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Anglo-Saxons and Orientals: British-American Interaction over East Asia, 1898-1914

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

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Abstract

This study investigates the relations between Britain and the United States with regard to East Asia at the turn of the twentieth century with a view to establishing how far these conformed in practice to the ideal of the 'great rapprochement'. It makes the case that interaction between the two powers, while generally cordial, was not characterised by cooperation or collaboration on a practical level. Through discussion of the issues of foreign investment and encroachment in China, the Boxer Rising, the Russo-Japanese War, Japanese immigration to the Pacific Coast of North America and the Chinese Revolution of 1911, the study considers why Britain and the United States failed to cooperate despite an apparent basis for joint action in both shared interests and ideological motivations. It argues that the community of interest of the two powers was generally nullified by the broader concerns of each power, principally the dictates of domestic politics for the United States and the global policy needs of an already overstretched British Empire. With regards to ideology, the study demonstrates that in spite of a significant body of shared ideas regarding race and civilisation, specifically the ideologies of Anglo-Saxonism and the Yellow Peril, British and American policymakers did not often employ such ideas or make use of ideological language in their interactions. It suggests that policymakers deliberately avoided or downplayed ideological considerations, apparently believing that these had the potential to be counterproductive. The key findings of the study are therefore that British and American policymakers were surprisingly sensitive and careful in their handling of ideas relating to race and civilisation and that very similar, if not identical, interests in a given region were not sufficient to overcome the wider limitations on British-American cooperation, bringing into question the notion that the 'great rapprochement' was effective beyond the level of rhetoric and friendly relations.

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Introduction

Relations between Britain and the United States between the close of the nineteenth century and the outbreak of the First World War are often referred to in terms of the 'great rapprochement', whereby the two powers put aside the animosity which had characterised the preceding decades and laid the groundwork for close cooperation throughout the twentieth century.¹ Though a marked improvement in the relationship undoubtedly did take place, the implication that these years witnessed a complete sea-change in British-American relations – from outright hostility to nascent 'special relationship' – is at risk of oversimplifying a complex and contested reality. In particular, the decidedly less than smooth course of interaction between Britain and the United States over East Asia during this period complicates the 'great rapprochement' narrative somewhat, suggesting that even where conditions appeared ripe for transatlantic cooperation the practical obstacles to harmonious relations remained formidable.

This study makes the case that British-American interaction over East Asia between 1898 and 1914, though by no means unfriendly, did not live up to the ideal of untrammelled closeness and collaboration, with instances of mutual irritation considerably more common than examples of successful cooperation. The chapters which follow explore the reasons behind this apparent failure, interrogating both the notion that the two powers were drawn together in East Asia by an identity of interests and the claim that shared ideology regarding race and civilisation predisposed British and American policymakers to pursue a partnership in the region. Though accepting the existence of a substantive basis of shared interests, the study argues that this was largely nullified by other concerns, most significantly domestic political constraints for the United States and global policy needs for

¹ B. Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement: England and the United States, 1895-1914* (London, 1969), pp.5-6; W.N. Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire: A Study in Presidential Statecraft* (Basingstoke, 1997), p.7.

Britain. The study also makes the case that the ostensible ideological motivations for a cooperative approach in East Asia ultimately played a very limited role in interaction between the two powers – to the extent that they were often less significant than negative British and American images of each other – in part because policymakers deliberately avoided or downplayed ideas that they deemed hazardous or potentially counterproductive.

The majority of the fairly extensive literature on the British-American rapprochement at the turn of the twentieth century follows an established framework in narrating the story of the transition from hostility to amity. This standard account begins in 1895, with the dispute over the boundary between Venezuela and British Guiana acting as a catalyst to bring the United States and Britain to a point of recognition that conflict would be irrational and ‘fratricidal’. The narrative continues with the Spanish-American War of 1898, wherein the British people and Government were afforded an opportunity to demonstrate their wholehearted support for the U.S., both in the conflict itself and in the ensuing territorial expansion in the Pacific, and dispel any American doubts as to the sincerity of the British desire for friendship. The story then depicts the grateful Americans reciprocating by standing by Britain during her calamitous war in South Africa, in spite of strong pro-Boer sentiment among the populace. Finally, with close cordiality firmly established, the standard narrative portrays British-American relations in the early years of the twentieth century as simply a matter of resolving the various niggling questions held over from the days of hostility, concluding in 1903 with the resolution of the Alaska boundary dispute.² This picture of the

² H.C. Allen, *Great Britain and the United States: A History of Anglo-American Relations, 1783-1952* (London, 1954), pp.532, 540, 556, 572, 580-581, 590-592, 596, 614; S. Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement: Anglo-Saxonism and Anglo-American Relations, 1895-1904* (East Brunswick, NJ, 1981), pp.95, 98, 111, 117-118, 131-132, 169; C.S. Campbell, *From Revolution to Rapprochement: The United States and Great Britain, 1783-1900* (New York, 1974), pp.175, 189, 192, 195; E.P. Crapol, ‘From Anglophobia to Fragile Rapprochement: Anglo-American Relations in the Early Twentieth Century’ in H. Schröder (ed.), *Confrontation and Cooperation: Germany and the United States in the Era of World War I, 1900-1924* (Oxford, 1993), pp.18-20; D. Dimpleby and D. Reynolds, *An Ocean Apart: The Relationship between Britain and America in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1988), p.28; R.B. Mowat, *The American Entente* (London, 1939), pp.124, 126-128, 136-137, 139-140, 144; S.S. Rock, *Why Peace Breaks Out: Great Power Rapprochement in Historical Perspective* (Chapel Hill, NC,

rapprochement implies a significant transformation in the nature of relations between the United States and Britain in the space of less than a decade. Though few historians would go as far as to suggest that the end result of the rapprochement was a concrete understanding or entente, the majority view is that some sort of 'moral alliance' developed. This notion, closely resembling the later concept of a 'special relationship', does not necessarily signify a commitment to joint action so much as a recognition that the bond between the two nations rendered their relations unlike those with other powers.³

There have been some challenges to the standard narrative of the rapprochement and to the notion that British-American relations in the early twentieth century took on the character of a 'moral alliance'. For example, R.G. Neale has cast doubt on the theory that the Spanish-American War consolidated the emerging cordiality between the two nations, contending that although British backing during the conflict softened American opinion in the short term, the longer-term impact of this support has been significantly exaggerated.⁴ Neale is not alone in suggesting that the notion of the rapprochement inaugurating a period of unalloyed harmony and cordiality in the early years of the twentieth century is misleading. A number of historians have noted that Britain and the United States continued to find themselves at loggerheads over relatively minor issues well beyond the traditional finish line of 1903, and that, regardless of how friendly relations may have been on the surface, actual cooperation remained very much an unrealised ideal.⁵ British historians C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill have even suggested

1989), pp.25-29, 57; H. Temperley, *Britain and America since Independence* (Basingstoke, 2002), pp.77-80; Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire*, pp.7-9, 48.

³ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, p.549; Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, p.125; H.K. Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of American to World Power* (Baltimore, MD, 1956), pp.142-143; A. Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism: U.S. Foreign Policy to 1914* (London, 1977), pp.209-211; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.83; Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire*, pp.241-242.

⁴ R.G. Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism, 1898-1900* (Brisbane, 1965), pp.125-128, 136, 172-174.

⁵ L.M. Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship: A Study in World Politics, 1898-1906* (London, 1938), pp.75, 85; P. Larsen, 'Sir Mortimer Durand in Washington: A Study in Anglo-American Relations in the Era of Theodore Roosevelt', *Mid-America* 66 (1984), p.67; Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism*, pp.129-130, 132-134; H.G. Nicholas, *The United States and Great Britain*

that the rapprochement was, 'much more apparent than real – a product of myth making and wishful thinking', and although this perhaps overstates the case, it would certainly be fair to question just how deeply-rooted the change in British-American relations was and the extent of its practical impact.⁶

Though this study does not attempt to deny the existence or significance of the rapprochement entirely, it does take its lead from those more critical studies which argue that relations between Britain and the United States during these years were characterised not so much by comfortable cooperation as by a frequently frustrating process of attempting to bring the realities of diplomacy into line with the rhetoric of friendship and harmony. As the chapters which follow demonstrate, this interpretation of British-American relations at the turn of the twentieth century is compellingly borne out by interaction between the two powers over East Asia, by which term is meant the region traditionally referred to as 'the Far East'.

