce, her dilemma was real. Moreover, she feared that America might form an alliance with France, with whom England and Russia were now at war.

Realizing the necessity of bringing the Anglo-American conflict to a close, Alexander, through his minister of foreign affairs, Count Romanzov offered his services as mediator.[20] The United States accepted this offer, and on April 17, 1813, President Madison appointed Albert Gallatin, John Quincy Adams and James Bayard as envoys to conclude a treaty of peace with England, and also to negotiate a treaty of commerce with Russia. But Great Britain, faced with the vital problem of neutral rights, refused mediation, and the American envoys, like Dana long before, found themselves in a state of embarrassment. Unwilling to accept Great Britain's rejection of mediation as final, Russia, holding out hope of eventual success, urged the American envoys to remain. But with the fall of Napoleon in 1814, Russia lost interest in Anglo-American peace, and took no part in the mediation that ended the War of 1812. "The Russian project of mediation had turned out to be a bitter disappointment for the American Government. Its policy of looking to Russia to protect the interests of the United States had proved a failure." [21] However, it was during the War of 1812, when the United States began to give evidence of her maritime importance, that Russia had its first glimpse of the role that America was destined to play in international affairs. Consequently Tsarist Russia, ever looking for an opportunity to tip the scales against Great Britain, sought the friendship of the United States as a counterweight to their mutual rival.

Before the French debâcle at Waterloo, the other European powers, confronted with the debris of many years of war and revolution, made plans for the overthrow of Napoleon. The first definite step in this direction was the four-power alliance between Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain, signed March 1, 1814, and reëstablished as the Treaty of Paris, commonly known as the Quadruple Alliance, on November 20,

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 274.

[19] The War of 1812, in addition to being a conflict over neutral rights, was directly connected with plans for territorial expansion on the part of the United States. See Julius W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1812.*

[20] Frank A. Golder, "The Russian Offer of Mediation in the War of 1812," *Political Science Quarterly*, XXXI, No. 3, 380–91.

[21] Hildt, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

1815.[22] The objective of the original alliance had been union for protection against French aggression; the final treaty was expanded to include measures for insuring "the maintenance of the peace of Europe." [23] Meanwhile, Alexander had conceived his own idea of a peace-mechanism, which took form in the Holy Alliance, signed September 26, 1815, by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, England refusing to join. The Tsar's imagination soared to include a "Holy League of Allied Sovereigns," to take charge not only of the affairs of Europe but of the entire civilized world. He saw in the United States a promising young disciple, and a cardinal factor of Alexander's foreign policy for some time was an attempt to win the adherence of America to this holy dictatorship of united sovereigns. But Washington, seeing in the Tsar's friendly overtures a design to use the increasing power of the United States as a counterpoise to Britain's maritime supremacy, refused to be drawn into European entanglements.[24]

The designs of Tsar Alexander to tempt the United States into the Holy Alliance, as well as preparations for the negotiation of a reciprocity treaty between the two countries, were interrupted by the unpleasant Koslov incident.[25] In November 1815, Koslov, Russian consul general at Philadelphia, was arrested on the charge of rape, locally confined over night, and released on bail the following day. This precipitated an acrimonious controversy between the two countries over consular immunity from criminal prosecution. Russia demanded reparation. The United States Government took the stand that consular immunity did not cover offenses against local laws.[26] André Dashkov, Russian minister at Washington, denouncing the arrest as a breach of international law, on his own initiative broke off diplomatic relations on October 31, 1816, and the Tsar refused to receive Levitt Harris, the American chargé d'affaires. The dispute was finally

[22] Ward and Gooch, *op. cit.*, I, 516–18. See Walter Alison Phillips, *The Confederation of Europe.*

[23] Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 14–15.

[24] Count Romanzov asserted to John Quincy Adams, at that time minister to Russia, that it was to the interest of Russia "to encourage and strengthen and multiply the commercial powers which might be rivals of England to form a balance to her overbearing power. . . . She ought then to support and favor those who had them." MS. Despatches, Russia, II, No. 53, State Department Archives. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 18. W. R. King, secretary of the American Legation in Russia, reported that "the Emperor cannot fail to see that England, and England only, stands in the way ready to oppose herself with effect to the great designs which he is suspected to have formed. Under this state of things the growing importance of the United States as a naval power naturally excites the attention of all, but more particularly of Russia, who thinks she sees in her a nation likely at no distant day to become the rival of England, and at the same time from their commercial persuits [*sic*] most apt to come in contact, hence if for no other reason, the favorable disposition manifested toward America by this country. . . . It is more than probable that the powers of Europe have sung the *Te Deum* for an event which at no distant day they will repent with bitterness. They have freed themselves, 'tis true, from the shackles of France, but at the same time paved the way to their subjugation by the barbarous hordes of the north." MS. Despatches, Russia, VI, Jan. 29, 1817, State Department. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.