In the period from 1898 to 1914, East Asia underwent a number of significant upheavals and came increasingly to play a prominent role on the global political scene. It represents a useful case study because of the wealth of opportunities for British-American joint action which these various crises and controversies created. The years surrounding the turn of the twentieth century were a time of particular turmoil for China, as the European powers engaged in a 'scramble for concessions' and internal unrest erupted into the full-blown chaos of the Boxer Rising. These incidents, as well as the American attempt to stave off the closing of China's markets by means of the Open Door notes, are the subject of the first chapter of this study. The second chapter addresses the conflict between Japan and Russia which exploded into a war of global significance in 1904 and 1905. The Russo-Japanese War was a significant turning point in the relations of East and West, as Japan's unexpected triumph raised fears in Europe and the United States

(Chicago, IL, 1975), pp.56-58; D.C. Watt, *Succeeding John Bull: America in Britain's Place, 1900-1975* (Cambridge, 1984), pp.21, 24.

⁶ C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. 1 (London, 1972), p.99.

of a future threat from the island nation. In the years that followed, this threat appeared to manifest itself chiefly in the form of immigration.

In 1906 and 1907, outbursts of anti-Japanese sentiment in California and British Columbia spiralled into an international crisis over the immigration question, which is dealt with in the third chapter of the study. The controversy over immigration in turn fed rumours of a coming conflict in the Pacific, as it appeared increasingly likely that relations between Japan and the United States would break down. The fourth chapter considers these war scares and the various strategies Britain and the United States adopted in response, including the world cruise of the U.S. fleet and British efforts to modify the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. In the fifth and final chapter of the study, the spotlight returns once again to China, first with the reinvigoration of international competition over railway investment caused by American 'Dollar Diplomacy' in 1909 and 1910, and then with the outbreak of the Xinhai Revolution in October 1911. The overthrow of the Qing Dynasty and the establishment in its place of the Republic of China represent the last significant episodes in the region prior to the First World War. The conflict which erupted in Europe in 1914 decisively shifted the focus of Britain and the United States away from East Asia, and thus marks a useful end-point for this study.

Despite all that was going on in East Asia during these years, historians of the British-American rapprochement have not tended to devote a great deal of attention to this part of the world. A number of accounts work from, and indeed do not go much beyond, the premise that a perceived community of interests in the region was one of the factors which contributed to Britain and the United States coming into more cordial relations around the turn of the twentieth century.⁷ Some historians have taken this line of argument a step further, suggesting not only that the potential for joint action in East Asia contributed to burgeoning British-American closeness, but that this closeness was in turn reflected in practical

⁷ Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, pp.142, 149; C.S. Campbell, *From Revolution to Rapprochement*, p.199; W. LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca, NY, 1963), pp.284-285, 318.

collaboration between the two powers in the region.⁸ There is, however, very little evidence to back up claims of British-American cooperation over East Asia in the years between 1898 and 1914. Numerous examples can be cited of the failure of the two powers to work together: from the American refusal to back British attempts to resist the 'scramble for concessions' in China, through British reluctance to press the American agenda with their Japanese allies over the Russo-Japanese War or the question of immigration, to President Woodrow Wilson's rejection of international cooperation in response to the Chinese Revolution. A number of historians have therefore foregrounded the disjuncture between the appearance of common goals and the reality of policies which, while rarely in direct conflict, were often far from cooperative.⁹

Not only did affairs in East Asia fail to draw Britain and the United States into joint action, they actually represented a source of tension at times. The failure of the two powers to coordinate their action not infrequently left something of a bitter aftertaste, with mutual suspicion and irritation a common feature of British-American interaction over East Asia.¹⁰ A significant contributing factor to the frustration felt by policymakers on both sides was a high level of expectation that the two powers would be found in harmony in East Asia. Historians Lionel Gelber and A.E. Campbell have both argued that East Asia represented the 'acid test' of the rapprochement, or in other words the arena where there was the greatest basis for

⁸ Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, pp.150-154, 171; G.E. Hubbard, *British Far Eastern Policy* (New York, 1943), pp.27-28; P. Joseph, *Foreign Diplomacy in China, 1894-1900: A Study in Political and Economic Relations with China* (London, 1928), pp.323, 378, 382-383; Mowat, *The American Entente*, p.135.

⁹ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, p.589; Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, p.151; A.E. Campbell, *Great Britain and the United States, 1895-1903* (London, 1960), pp.157, 159, 185; A.E. Campbell, 'The United States and Great Britain: Uneasy Allies' in J. Braeman, R.H. Bremner and D. Brody (eds.), *Twentieth Century American Foreign Policy* (Columbus, OH, 1971), p.488; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, pp.84-85; Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism*, p.171; A. Orde, *The Eclipse of Great Britain: The United States and British Imperial Decline, 1895-1956* (New York, 1996), p.33; R. Ovendale, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke, 1998), p.6; B.M. Russett, *Community and Contention: Britain and America in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA, 1963), p.6.

¹⁰ Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, pp.214-216, 235; Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism*, p.212; W. LaFeber, *The Clash: A History of U.S.-Japan Relations* (New York, 1997), pp.66, 69, 84; Larsen, 'Sir Mortimer Durand in Washington', p.65; C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. 2 (London, 1972), p.277; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, pp.213, 215-216, 224-227, 239.

British-American cooperation.¹¹ This notion that East Asia was the fertile ground from which transatlantic amity could flourish also had some traction at the time and may well have influenced policymakers' views of the situation. In his 1896 study of the Far East, British journalist Valentine Chirol offered this prediction:

There, if anywhere, might be laid the foundations of that close understanding between the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race which it must be the object of every far-seeing statesman on both sides of the Atlantic to promote and extend.¹²

This assertion begs the question of why exactly East Asia appeared so ripe for British-American cooperation. Another contemporary observer, British writer Archibald Colquhoun, made the case that the English-speaking nations had 'an obvious community of interest as well as community of sentiment' in the Far East, and this formulation offers a useful way to approach the problem.¹³ Britain and the United States, in theory at least, not only shared the same interests in East Asia, but were also drawn together by a shared ideological framework.

That this apparent coincidence of shared interests and ideological factors did not translate into significant cooperation on a practical level is a key point of departure for this study. The chapters which follow will seek to address the question of why, if there was a genuine basis for British-American cooperation in East Asia in both interests and ideas, the combination proved insufficient to bring about joint action. A useful preliminary to this endeavour is to consider the extent of these communities of interest and sentiment and what it was that they specifically entailed. The ideological side will be dealt with in considerably greater detail in order to draw on the vast range of literature, both primary and scholarly, which touches upon the subject.

There is some debate among historians as to the extent to which the two countries actually had a common set of interests in East Asia. Anne Orde, for example, has suggested that the much-vaunted community of interest was largely

¹¹ A.E. Campbell, *Great Britain and the United States*, p.156; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.75.

¹² V. Chirol, *The Far Eastern Question* (London, 1896), p.194.

¹³ A.R. Colquhoun, *China in Transformation* (New York, 1904 [1898]), p.ix.

illusory. She has made the case that it was possible for the powers to maintain a fiction of common aims and goals precisely because this theory was never put to the test in actual collaboration. This is an interesting claim, and it would not be an unfair assumption, given the general lack of cooperation between the powers in East Asia, to conclude that the extent of British-American shared interests had been somewhat exaggerated.¹⁴ Nevertheless, there is a strong case to be made that, their failure to pursue them in concert notwithstanding, the two powers did have very similar interests in East Asia.

The primary shared interest of Britain and the United States in the region was the maintenance of stability and the status quo. Both powers were committed to the preservation of the Chinese Empire as a sovereign state with full jurisdiction over the entirety of its territory, including the outlying region of Manchuria. In pursuance of this broad goal, British and American policymakers looked for a balance of power between the various nations involved in East Asian affairs, in the hope that this would safeguard Chinese integrity and minimise the potential for conflict and instability.¹⁵ The common solicitude of Britain and the United States for the status quo in East Asia was in part a reflection of the second major shared interest of the two powers: open trade throughout the Chinese Empire. Both powers were keen to expand their commerce in East Asia, and although they held radically different positions on international trade – the Americans convinced of the necessity of protectionism and economic nationalism, the British devoted to the Cobdenite gospel of free trade – they found themselves in broad agreement that

¹⁴ A.E. Campbell, *Great Britain and the United States*, p.182; Orde, *The Eclipse of Great Britain*, p.33.