[25] Hildt, *op. cit.*, pp. 92–107.

[26] Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

settled by an exchange of notes, the Russian Government accepting unconditionally the position of the United States. Dashkov, as a result of his hasty and unwarranted conduct in the Koslov episode, was recalled. Harris was reinstated at court, and William Pinckney, the new American minister, was received with acclamation. His reception at the Court of St. Petersburg was unprecedented. On New Year's day he had an audience with the Tsar, and in the evening at the court ball he was invited to join the Imperial circle, which was the first time that such an honor had been conferred on an envoy of less than ambassadorial rank. In many other ways the Tsar showed his desire to propitiate the United States.[27]

Pierre de Poletica, who succeeded Dashkov as Russian minister, arrived in Washington in April 1819.[28] Acting under instructions from the Tsar, Poletica was advised to aim at two objectives: first, the entrance of the United States into the Holy Alliance, stressing the folly of isolation as shown in the War of 1812, interspersed with subtle intimations as to the possibility of Russian protection from Great Britain; second, in relation to the South American colonies, which were struggling for freedom from Spain, to do all in his power to prevent the Washington Government from pursuing a policy antagonistic to that followed by the European powers.[29]

The Tsar, eager to uphold the principle of monarchical solidarity and distressed at the contagion of revolutionary sentiment in Europe, favored the return of the colonies to the allegiance of Spain. Hence his persistent overtures, within the confines of diplomatic courtesy, to induce the United States to enter the Holy Alliance.[30] In three consecutive interviews with Secretary of State Adams, Poletica tactfully brought up the subject of the Holy Alliance, confidentially assuring Adams that "the Emperor was earnestly desirous that the United States should accede to the Holy Alliance.[31] But these overtures, while politely received, were of no avail.[32] Despatches from abroad convinced the American Government that the continental powers were contemplating forcible intervention in the Spanish-American revolution.[33] Meanwhile George Canning, foreign secretary of England, whose commercial interests in Spanish America dictated a policy which was no longer compatible with that of her one-time allies, declared in an interview with the French minister in London that she

[27] Johnson, *op. cit.*, I, 297–98.

[28] For the first time Russia agreed to require her ministers to reside in Washington rather than in Philadelphia, as Dashkov had persisted in doing. *Ibid.*

[29] J. Franklin Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of the Russian Ministers in Washington, 1818–1825, I," *American Historical Review*, XVIII, 317.

[30] Charles Francis Adams, ed., *The Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, IV, 404, 446–47; "Correspondence of the Russian Ministers in Washington," *A.H.R.*, p. 317.

[31] Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[32] While the majority were in favor of isolation from European entanglements, public sentiment was by no means unanimous, and a number of peace societies, which were formed in the United States during this period, accepted the proposals of Alexander with enthusiasm. *Ibid.*, pp. 27–30.

[33] Adams, *op. cit.*, IV, 40, 86.

would no longer tolerate intervention in America.[34] Finally, with the proclamation of President Monroe on December 2, 1823, and the supporting British declaration of January 30, 1824,[35] whatever plans Alexander I and his allies may have had in regard to the new world were effectually foiled.

In spite of the tension and suspicion which existed in American-Russian relations during the period following Waterloo, Russia rendered friendly service to the United States and to the cause of peaceful settlement of disputes by arbitrating a dispute between Great Britain and the United States over the meaning of Article I of the Treaty of Ghent, which had concluded the War of 1812. This article provided for a reciprocal return of "all territory, places, and possessions whatsoever which had been seized." Great Britain opposed American claims to compensation for slaves seized by British troops during the war. The award which was made by the Tsar in April 1822 was entirely favorable to the United States.[36]