¹⁵ J.M. Cooper, *The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, MA, 1983), p.74; E.W. Edwards, 'The Japanese Alliance and the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904', *History* 42 (1957), p.25; N.A. Graebner, 'The Year of Transition' in N.A. Graebner (ed.), *An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1961), p.6; R.J. Moore, 'Social Darwinism, Social Imperialism and Rapprochement: Theodore Roosevelt and the English-Speaking Peoples, 1886-1901' (PhD Thesis, Washington University, 2003), pp.269-270; J. Osterhammel, 'Britain and China, 1842-1914' in A. Porter (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1999), pp.157-158; T.G. Otte, *The China Question: Great Power Rivalry and British Isolation, 1894-1905* (Oxford, 2007), p.84; M.H. Wilgus, *Sir Claude MacDonal, the Open Door, and British Informal Empire in China, 1895-1900* (New York, 1987), p.39.

China's largely untapped markets should remain freely accessible to all nations.¹⁶ British and American policymakers thus stood in opposition to any sort of restrictions on trade and any arrangements which granted individual powers special privileges or exclusive 'spheres of influence', a position which would come to be defined by the concept of the 'Open Door'.¹⁷ Finally, Britain and the United States had similar interests with regard to the issue of Japanese immigration. Neither power could cope politically with a large influx of Asian labour into their territory. Equally, however, neither of them could afford to disrupt friendly relations with Japan, a power still in the midst of a meteoric rise during these years. London and Washington therefore had a common interest in finding a solution to the immigration question which would curb the flow of labour from Japan without causing offence to the Japanese and souring relations.¹⁸

The 'community of sentiment' between Britain and the United States to which Colquhoun refers is a somewhat more nebulous notion than that of common interests. This study treats it as a shared basis of ideas which served, or had the potential to serve, as an inducement to joint action in East Asia, either by directly encouraging British-American cooperation or by pointing towards a particular

¹⁶ A. Howe, *Free Trade and Liberal England, 1846-1946* (Oxford, 1997), pp.195, 213, 266-267, 297; M-W. Palen, *The Conspiracy of Free Trade: The Anglo-American Struggle over Empire and Economic Globalisation, 1846-1896* (Cambridge, 2016), pp.xv-xviii, 84, 181, 206, 234, 268; M-W. Palen, 'The Imperialism of Economic Nationalism, 1890-1913', *Diplomatic History* 39 (2015), pp.161-163, 166, 171-172, 185; A. Sykes, *Tariff Reform in British Politics, 1903-1913* (Oxford, 1979), pp.1, 287; A.S. Thompson, 'Tariff Reform: An Imperial Strategy', 1903-1913', *Historical Journal* 40 (1997), pp.1035, 1054; F. Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation: Commerce, Consumption, and Civil Society in Modern Britain* (Oxford, 2008), pp.1-3, 64-66, 100.

¹⁷ C.S. Campbell, *Anglo-American Understanding, 1898-1903* (Baltimore, MD, 1957), pp.12-13; J. Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?: Britain, the Balance of Power and the Origins of the First World War* (London, 1999), p.252; R.S. McCordock, *British Far Eastern Policy, 1894-1900* (New York, 1931), p.142; T.J. McCormick, *China Market: America's Quest for Informal Empire, 1893-1901* (Chicago, IL, 1967), pp.63-64, 136; T.M. Sobottke, 'The Imperial Enterprise: Anglo-American Reaction to the Spanish-American and Boer Wars, 1898-1902' (PhD Thesis, Marquette University, 2008), p.63; J. Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy: The International Thought of a Conservative Statesman* (Cambridge, 1997), p.113.

¹⁸ T.A. Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises* (London, 1934), pp.139, 160, 318; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p.327; R.A. Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan* (Seattle, WA, 1966), pp.168, 302; A.W. Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New York, 1938), p.128; R.A. Huttenback, *Racism and Empire: White Settlers and Colored Immigrants in British Self-Governing Colonies, 1830-1910* (Ithaca, NY, 1976), p.169; Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism*, p.207.

course of action with regard to Japan and China. The term 'sentiment', though apposite for the period under consideration, is a little imprecise and would tend to imply principally an emotional response, so 'ideology' will generally be used in preference. Michael Hunt's attempts to define 'ideology' in the context of foreign policy and international relations have emphasised that this term does not need to refer to a formalised or systematic belief system, but is rather 'an interrelated set of convictions or assumptions' which serves to make a complex reality more comprehensible.¹⁹ This study will thus include under the umbrella term 'ideology' not only logically coherent ways of thinking about a given issue, in other words identifiable 'ideologies', but also more inchoate 'ideas' and 'images'. This latter term is often employed by International Relations scholars to describe the frames of reference through which people perceive and interpret the world around them. In this usage, 'images', especially those relating to the character and characteristics of other nations and people groups, play an important role in policymaking as they enable policymakers to predict and evaluate the behaviour of the various powers with which they interact.²⁰ Jean-Pierre Lehmann has suggested that all 'images' are inherently neither comprehensive nor objective but are rather impressions or even

¹⁹ M.H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT, 2009), pp.xi, 12; M.H. Hunt, 'Ideology' in M.J. Hogan and T.J. Paterson (eds.), *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, 2004), pp.221-222, 237; W.A. Mullins, 'On the Concept of Ideology in Political Science', *American Political Science Review* 66 (1972), p.507.

²⁰ K. Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (New York, 1979), p.17; K.E. Boulding, 'National Images and International Systems', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 2 (1959), pp.120-121; C.H. Heimsath, 'The American Images of India as Factors in U.S. Foreign Policy Making', *Asian Thought and Society* 3 (1978), pp.272, 281; O. Holsti, 'Cognitive Dynamics and Images of the Enemy' in J.C. Farrell and A.P. Smith (eds.), *Image and Reality in World Politics* (New York, 1967), p.18; R. Jervis, *The Logic of Images in International Relations* (New York, 1989), pp.4-5; H.C. Kelman, 'Social-Psychological Approaches to the Study of International Relations: Definitions of Scope' in H.C. Kelman (ed.), *International Behavior: A Social-Psychological Analysis* (New York, 1966), pp.24-25; D.R. Kinder and J.A. Weiss, 'In Lieu of Rationality: Psychological Perspectives on Foreign Policy Decision Making', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 22 (1978), pp.709, 721; D.G. Pruitt, 'Definition of the Situation as a Determinant of International Action' in H.C. Kelman (ed.), *International Behavior: A Social-Psychological Analysis* (New York, 1966), pp.394-395; R.S. Schwantes, *Japanese and Americans: A Century of Cultural Relations* (Westport, CT, 1955), p.39; G.H. Snyder and P. Diesing, *Conflict Among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making and System Structure in International Crises* (Princeton, NJ, 1977), p.286; J.C. Thomson, Jr., P.W. Stanley and J.C. Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists: The American Experience in East Asia* (New York, 1981), p.5; Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy*, p.3.

caricatures, and for this reason the term 'image' is to a large extent used interchangeably with 'stereotype' throughout the study.²¹

The ideological framework which the people, and to a large extent the policymakers, of Britain and the United States shared at the turn of the twentieth century was overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, centred on notions of race and civilisation. This study therefore focuses primarily on ideas which fall under this broad category. The terms 'race' and 'civilisation' do not lend themselves to precise definition, especially given that both were subject to considerable flexibility and ambiguity around the turn of the twentieth century. On a very basic level, however, 'race' might be said to refer to biological inheritance and divisions of humanity based on descent. In contrast, 'civilisation' would refer to cultural inheritance and divisions of humanity based on factors such as social systems, religion and linguistics.²² This theoretical dichotomy is useful, but there is a significant caveat in the high level of overlap in the actual usage of the two terms. For instance, 'civilisation' was not necessarily innocent of biological connotations, with a number of key nineteenth century thinkers, such as Gustave Le Bon, describing different types of 'civilisation' as mere reflections of inherited 'racial' characteristics.²³ More fundamentally, the term 'race' carried an incredibly broad range of possible meanings and connotations. It was often employed in ways which implied no biological association, for example as a substitute for the word 'nation', but it was also used in a catch-all manner to encompass almost all aspects of human character

²¹ G. Fisher, *Mindsets: The Role of Culture and Perception in International Relations* (Yarmouth, ME, 1997), p.23; Holsti, 'Cognitive Dynamics and Images of the Enemy', p.18; J-P. Lehmann, *The Image of Japan: From Feudal Isolation to World Power, 1850-1950* (London, 1978), p.13; S.C. Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant: The American Image of the Chinese, 1785-1882* (Berkeley, CA, 1969), p.8.

²² J. Barzun, *Race: A Study in Superstition* (New York, 1965), p.1; R. Kowner and W. Demel, 'Modern East Asia and the Rise of Racial Thought: Possible Links, Unique Features and Unsettled Issues' in R. Kowner and W. Demel (eds.), *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions* (Leiden, 2013), p.6; G. Sinkler, *The Racial Attitudes of American Presidents: From Abraham Lincoln to Theodore Roosevelt* (Garden City, NY, 1971), p.3; L.L. Snyder, *The Idea of Racialism: Its Meaning and History* (Princeton, NJ, 1962), p.29.

²³ G. Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago, IL, 1995), pp.23, 25; A. De Gobineau, *The Inequality of the Human Races*, trans. A. Collins (London, 1915 [1854]), pp.39-40, 77; G. Le Bon, *The Psychology of Peoples* (New York, 1898), pp.63-64, 126; Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy*, p.29.

and behaviour under the umbrella of inheritance.²⁴ In consequence of the extensive crossover and confusion between the concepts of 'race' and 'civilisation', the two are treated throughout this study not as interchangeable but as inextricably connected.

The very broad scope of what could be considered 'racial' in the years around the turn of the twentieth contributed to the prominent place of 'race thinking' in the dominant worldview of the time. Though there were dissenters, such as the influential French theorist Jean Finot, the broad consensus throughout the West was that racial difference was the essential driver of history, and that all significant characteristics of individuals and groups could be delineated at least partially in biological terms.²⁵ In Britain and the United States the major manifestation of this saturation of racial thought, and the heart of Colquhoun's

²⁴ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.18-19; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, p.29; R. Bickers, *Britain in China: Community, Culture and Colonialism, 1900-1949* (Manchester, 1999), p.26; C. Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race* (London, 1971), pp.9, 16, 206; T.G. Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1980), p.29; R. Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, MA, 1981), p.301; M.F. Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York, 2000), pp.152-153; P. Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914* (Vancouver, 1989), p.viii; G. Rystad, *Ambiguous Imperialism: American Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics at the Turn of the Century* (Stockholm, 1975), pp.49, 51; R.J. Scott-Childress, 'Race, Nation, and the Rhetoric of Color: Locating Japan and China, 1870-1907' in R.J. Scott-Childress (ed.), *Race and the Production of Modern American Nationalism* (New York, 1999), p.3; G.R. Searle, *Eugenics and Politics in Britain, 1900-1914* (Leyden, 1976), p.39; R.A. Thompson, *The Yellow Peril, 1890-1924* (New York, 1978), p.43.

²⁵ M. Banton, *White and Coloured: The Behaviour of British People towards Coloured Immigrants* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1960), p.63; M. Banton, *The Idea of Race* (London, 1977), pp.5, 8; P. Darby, *Three Faces of Imperialism: British and American Approaches to Asia and Africa, 1870-1970* (New Haven, CT, 1987), pp.45-46; Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race*, pp.1-2, 21, 26; R.M. Elson, *Guardians of Tradition: American Schoolbooks of the Nineteenth Century* (Lincoln, NE, 1964), pp.65-66; J. Finot, *Race Prejudice* (New York, 1907), pp.xi, 46, 48, 129, 317; I. Hannaford, *Race: The History of an Idea in the West* (Washington, D.C., 1996), pp.250, 262, 326-327; J.M. Henning, *Outposts of Civilization: Race, Religion, and the Formative Years of American-Japanese Relations* (New York, 2000), pp.10-11; Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, pp.48, 52, 91; P.G. Lauren, *Power and Prejudice: The Politics and Diplomacy of Racial Discrimination* (Boulder, CO, 1988), pp.34-36; W. Mock, 'The Function of 'Race' in Imperialist Ideologies: The Example of Joseph Chamberlain' in P. Kennedy and A. Nicholls (eds.), *Nationalist and Racialist Movements in Britain and Germany before 1914* (Oxford, 1981), p.191; A. Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* (Boulder, CO, 1993), pp.251, 255-256, 270; T.W. Thompson, *James Anthony Froude on Nation and Empire: A Study in Victorian Racialism* (New York, 1987), pp.1, 35; R. Weiss, 'Racism in the Era of Industrialization' in G.B. Nash and R. Weiss (eds.), *The Great Fear: Race in the Mind of America* (New York, 1970), pp.121-122, 135; H. Winant, *The World is a Ghetto: Race and Democracy since World War II* (New York, 2001), pp.28-30, 32, 84.

'community of sentiment', was the ideology of Anglo-Saxonism, which dominated the intellectual landscape of both nations.²⁶

Reduced to its simplest level, Anglo-Saxonism was a broad set of beliefs regarding the superiority, world mission and essential brotherhood of the 'Anglo-Saxon' or 'English-speaking' peoples. These two terms were broadly interchangeable, though the former was rejected by some proponents of the ideology, most notably Theodore Roosevelt, as too narrowly racial.²⁷ Anglo-Saxonist thinkers, such as James K. Hosmer, ascribed to the English-speaking race a position at the pinnacle of the hierarchy of the world's peoples, often attributing this superiority primarily to an unrivalled aptitude for governance. This quality was theoretically rooted in an innate 'love of liberty' – a distinctive possession and inheritance of the English-speaking peoples – and an unbroken heritage of developing and perfecting the institutions of popular self-government.²⁸ Anglo-Saxonist ideologues claimed that the English-speaking peoples had a duty to impart their culture, values and institutions – in other words, their civilisation – to the rest of the world by taking a leading role in global affairs and ensuring the ascendancy of

²⁶ Barzun, *Race*, p.74; Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.11-12, 45, 60-61; A. DeRoche, 'Race Relations' in W. Kaufman and H.S. MacPherson (eds.), *Britain and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History – A Multidisciplinary Encyclopaedia*, vol. 3 (Santa Barbara, CA, 2005), p.790; M.H. Haller, *Eugenics: Hereditary Attitudes in American Social Thought* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1963), p.51; R. Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston, MA, 1955), pp.172-173; Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, pp.77-79; F. Schumacher, 'Anglo-Saxonism' in W. Kaufman and H.S. MacPherson (eds.), *Britain and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History – A Multidisciplinary Encyclopaedia*, vol. 1 (Santa Barbara, CA, 2005), p.92; Weiss, 'Racism in the Era of Industrialization', p.129.

²⁷ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.74-75; Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race*, pp.26, 67-68; A.J. Frantzen and J.D. Niles, 'Anglo-Saxonism and Medievalism' in A.J. Frantzen and J.D. Niles (eds.), *Anglo-Saxonism and the Construction of Social Identity* (Gainesville, FL, 1997), p.2; T.F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (Dallas, TX, 1963), pp.117, 318; P.A. Kramer, 'Empires, Exceptions and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule between the British and United States Empires, 1880-1910', *Journal of American History* 88 (2002), pp.1322-1323, 1345; Sinkler, *The Racial Attitudes of American Presidents*, p.379; Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy*, p.36.

²⁸ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.12, 20, 26, 37-38, 40-41; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, p.22; Gossett, *Race*, p.88; G.M. Frederickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton, NJ, 2002), p.74; Haller, *Eugenics*, p.51; Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, pp.12-13; J. Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New York, 1975), p.10; Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, pp.3-4, 174; J.K. Hosmer, *A Short History of Anglo-Saxon Freedom: The Polity of the English-Speaking Race* (New York, 1890), pp.v, 275-276, 306, 354; Huttenback, *Racism and Empire*, p.15; B. Kidd, *Social Evolution* (New York, 1895), p.215; Kramer, 'Empires, Exceptions and Anglo-Saxons', p.1322; Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy*, pp.39-40.

liberty, democracy and Protestant Christianity.²⁹ They were uniquely equipped for this task not only because of their genius for governance but also as a result of various inherent traits – the stereotyped characteristics which composed the image of the Anglo-Saxon peoples – such as manly energy, adventurousness and ‘moral character’.³⁰

Anglo-Saxonist thought could take on a number of forms and be put to a variety of different uses, and there are notable distinctions between its manifestations in Britain and in the United States. In the latter, for example, Anglo-Saxonism often assumed a nativist guise, forming the basis of a claim for the superiority of white, English-speaking Americans over the new immigrants from Eastern Europe and Asia.³¹ British Anglo-Saxonists, on the other hand, tended to apply their ideology to the question of empire, most strikingly in the late-nineteenth-century movement to promote imperial federation and the somewhat nebulous vision of ‘Greater Britain’.³² Many, though by no means all, devotees of Anglo-Saxonism on both sides of the Atlantic believed, however, that the supposed racial mission or destiny of the English-speaking peoples could be best attained by some sort of united front between Britain and the United States, with some even

²⁹ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.23-24; P.F. Boller, *American Thought in Transition: The Impact of Evolutionary Nationalism* (Chicago, IL, 1969), pp.213-215, 220; H.W. Brands, *The Reckless Decade: America in the 1890s* (New York, 1995), pp.288-289; C.A. Conant, *The United States in the Orient: The Nature of the Economic Problem* (Boston, MA, 1900), pp.222-223, 226-227; C.W. Dilke, *Greater Britain: A Record of Travels in English-Speaking Countries*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA, 1869), p.348; Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, p.174; Hosmer, *A Short History of Anglo-Saxon Freedom*, pp.308, 353-354, 362; A.T. Mahan, *The Problem of Asia and Its Effect upon International Politics* (Boston, MA, 1900), pp.193-194; W.R. Mead, *God and Gold: Britain, America, and the Making of the Modern World*, (London, 2007), pp.52-53; F. Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: A Reinterpretation* (New York, 1963), p.240.