In the meantime, the controversy over the Russian possessions on the northwest coast of America approached a crisis. For more than a century Russian subjects had carried on a lively fur trade in this region, culminating in the formation in 1799 of the Russian-American Company, which was given exclusive fishing and trading privileges on the American coast as far south as fifty-one degrees north latitude for a period of twenty years. More and more, however, the Company's monopoly was threatened by American traders who came to this area in increasing numbers. Finally, with the renewal in 1821 of the Company's charter for another twenty years, Tsar Alexander, irked by these encroachments and failing to obtain satisfaction from the United States, issued a ukase in September 1821 claiming the Pacific coast north of the fifty-first parallel and forbidding foreign vessels from approaching within one hundred Italian miles of the shore.[37] Adams protested, contending that in 1799 the Tsar had designated the fifty-fifth parallel north as the southern boundary of Russian possessions, and that the Pacific Ocean, with its shores four thousand miles apart at the fifty-first parallel, was an open sea.[38] Adams' purpose was to keep the region open in behalf of American trading interests; with this objective in view, he instructed Henry Middleton, United States minister to Russia, to insist on the right of American citizens to fish and trade north of the fifty-first parallel.[39] After a still more vigorous protest from Adams to Baron Tuyll, the Russian minister, the Tsar, realizing that he had gone too far in his claim of 1821, showed a disposition to yield.[40]

[34] *British and Foreign State Papers,* XI, 49–53.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] Johnson, *op. cit.,* I, 302–03.
[37] *Proceedings of the Alaskan Boundary Tribunal,* II, 25–26.
[38] J. B. Moore, *Digest of International Law,* I, 891; Hildt, *op. cit.,* Chapter ix.
[39] "Correspondence of the Russian Ministers in Washington," *American Historical Review,* XVIII, 333–34; Adams, *op. cit.,* VI, 93, 159.
[40] *Proceedings of the Alaskan Boundary Tribunal,* II, 40–41.

This controversy, together with the threat of continental intervention in Spanish South America, led to President Monroe's historic message of December 2, 1823, which, in addition to proclaiming to Europe a "hands-off" policy in South America, contained the ultimatum that "the American continents . . . are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers."[41] Finally, after several months of not unfriendly negotiations, Middleton concluded with Poletica and Nesselrode, Russian minister of foreign affairs, a "Convention as to the Pacific Ocean and Northwest Coast of North America," which was signed on April 17, 1824.[42]

This treaty, the first formal agreement between the United States and Russia, provided for reciprocal freedom of fishing and navigation in the Pacific Ocean, and of trading with the natives inhabiting the coast; it further stipulated that Russia should make no establishments on the coast south of latitude fifty-four degrees, forty minutes north, and the United States should make none north of that line.[43] Although this treaty was only a trading agreement, it brought a thorny dispute to an amicable conclusion and assured tranquillity for a decade.

It had been expected that Great Britain, a joint claimant with the United States on the northwest coast, and therefore equally interested in resisting Russian pretensions, would coöperate in the negotiations of the United States with Russia. Displeased, however, by the threat to further European colonization of America implied in Adams' reply to Baron Tuyll, Great Britain declined to coöperate.[44]

Stimulated by the ratification of the Convention of 1824, the United States in 1829, under President Jackson, resumed her efforts to enter into treaties with Russia concerning commerce and neutral rights.[45] Further encouraged by the willingness of Tsar Nicholas I, who had succeeded Alexander I, to negotiate such treaties, providing they were not displeasing to Great Britain,[46] John Randolph of Roanoke was sent as minister to

[41] J. D. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents,* II, 209. See Dexter Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1823–1826.* Perkins is of the opinion that the possibility of European intervention in America has been greatly exaggerated. He points out that the Tsar's future policy at the time of the Monroe promulgation was unformulated. Though the Russian ministers at Paris and Madrid may have made efforts to bring about armed intervention, the Tsar himself had only concluded that the matter should be considered at a conference of the powers (pp. 104–43).

[42] Johnson, *op. cit.,* I, 318. "It [the treaty] was a great victory for the United States; and it was the more gratifying to this country . . . for the reason that it had been made after the publication in Europe of the Monroe Doctrine with its direct defiance of the schemes of American reconquest which Russia had been foremost in pushing." *Ibid.,* I, 319.

[43] W. M. Malloy, *Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols and Agreements between the United States of America and Other Powers,* II, 1512–14.

[44] Johnson, *op. cit.,* I, 319.

[45] Since both countries had always pursued similar policies in regard to the protection of neutral commerce, such a treaty was logical.