³⁰ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, p.20; Dilke, *Greater Britain*, vol. 2, p.134; Hannaford, *Race*, p.339; Kidd, *Social Evolution*, pp.57-60, 279; M.L. Krenn, *The Color of Empire: Race and American Foreign Relations* (Washington, D.C., 2006), p.8; Le Bon, *The Psychology of Peoples*, p.140; Temperley, *Britain and America since Independence*, p.87; T.W. Thompson, *James Anthony Froude*, pp.i, 78, 81; Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy*, pp.41, 67.

³¹ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.55-57, 80-81; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, p.9.

³² J. Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783-1939* (Oxford, 2009), pp.458-460; D. Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860-1900* (Princeton, NJ, 2007), pp.1-2, 5, 7-8, 10, 12, 24-25, 44-45, 93, 113-114, 160, 184-185; Dilke, *Greater Britain*, vol.2, pp.137, 345-346; J.A. Froude, *Oceana* (London, 1912 [1886]), pp.10-11, 15, 306; T. Koditschek, *Liberalism, Imperialism, and the Historical Imagination: Nineteenth-Century Visions of a Greater Britain* (Cambridge, 2011), pp.175-176, 207-209, 248, 317, 338-339; J.R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England* (Boston, 1883), p.8.

predicting that if the two powers were to make common cause it would effectively bring an end to great power conflict and usher in an era of pacific Anglo-Saxon hegemony.³³

The question of how significant such Anglo-Saxonist ideas were in drawing Britain and the United States together forms a crucial part of the historiography of the rapprochement. Much of the scholarship, particularly that which abides by the standard narrative described above, tends to work from the premise that bonds of common language, culture, and 'blood' were central in drawing Britain and the United States into close and friendly relations, in large part because they provided the logic that such a development was a natural one.³⁴ This interpretation has been given added weight by recent scholarship on the notion of the 'Anglo world', in particular the work of James Belich and Gary Magee and Andrew Thompson. These historians have made the case that linguistic and cultural ties facilitated social networks and economic interdependence amongst the English-speaking nations, which in turn reinforced the sense of belonging to a transnational Anglophone identity, as distinct from other more 'foreign' peoples.³⁵ Stuart Anderson, who has dealt explicitly and extensively with the role of ideology in the rapprochement, has concluded that Anglo-Saxonist beliefs about racial unity and a shared racial mission

³³ B. Adams, *America's Economic Supremacy* (New York, 1900), p.25; Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.12-13, 49, 53, 62-63, 89-91; E.H. Fitzpatrick, *The Coming Conflict of Nations, or The Japanese-American War* (Springfield, IL, 1909), pp. 8-9, 291-292, 298, 306; Froude, *Oceana*, p.306; Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, p.182; Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, p.292; E.P. Kohn, 'This Kindred People: Canadian-American Relations and North American Anglo-Saxonism During the Anglo-American Rapprochement, 1895-1903' (PhD Thesis, McGill University, 2000), pp.77, 198, 201; H. Lea, *Day of the Saxon* (New York, 1912), pp.34-35.

³⁴ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, pp.33, 95, 106, 108, 129-130, 150; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, pp.142, 159-160; C. Bell, *The Debatable Alliance: An Essay in Anglo-American Relations* (London, 1964), p.12; A.E. Campbell, *Great Britain and the United States*, pp.195-197, 208; C.S. Campbell, *From Revolution to Rapprochement*, pp.203-204; Crapol, 'From Anglophobia to Fragile Rapprochement', pp.20, 25; DeRoche, 'Race Relations', p.790; Dimpleby and Reynolds, *An Ocean Apart*, pp.31, 33; A.P. Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century: Of Friendship, Conflict and the Rise and Decline of Superpowers* (London, 1995), pp.15-17; P. Kennedy, 'British and German Reactions to the Rise of American Power' in R.J. Bullen, H. Pogge von Strandmann and A. Polonsky (eds.), *Ideas into Politics: Aspects of European History, 1880-1950* (London, 1984), pp.20-22; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, pp.8, 64, 82-83; Rock, *Why Peace Breaks Out*, pp.8, 10, 41-42; Schumacher, 'Anglo-Saxonism', pp.91-92.

³⁵ Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, pp.49-50, 450-451, 479-481, 555; G.B. Magee and A.S. Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c.1850-1914* (Cambridge, 2010), pp.xii-xiii, 5-8, 13-14, 19, 38-39, 44, 60-62, 107-109, 158.

were the 'primary abstract rationale' for the rapprochement.³⁶ Anderson's contention is that key policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic were firm believers in Anglo-Saxonism, and that these ideas, and not merely respective national interests, were vital in motivating not only the rapprochement more broadly but also the shared desire for cooperation in East Asia.³⁷

Inevitably, not all historians have accepted Anderson's thesis, and in particular those historians who are sceptical of the traditional picture of the rapprochement have tended to doubt the significance of ideological factors. They have generally argued that ideas of racial or cultural affinity only came in to play when they chimed with the agendas of the two powers. In this reading, Anglo-Saxonist ideology, far from driving the improvement in relations, was at best a 'convenient afterthought', rendering reliance on or deference to the other power more palatable.³⁸ This interpretation usefully highlights the potential for ideology to function chiefly as rationalisation after the fact rather than as a motivating force, but it also underestimates the extent to which British and American policymakers were philosophically committed to the tenets of Anglo-Saxonism, a point for which Anderson provides ample evidence. That said, a major weakness of Anderson's study is its overreliance on simply outlining the ideological make-up of key actors without actually establishing whether and how their Anglo-Saxonist beliefs impacted on policymaking. It thus remains something of an open question as to how far Anglo-Saxonist ideology can be cited as a factor in the British-American rapprochement.

³⁶ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.12-14, 100, 110, 112, 116-117, 125-127, 132-133, 146, 150-151, 177.

³⁷ Ibid., pp.13, 48-49, 51-53, 73-74, 82-83, 86-91, 160-161, 163-165.

³⁸ M. Beloff, 'The Special Relationship: An Anglo-American Myth', in M. Gilbert (ed.), *A Century of Conflict, 1850-1950: Essays for A.J.P. Taylor* (London, 1966), pp.154, 170; K. Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America, 1815-1908* (London, 1967), pp.340, 342, 344; R.H. Heindel, *The American Impact on Great Britain, 1898-1914: A Study of the United States in World History* (Philadelphia, PA, 1940), pp.63, 79, 126; Kohn, 'This Kindred People', pp.80, 90, 109, 123, 320; Lowe and Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. 1, pp.96-97, 99; Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism*, pp.127, 134-136; Orde, *The Eclipse of Great Britain*, pp.7, 28; Watt, *Succeeding John Bull*, pp.27-29.

Anglo-Saxonism was not the only aspect of the shared British and American ideological framework, and indeed it formed only part of a broader worldview which dominated popular and elite thinking in the English-speaking nations. It was widely believed that the world would soon witness, and was perhaps already in the throes of, a colossal struggle for supremacy between different races or civilisations which would determine the course of the future, a contest which might end in military combat but would also be played out in economic and demographic competition.³⁹ The notion of a coming 'clash' took its lead from the Social Darwinist theory of a natural 'struggle for existence', and was grounded in a key tenet of the racial thought of the period: the notion of a fundamental and unbridgeable divide between different peoples which rendered antagonism and conflict inevitable.⁴⁰ Racial or civilisational conflict was a significant preoccupation of the *fin de siècle* discourse in Britain and the United States, in which confidence in the innate superiority of the English-speaking peoples mingled with a strain of anxiety over the ultimate outcome of competition between races and civilisations. This mix of arrogance and insecurity was fuelled by widespread fears that 'inferior' peoples might prove themselves 'the fittest to survive' in the coming struggle and displace the supposedly decadent and effete white, Western powers.⁴¹

³⁹ Adams, *America's Economic Supremacy*, p.22; Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, p.12; Conant, *The United States in the Orient*, pp.61, 190; A. DeConde, *Ethnicity, Race and American Foreign Policy: A History* (Boston, MA, 1992), p.56; Fitzpatrick, *The Coming Conflict of Nations*, pp.175, 184, 285; Lauren, *Power and Prejudice*, p.67; Mahan, *The Problem of Asia*, p.74; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.82; W. Von Schierbrand, *America, Asia and the Pacific: With Special Reference to the Russo-Japanese War and its Results* (New York, 1904), pp.iii, 64, 302-303.

⁴⁰ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.30-32, 36; R.C. Bannister, *Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought* (Philadelphia, PA, 1979), pp.150, 190; Banton, *The Idea of Race*, pp.89, 92-93; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, pp.180, 197; Boller, *American Thought in Transition*, p.218; J. Bryce, *The Relations of the Advanced and the Backward Races of Men* (Oxford, 1902), pp.27, 29-30; P. Crook, *Darwinism, War and History: The Debate over the Biology of War from the 'Origin of Species' to the First World War* (Cambridge, 1994), p.88; Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race*, pp.23-24; Kidd, *Social Evolution*, pp.37-41; Lauren, *Power and Prejudice*, p.44; Le Bon, *The Psychology of Peoples*, p.233; H. Lea, *The Valor of Ignorance* (New York, 1909), pp.8-10.

⁴¹ B. Adams, *The Law of Civilization and Decay: An Essay on History* (London, 1895), pp.291, 295; Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*, pp.21, 39; C.J. Davis, 'Nation's Nature: "Billy Budd, Sailor"', *Anglo-Saxonism, and the Canon* in R.J. Scott-Childress (ed.), *Race and the Production of Modern American Nationalism* (New York, 1999), p.47; Dilke, *Greater Britain*, vol. 2 pp.59-60; Gossett, *Race*, p.224; P.F. Hall, *Immigration and Its Effects upon the United States* (New York, 1906), p.viii; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, pp.144, 146-147, 172-173; J. Higham, 'The Reorientation of American Culture in the 1890s'

The notion of a coming contest for global supremacy and this latter concern about 'inferior' peoples threatening white, Western hegemony were particularly pertinent as Britain and the United States looked to affairs in East Asia. This region was slated by many observers to be the decisive factor in the future global struggle for dominance because of the vast reservoir of natural resources and people in China, the last great expanse of territory as yet unclaimed by a single imperialist power.⁴² Such predictions, especially in the years immediately surrounding the turn of the twentieth century, were often grounded in the notion of global rivalry between the Anglo-Saxon and Slavic races.⁴³ Increasingly, however, the focus of such forecasts shifted to reflect fears of an awakened Orient rising up to challenge the West for dominance. The spectre of an inevitable conflict between East and West, or between the white and 'yellow' races, was pervasive during these years, and such thinking was stoked by figures such as Kaiser Wilhelm II, who was at least partially responsible for popularising the term 'Yellow Peril'.⁴⁴ This concept was very

in J. Higham and C.J. Guarnei (eds.), *Hanging Together: Unity and Diversity in American Culture* (New Haven, CT, 2001), p.188; Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, p.185; Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, p.79; A. Iriye, *Across the Pacific: An Inner History of American-East Asian Relations* (New York, 1967), pp.58-59; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, p.3; Lea, *The Valor of Ignorance*, pp.42, 44; Lehmann, *The Image of Japan*, p.149; C.H. Pearson, *National Life and Character: A Forecast* (London, 1913 [1893]), pp.32-33, 44, 47-48, 73, 89-90, 361; G.R. Searle, *A New England?: Peace and War, 1886-1918* (Oxford, 2004), p.7; T.W. Thompson, *James Anthony Froude*, p.i; Thomson, Stanley and Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists*, p.105.

⁴² Adams, *America's Economic Supremacy*, pp.vii, 11-12, 22-24, 43, 50-51, 195-196, 222; D.H. Burton, *Theodore Roosevelt: Confident Imperialist* (Philadelphia, PA, 1968), pp.95-97; Colquhoun, *China in Transformation*, pp.ix, 357; G.N. Curzon, *Problems of the Far East* (London, 1894), pp.361-362, 364; C. Denby, *China and Her People: Being the Observations, Reminiscences, and Conclusions of an American Diplomat*, vol. 2 (Boston, MA, 1906), pp.208, 239; Mahan, *The Problem of Asia*, pp.87-88, 131; T.F. Millard, *America and the Far Eastern Question* (New York, 1909), pp.1, 69, 353; B.L. Putnam Weale, *The Coming Struggle in Eastern Asia* (London, 1908), pp.519, 613, 639; R.A. Thompson, *The Yellow Peril*, pp.24, 286; P.A. Varg, *The Making of a Myth: The United States and China, 1897-1912* (East Lansing, MI, 1968), p.18; Von Schierbrand, *America, Asia and the Pacific*, p.200.

⁴³ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.13, 68-72, 93, 150-154, 161-162; Colquhoun, *China in Transformation*, pp.ix, 381-382; Conant, *The United States in the Orient*, pp.60, 180, 186; Gossett, *Race*, p.314; Hosmer, *A Short History of Anglo-Saxon Freedom*, pp.360, 362-363; A. Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement: Japanese and American Expansion, 1897-1911* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), p.70; Von Schierbrand, *America, Asia and the Pacific*, pp.5, 249, 285, 287.

⁴⁴ G. Blue, 'Gobineau on China: Race Theory, the "Yellow Peril" and the Critique of Modernity', *Journal of World History* 10 (1999), pp.126, 133; K. Chang, 'Circulating Race and Empire: Transnational Labor Activism and the Politics of Anti-Asian Agitation in the Anglo-American Pacific World', *Journal of American History* 96 (2009), p.694; R. Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Berkeley, CA, 1962), p.74; D. Glover, 'Die Gelbe Gefahr, le Peril Jaune, the Yellow Peril: The Geopolitics of a Fear' in K.

broad and somewhat vague; the anticipated danger could come either from China or Japan singly or from a unified 'pan-Asian' conglomerate, and might take the form of a military threat, as in 'Asian invasion' stories such as M.P. Shiel's *The Yellow Danger*, but could equally manifest itself in economic competition or even relate merely to the inevitable consequences of a vast and ever-expanding Oriental population.⁴⁵ This latter aspect of the Yellow Peril was probably the one foremost in the minds of British and American leaders, who were faced, and to some extent sympathised, with widespread and fervent opposition to the immigration of Asian

Hebblethwaite and E. McCarthy (eds.), *Fear: Essays on the Meaning and Experience of Fear* (Dublin, 2007), p.49; A. Iikura, 'The Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the Question of Race' in P.P. O'Brien (ed.), *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1902-1922* (London, 2004), pp.222-223; Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, pp.30-31; M. Lake and H. Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge, 2008), pp.93, 188; S.M. Lyman, 'The "Yellow Peril" Mystique: Origins and Vicissitudes of a Racist Discourse', *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 13 (2000), pp.688-689; Millard, *America and the Far Eastern Question*, p.523; L.E. Neame, *The Asiatic Danger in the Colonies* (London, 1907), p.2; R. O'Connor, *Pacific Destiny: An Informal History of the U.S. in the Far East, 1776-1968* (Boston, MA, 1969), pp.243-244, 246-247, 251; G.G. Rupert, *The Yellow Peril, or The Orient vs. the Occident as Viewed by Modern Statesmen and Ancient Prophets* (Britton, OK, 1911), pp.6, 9, 37-38; R.A. Thompson, *The Yellow Peril*, pp.30, 131; M. Townsend, *Asia and Europe* (New York, 1904), pp.ix, 28; J.G. Utley, 'American Views of China, 1900-1915: The Unwelcome but Inevitable Awakening' in J. Goldstein, J. Israel and H. Conroy (eds.), *America Views China: American Images of China Then and Now* (Bethlehem, PA, 1991), pp.114-115.