[46] Frank A. Golder, *Guide to Materials for American History in Russian Archives.* Professor Golder, while assembling the material for this volume for the Carnegie In-

Russia in 1830, to reopen the question. Nicholas, fearful of antagonizing Great Britain, and suspicious of all republics because of a fresh outbreak of revolution in France, took no decisive steps. Further delay was caused by the turmoil in Europe, and finally the revolt in Poland, which compelled Nicholas to concentrate on matters nearer home.[47] And still fearful of Britain's maritime might, he became adamant in his refusal "to recognize by treaty any principle of public law which might be disagreeable to England." [48]

Convinced of the impossibility of concluding a maritime treaty, the United States postponed until a later day all efforts toward this end and pressed once more the desirability of a commercial agreement. Finally, thanks to the sedulous efforts of James Buchanan, who had succeeded Randolph as minister to Russia, and the friendly disposition toward the United States of Nesselrode, Russia's secretary of foreign affairs, a "Treaty of Commerce and Navigation" was signed on December 18, 1832, and ratified early in the following year.[49]

This treaty was for the most part similar to other commercial treaties concluded by the United States with other powers, and under its provisions commerce increased appreciably and cordial relations were once more entered upon. Article I of the treaty, however, ultimately gave rise to a serious controversy.[50]

In 1834, cordial relations gave way to a period of acrimonious controversy. Article IV of the Treaty of 1824 had provided that for a period of ten years citizens of both countries should have the reciprocal privilege of fishing and trading with the natives inhabiting the unsettled northwest coast of America.[51] The treaty, ambiguous in its wording as a whole, and particularly in Article IV, lent itself to different interpretations. Russia, hoping to acquire exclusive jurisdiction over the region north of 54° 40′, held that the expiration of Article IV automatically abrogated Article I, which gave practically the same right, subject to certain conditions. The United States, on the other hand, asserted that Article I still held and that, with the exception of settlements already established, the treaty gave Russia no sovereignty north of the given parallel. The Russian-American Company, which from the first had opposed the Treaty of 1824, brought strong influence to bear on the Russian Government against further concessions to the United States. The latter urged Russia to renew Article IV, which expired April 17, 1834, but she hedged.[52]

After over two years of parleying and skirmishing, an incident occurred

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stitute, was given permission by the Tsarist Government to examine the archives of the Russian Foreign Office down to 1870. This opportunity gives his many articles unusual authenticity.

47 Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 69–71.

48 J. B. Moore, ed., *The Works of James Buchanan*, II, 253–63.

49 Malloy, *op. cit.*, II, 1514–19.

50 *Infra*, p. 18, n. 102.

51 Malloy, *op. cit.*, II, 1516.

52 Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–96.

on September 19, 1836, which might have led to grave consequences. The American vessel *Loriot,* which had anchored in the harbor of Tuckessan in the north Pacific to procure supplies, was boarded by Russian officers from an armed vessel and peremptorily ordered to leave "the dominions of Russia." Richard Blinn, master of the *Loriot,* refused to go, but upon the arrival of armed Russian boats, the American vessel finally set sail. The United States protested in vain.[53] While the incident in itself was galling, the United States was less interested in it than in the renewal of Article IV and in protesting Russia's claims to sovereignty in the north Pacific. Hence more notes were exchanged, but the Russian Foreign Office not only definitely refused to renew Article IV but gave the United States to understand that American vessels would no longer be welcome north of 54° 40′.[54] Because of the urgency of other matters and the fact that trade with the region was comparatively small, Secretary of State Forsythe, who had originally taken a high tone, refused to concern himself further with Russian claims.[55] Meanwhile, having leased a large strip of coast land to a British company, Russia's interest in the territory declined and by 1840 her dominion in America was on the wane.[56]

With the closing of this controversy, the United States and Russia entered upon a period of cordial and largely coöperative relations which lasted approximately fifty years. As disinterested friendship is something unknown in international affairs, a key to an understanding of this friendly coöperation is to be found in the mutual hostility to Great Britain on the part of both countries.

Throughout most of the nineteenth century the decaying Ottoman Empire had been the object of considerable rivalry among the European powers. The expansionist ambitions of Russia in the Near East brought hostilities to a head, culminating in the Crimean War of 1854, in which Russian pressure on Turkey was met by the united resistance of England, France, and Sardinia. While the United States Government maintained neutrality to the end of the war, the American press and populace were outspoken in their hostility toward Britain and France and in their sympathy for Russia. Shortly after the declaration of war by Britain and France, Secretary of State William Marcy informed the belligerents of his intention to uphold the principles that free ships make free goods and that neutral goods on an enemy ship, unless contraband of war, are not subject to capture. At this stage many Americans anticipated war with England over neutral rights.[57] Russia, unable to compete with Great Britain on the sea, readily declared her acceptance of both principles; hence on July 22, 1854, the two great continental powers interested in the

[53] *Ibid.,* pp. 99–102.