⁴⁵ S. Auerbach, *Race, Law and "The Chinese Puzzle" in Imperial Britain* (Basingstoke, 2009), p.23; A. Best, 'India, Pan-Asianism and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance' in P.P. O'Brien (ed.), *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1902-1922* (London, 2004), p.237; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, p.68; Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, p.189; A. Iriye, 'Japan as Competitor, 1895-1917' in A. Iriye (ed.), *Mutual Images: Essays in American-Japanese Relations* (Cambridge, MA, 1975), pp.74-76, 78, 91-92; V.G. Kiernan, *The Lords of Human Kind: European Attitudes towards the Outside World in the Imperial Age* (Harmondsworth, 1972), p.177; Lehmann, *The Image of Japan*, pp.150, 172, 176; J. London, 'The Unparalleled Invasion' in J. London (ed.), *The Strength of the Strong* (New York, 1914), pp.75-78, 80-81, 83, 85-86, 88-89; Lyman, 'The "Yellow Peril" Mystique', pp.690, 692, 699; F.A. McKenzie, *The Unveiled East* (New York, 1907), pp.229-230, 317-318; Millard, *America and the Far Eastern Question*, pp.5, 13, 28; Neame, *The Asiatic Danger in the Colonies*, p.91; O'Connor, *Pacific Destiny*, pp.330, 339-340; G.Y. Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle, WA, 1994), p.130; L. Pan, *Sons of the Yellow Emperor: The Story of the Overseas Chinese* (London, 1991), p.97; Pearson, *National Life and Character*, pp.54, 137-138; G. Prince, 'The Yellow Peril in Britain, 1890-1920' (MA Thesis, McGill University, 1987), pp.53, 59-60, 148; E.A. Ross, *The Changing Chinese: The Conflict of Oriental and Western Cultures in China* (New York, 1911), pp.112, 114; M.P. Shiel, *The Yellow Danger* (London, 1898), pp.49, 109, 111-112, 256; R.A. Thompson, *The Yellow Peril*, pp.ii, 36, 63, 76, 80-81, 91, 141, 250, 306, 346-347, 464; W.F. Wu, *The Yellow Peril: Chinese-Americans in American Fiction, 1850-1940* (Hamden, CT, 1982), pp.1-2, 33-35, 39-40, 118-119.

labour on the basis that it was believed to represent a menace to the livelihood, morals, institutions, and culture of the English-speaking peoples.⁴⁶

Just as Anglo-Saxonism was built on a foundation of positive images of the English-speaking peoples, so Yellow Peril ideology relied on, for the most part contrasting, images of East Asians. Though such images did not necessarily have any logical consistency – indeed it was common for people to hold entirely contradictory images of Asians at the same time – they did form an important facet of the shared ideological framework through which British and American people and policymakers understood East Asian affairs.⁴⁷ Moreover, these ‘hetero-stereotypes’ of the East Asian other were an essential counterpart to British and American ‘auto-stereotypes’; the ‘Oriental’, as in many ways the polar opposite of the Anglo-Saxon, represented a key foil against which the English-speaking peoples could define themselves.⁴⁸ Most British and American images and stereotypes of

⁴⁶ Chang, ‘Circulating Race and Empire’, p.685; Denby, *China and Her People*, vol. 2, pp.110-111; A. Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1998), p.3; B. Hornadge, *The Yellow Peril: A Squint at Some Australian Attitudes towards Orientals* (Dubbo, N.S.W., 1971), pp.16, 30; K. Kingsbury, ‘Yellow Peril, Dark Hero: Fu Manchu and the “Gothic Bedevilment” of Racist Intent’ in R.B. Anolik and D.L. Howard (eds.), *The Gothic Other: Racial and Social Constructions in the Literary Imagination* (Jefferson, NC, 2004), p.110; Krenn, *The Color of Empire*, p.54; Lyman, ‘The “Yellow Peril” Mystique’, p.696; G. Marchetti, *Romance and the “Yellow Peril”: Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (Berkeley, CA, 1993), pp.2-3; Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant*, pp.159-162; Neame, *The Asiatic Danger in the Colonies*, pp.2-3, 45, 81-83, 107; W.C. Nicholson, ‘Anglo-Saxonism at the Crossroads: U.S.-Canadian Responses to Japanese Immigration, 1905-1914’ (PhD Thesis, Georgia State University, 2004), p.4; Pearson, *National Life and Character*, pp.131-132; Ross, *The Changing Chinese*, pp.47-48; R.A. Thompson, *The Yellow Peril*, pp.187, 189, 203; Wu, *The Yellow Peril*, p.11.

⁴⁷ Auerbach, *Race, Law and “The Chinese Puzzle”*, p.4; E.A. Glenn, ‘Imperial Yellow: Local Phenomena, Transnational Fears, and the Changing Image of the Chinese in Early Twentieth-Century Britain’ (MA Thesis, University of Utah, 2012), p.2; Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, p.69; H.R. Isaacs, *Scratches on Our Minds: American Views of China and India* (White Plains, NY, 1980), pp.63-64; Lehmann, *The Image of Japan*, p.18; L. Metrick-Chen, ‘Class, Race, Floating Signifier: American Media Imagine the Chinese, 1870-1900’ in R. Kowner and W. Demel (eds.), *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions* (Leiden, 2013), pp.208-209; Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant*, pp.8, 11; Wu, *The Yellow Peril*, p.4.

⁴⁸ Boulding, ‘National Images and International Systems’, p.121; L. Colley, ‘Britishness and Otherness: An Argument’, *Journal of British Studies* 31 (1992), p.311; A.L. Friedberg, *The Weary Titan: Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline, 1895-1905* (Princeton, NJ, 1988), p.282; L. Hearn, *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* (New York, 1907 [1904]), pp.101, 276-278, 419, 479; F. Hilfrich, *Debating American Exceptionalism: Empire and Democracy in the Wake of the Spanish-American War* (New York, 2012), p.59; A. Iriye, ‘Introduction’ in A. Iriye (ed.), *Mutual Images: Essays in American-Japanese Relations* (Cambridge, MA, 1975), p.4; P. Lowell, *The Soul of the Far East* (Boston, MA, 1888), pp.1-3, 14-15; A.L. March, *The Idea of China: Myth and Theory in Geographic Thought*

Orientalism was, unsurprisingly, broadly negative, including stereotyped characteristics such as cruelty, dishonesty, xenophobia, arrogance and immorality.⁴⁹ There were, however, also a number of more positive characteristics, mostly associated specifically with the Japanese, such as industry, resilience, frugality, militancy and loyalty. Though these qualities were at times admired, they were also, in the context of Yellow Peril fears, often viewed in a more threatening light as enhancing the ability of East Asians to compete with and challenge the Anglo-Saxon powers.⁵⁰

Though the above summary is necessarily very broad-brush and neither as comprehensive nor as nuanced as such a complex topic deserves, it does not fall within the scope of this study to go beyond this brief precis of the shared British-American ideological framework or 'community of sentiment'. In particular, it is not

(Newton Abbot, 1974), pp.23, 35; R.H. Minear, 'Cross-Cultural Perceptions and World War II: American Japanists of the 1940s and Their Images of Japan', *International Studies Quarterly* 24 (1980), p.556; M.V. Nayak and C. Malone, 'American Orientalism and American Exceptionalism: A Critical Rethinking of U.S. Hegemony', *International Studies Review* 11 (2009), p.256; Putnam Weale, *The Coming Struggle in Eastern Asia*, p.335; A.H. Smith, *Chinese Characteristics* (Shanghai, 1890), pp.13, 55-56, 74; Snyder and Diesing, *Conflict Among Nations*, p.286; Townsend, *Asia and Europe*, pp.ix, xi, 28-29, 33.

⁴⁹ Auerbach, *Race, Law and "The Chinese Puzzle"*, p.18; Bickers, *Britain in China*, pp.23, 53; Chirol, *The Far Eastern Question*, pp.7, 19; Colquhoun, *China in Transformation*, p.34; Curzon, *Problems of the Far East*, pp.4, 53, 321; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, p.36; Denby, *China and Her People*, vol. 2, p.89; W.E. Griffis, *The Mikado's Empire* (New York, 1890 [1876]), pp.349, 596; Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, pp.109-110; Kiernan, *The Lords of Human Kind*, p.187; Lehmann, *The Image of Japan*, p.48; Lowell, *The Soul of the Far East*, p.176; C. Mackerras, *Western Images of China* (Oxford, 1989), p.51; McKenzie, *The Unveiled East*, pp.12, 165, 224; Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant*, pp.26, 29, 55; T.G. Otte, "'A Very Great Gulf': Late Victorian British Diplomacy and Race in East Asia" in R. Kowner and W. Demel (eds.), *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions* (Leiden, 2013), pp.137-138; A.H. Smith, *Chinese Characteristics*, pp.124-125, 220, 268-270; R.A. Thompson, *The Yellow Peril*, pp.190, 213, 221-222.