[54] MS. Despatches, Russia, XIII, March 14/27, 1838, State Department. Thomas, *op. cit.,* p. 105.

[55] *Ibid.,* p. 106.

[56] Clarence L. Andrews, "Russian Plans for American Dominion," *Washington Historical Quarterly,* XVII, 83–92.

[57] Thomas, *op. cit.,* pp. 112–16.

freedom of the seas, Russia and the United States, concluded a "Convention as to the Rights of Neutrals on the Sea." [58] This was the third formal agreement between the United States and Russia.

By the close of the Crimean War, then, links of friendship between the United States and Russia had been forged. The events which took place during the next decade brought about a still closer relationship. As the United States now played a significant part in the maintenance of European equilibrium, the outbreak of the American Civil War had immediate repercussions abroad. That Russia, with her crushing defeat in the recent war still fresh in mind, should sympathize with the North in proportion as Britain and France sympathized with the South, was a natural sequel to the chain of events which had gone before.

The proclamation of President Lincoln on April 19, 1861, announcing the blockade of southern United States ports, marked the commencement of the American Civil War in respect to third states.[59] As British shipping interests were seriously affected by this proclamation, Great Britain as well as France without delay recognized the Confederate states as belligerents.[60] While the attitudes of Great Britain and France differed on several points,[61] both governments openly favored the South and were determined to support its cause in every way possible. The indignation of the North because of this cordiality toward the Confederacy was outspoken. Diplomatic relations with England and France became strained, and at times war seemed not improbable.[62]

Russia from the outset supported the Union. Ever on the alert to weaken Britain's maritime power, she extended a helping hand to the cause of the North whenever opportunity presented itself. Before the fall of Fort Sumter, Eduard Stoeckl, the capable and respected Russian minister to the United States, went so far as to remonstrate with southern leaders, whom he knew well, in an attempt to bring about reconciliation between North and South.[63] Alexander Gortchakov, the Russian minister of foreign affairs, extended to Cassius Clay, our representative at St. Petersburg, the "unequivocal assurance" of Russia's friendship, together with the information that United States naval vessels would have the privilege of bringing prizes into Russian ports.[64] In fact, during the first two years of the war, when Union forces were by no means sure of victory, Russia's friendship was an important factor in preventing British and French intervention.

The *Trent* affair—an American model of British rights—aroused great indignation in England and almost caused a rupture in relations between

58 Malloy, *op. cit.*, II, 1519–21.

59 Charles G. Fenwick, *International Law*, p. 455.

60 Randolph G. Adams, *A History of the Foreign Policy of the United States*, p. 236.

61 Samuel F. Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States*, pp. 365–66.

62 Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

63 Frank A. Golder, "The American Civil War through the Eyes of a Russian Diplomat," *American Historical Review*, XXVI, 454–63.

64 MS. Despatches, Russia, XVIII, April 8/21, 1861, State Department. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

Great Britain and the United States.[65] New conditions confronted by the North's blockading fleet resulted in the introduction of new doctrines of blockade, over which there was considerable controversy. The destruction of northern commerce by Confederate cruisers like the *Alabama,* which were constructed in British ports, was considered by the United States a flagrant violation of neutral duty and brought the two countries to the brink of war.[66] Napoleon III, with colonial designs on Mexico, looked longingly on a divided United States in order to make a treaty with the South to his own liking.[67] Under these conditions so inauspicious for the Union, plans for intervention were seriously discussed in the capitals of Europe, France taking the lead in such schemes.[68] Lord Russell, British minister of foreign affairs, looked with approval upon the proposal made by France for joint mediation but, unable to obtain Russia's adhesion to the plan, decided that the time was not ripe for action.[69] When in November 1862 Napoleon III made his formal proposal to Great Britain and Russia for a joint tender of good offices to the belligerents, the latter country flatly rejected his offer. Great Britain, which by this time had lost faith in the Confederate army, after much discussion in the Cabinet finally decided to reject the plan.[70] After this, all attempts on the part of southern sympathizers in the British Parliament to reopen the project of mediation failed.[71]

While Russia's firm stand was of significance in restraining Great Britain, especially during the earlier period of the war, it must be recognized that in view of conditions in Europe Alexander II could not with consistency have taken any other course. During the Civil War, Russia and the United States were confronted with similar problems. The years 1860 and 1861 had been tempestuous ones in Russian Poland, and in the latter year a revolt got under way. The struggle of the Poles for independence called forth a wave of sympathy in England and France, where both press and people denounced in bitter terms the Tsar's oppression of the legitimate national aspirations of this subject people.[72] The British and French Governments, having guaranteed by the Treaty of Vienna of 1815 a measure of autonomy to Russian Poland, strongly protested Russia's conduct, but the Russian Government, insisting that the revolt was solely a domestic question, branded all talk of intervention as a violation of their

65 This episode occurred as a result of the seizure of two Confederate commissioners, John Slidell and James Mason (on their way to France and England respectively to obtain recognition), on the English steamer *Trent* by Captain Wilkes of the Federal war vessel, *San Jacinto*. Not being able to fight Great Britain and the Confederate states at the same time, Lincoln surrendered the commissioners to the British.

66 Adams, *A History of the Foreign Policy of the United States,* pp. 236–41.

67 Bemis, *Diplomatic History,* pp. 365-66.

68 Ephraim D. Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War,* II, 39.

69 Thomas, *op. cit.,* p. 132.

70 *Ibid.,* p. 134.

71 Bemis, *Diplomatic History,* p. 373.

72 W. F. Grace, "Russia and the [London] Times in 1863 and 1867," *Cambridge Historical Journal,* I, No. 1, 95–96.

sovereign rights.[73] Confronted with such difficulties, it would have been out of the question for Russia to have entered into mediatory alliance with England and France during the critical period of the American Civil War. The revolt within her own domain must therefore be considered a strong factor in Russia's motivation.

In consideration of Russia's coöperative policy toward the United States, Secretary of State Seward reciprocated in May 1863, by rejecting the invitation of France for joint action with Britain to restrain the Tsar in his repressive measures against the Poles.[74] Also connected with the Polish question was the visit of the Russian fleet to the United States in the fall of 1863. In September of that year a Russian squadron under Admiral Lessofsky unexpectedly arrived in New York harbor. The following month another squadron anchored at San Francisco.[75] Throughout the North there was thunderous applause. There was no end of speculation. The popular belief was that the fleet had come to assist the Union in case of attack by England or France.[76] The average American citizen was convinced of the existence of a secret agreement between Russia and the United States.[77] Another popular legend was that, at this critical stage of the Civil War, Russia had sent the fleet to this country with "secret orders" that in case of European intervention the fleet would be placed at the service of our government.[78] It is now known that this pleasing legend had no foundation.[79]

The facts are that the Polish controversy reached a critical stage in the summer of 1863, and for months there had been danger of French and British intervention to bring about pacification by force.[80] Determined not to yield, Alexander II put his army on a war footing, and ordered the

[73] Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

[74] *Ibid.*, pp. 135–36.

[75] Frank A. Golder, "The Russian Fleet and the American Civil War," *American Historical Review*, XX, 807–08.

[76] Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

[77] J. Bigelow, *Retrospections of an Active Life*, I, 499–500.

[78] J. M. Callahan, *Russo-American Relations During the American Civil War*, p. 12.

[79] In MS. Despatches, Russia, LXI, State Department, there is an interesting and lengthy article, "A Page of Contemporary History," translated from the *Journal de St. Petersbourg*, June 4/17 and 5/18, 1904, where in only three short sentences the author refers to the visit of the Russian fleets to the United States in September 1863. No mention whatever is made of the so-called "secret orders." Commenting on this article, Ambassador McCormick, who sent the despatch to the State Department, says: "I have the honor of enclosing herewith a translation of a contribution to the discussion which has been proceeding for some time as to the services rendered by Russia to the United States during and toward the close of the Civil War bearing the title as it was published, 'A Page of Contemporary History.' Special interest is attached to this contribution as it is based upon data taken from the archives of the Russian Foreign Office and may very properly be called an official document. If it adds no facts to the discussion it is interesting on account of its source and because it contains some official correspondence between London and St. Petersburg and Paris and St. Petersburg which probably does not exist in the State Department archives." McCormick to Hay, June 25, 1904.

[80] Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 138–39.