⁵⁰ Auerbach, *Race, Law and "The Chinese Puzzle"*, pp.24, 30; E. Boime, "'Beating Plowshares into Swords": The Colorado River Delta, the Yellow Peril, and the Movement for Federal Reclamation, 1901-1928', *Pacific Historical Review* 78 (2009), p.39; Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*, p.199; Colquhoun, *China in Transformation*, pp.71, 252; J.R. Commons, *Races and Immigrants in America* (New York, 1916 [1907]), p.131; R.G. Forman, 'Peking Plots: Fictionalizing the Boxer Rebellion of 1900', *Victorian Literature and Culture* 27 (1999), pp.40-41; N. Harris, 'All the World a Melting Pot? Japan at American Fairs, 1876-1904' in A. Iriye (ed.), *Mutual Images: Essays in American-Japanese Relations* (Cambridge, MA, 1975), p.51; Hearn, *Japan*, pp.198, 311; C. Holmes, *John Bull's Island: Immigration and British Society, 1871-1971* (Basingstoke, 1988), pp.77-78; Lea, *The Valor of Ignorance*, pp.183, 228, 243; Ross, *The Changing Chinese*, pp.33-34, 39-40, 42, 46-47; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, pp.xii, xiv; E.R. Scidmore, *Jinrikisha Days in Japan* (New York, 1902 [1891]), p.45; A.H. Smith, *Chinese Characteristics*, pp.36, 115, 117, 185-186; Von Schierbrand, *America, Asia and the Pacific*, p.91.

possible, nor indeed wholly desirable, to examine in detail the individual ideological leanings of the various key policymakers discussed in the chapters which follow. Not only have scholars already undertaken this task for a number of the major figures but, as suggested above with regard to Stuart Anderson's work on Anglo-Saxonism, this approach does not in itself necessarily offer useful insights into the influence of ideology on policy and international interaction.⁵¹ Moreover, the intention of this study is not simply to assess the significance of ideological factors in British-American interaction over East Asia, either in isolation or in comparison to more tangible interests. Rather, the aim is to consider these two aspects of the question in tandem, with a view to a more holistic understanding of relations between the two powers.

By giving roughly equal weight to both interests and ideology and dealing with the two alongside one another, it is hoped that this study avoids the pitfalls either of relegating ideology to the status of simple irrationality or mere mask for concrete interests, or of reifying ideology so that it is treated as significant in and of itself regardless of its actual influence on policy and decision-making.⁵² Moreover, there is a strong case to be made that it is not fruitful to consider ideas and interests as separate or competing factors because of the importance of the way they impact on each other, in other words the interplay between the two.⁵³

⁵¹ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.82-84, 87-89; Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race*, pp.9-11, 14-16, 21; E. Ions, *James Bryce and American Democracy, 1870-1922* (London, 1968), pp.169-170, 181-182; Mock, 'The Function of 'Race' in Imperialist Ideologies', pp.193, 195, 197-198; Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy*, pp.20, 22, 28-29, 33-34, 39-41.

⁵² V. Depkat, 'Cultural Approaches to International Relations' in J.C.E. Gienow-Hecht and F. Schumacher (eds.), *Culture and International History* (New York, 2004), pp.176-177, 181-182, 188-189; Hunt, 'Ideology', p.225; Kelman, 'Social-Psychological Approaches to the Study of International Relations', p.5; R. Little and S. Smith, 'Introduction' in R. Little and S. Smith (eds.), *Belief Systems and International Relations* (Oxford, 1988), pp.2-5; J.P. Lovell, 'The United States as Ally and Adversary in East Asia: Reflections on Culture and Foreign Policy' in J. Chay (ed.), *Culture and International Relations* (New York, 1990), p.90; J. MacLean, 'Belief Systems and Ideology in International Relations: A Critical Approach' in R. Little and S. Smith (eds.), *Belief Systems and International Relations* (Oxford, 1988), p.70.

⁵³ Darby, *Three Faces of Imperialism*, pp.5-6; M. Frey, 'Gender, Tropes, and Images: A Commentary' in J.C.E. Gienow-Hecht and F. Schumacher (eds.), *Culture and International History* (New York, 2004), p.216; R. Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ, 1976), p.9; A.J. Rotter, 'Saidism without Said: Orientalism and U.S. Diplomatic History', *American Historical Review* 105 (2000), p.1214; A. Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, 1999), pp.111-112.

Numerous historians and theorists have argued that ideology plays an essential role in the process by which policymakers assess and define national interests, contending that far from being self-evident these interests are the product of judgements which are inevitably coloured by perceptions, assumptions and beliefs.⁵⁴ For example, Thomas Otte has suggested that Anglo-Saxonist ideology, though perhaps not a causal factor in itself, served to reinforce the 'cooler calculations of British interests' in the formulation of policy towards the United States.⁵⁵ The other side of the coin is that tangible interests can have an influence on ideology, most obviously in the realm of national images. During the period with which this study is concerned, British and American images of and attitudes towards other nations shifted in line with changes in the international situation. So, when Japan became primarily a competitor rather than a partner in East Asia, positive images of the Japanese faded into the background as negative ones emerged and came to the fore.⁵⁶

The approach of addressing interests and ideology together does not require any great methodological innovation. As Marc Frey has pointed out, one of the peccadillos of many historians who work with ideas and images is to foreground theory and methodology, implying that their scholarship represents a new departure, before going on to undertake traditional diplomatic history anyway.⁵⁷ With that critique in mind, this study unabashedly follows a fairly standard

⁵⁴ Darby, *Three Faces of Imperialism*, p.19; J. De Rivera, *The Psychological Dimension of Foreign Policy* (Columbus, OH, 1968), p.17; Friedberg, *The Weary Titan*, pp.14-15; Heimsath, 'The American Images of India', p.272; W.L. Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT, 2008), p.5; O.R. Holsti, 'Theories of International Relations' in M.J. Hogan and T.G. Paterson (eds.), *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, 2004), pp.68-69; Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, p.16; Lauren, *Power and Prejudice*, pp.33-34; E.P. Skinner, 'Ethnicity and Race as Factors in the Formation of United States Foreign Policy' in M.P. Hamilton (ed.), *American Character and Foreign Policy* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1986), p.94; Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, pp.1, 24-25, 78, 94, 96, 124, 135.

⁵⁵ T.G. Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge, 2011), p.404.

⁵⁶ Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*, p.xii; Henning, *Outposts of Civilization*, p.145; Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, p.77; Iriye, 'Introduction', pp.19-20; Iriye, *Across the Pacific*, pp.28, 117-118; Mackerras, *Western Images of China*, p.87; Otte, "A Very Great Gulf", pp.129, 140-142; Smedley, *Race in North America*, p.17; Thomson, Stanley and Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists*, p.144.

⁵⁷ Frey, 'Gender, Tropes, and Images', pp.215-216, 218.

framework for diplomatic history, relying primarily on the official and personal source material generated by the policymaking elite of Britain and the United States to investigate the decision-making process behind each power's policy in East Asia and the direct interaction between the two powers with regard to the various issues and crises that arose in the region.

Specifically, the raw material in which the study is grounded is the documentary record of the major actors in both governments – presidents and secretaries of state on the American side, prime ministers and foreign secretaries on the British – as well as some of the subordinate figures within each country's foreign policy establishment, such as diplomats in East Asian nations and key officials in the Foreign Office and State Department. In light of the particular focus on the interaction and communication between Britain and the United States, the study also draws heavily on the papers of various men who served as ambassador in Washington or London during this period, most prominently Whitelaw Reid and James Bryce. These sources are very much the stuff of high policymaking, and although the study does draw on a broad pool of sources relating to the cultural background of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century – as in the above survey of the British-American 'community of sentiment' – it follows the lead of Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher in considering these primarily through the prism of the 'official mind'. This entails focusing chiefly on how the ideas and images contained within such sources were mediated in the deliberations of policymakers, rather than attempting to ascribe significance or influence to them independently of their role in informing how policy was made and communicated between the two powers. This approach also informs the emphasis throughout the study on internal discussions of policy and the actual interaction between British and American policymakers, as opposed to the broader political record or the public pronouncements of the major actors. As Robinson and Gallagher have persuasively argued, the former categories of sources offer a much more direct insight into the motivations and priorities of policymakers as well as the ideological and material

influences on the policymaking process, and it is with questions relating to these issues which this study is primarily concerned.⁵⁸

Though the major focus of the study is thus on the official side of British-American relations, the chapters which follow also draw on private correspondence to reflect the fact that a vital element of interaction between the two powers during this period was the employment of personal diplomacy and informal channels. Regardless of how far one accepts the notion of a 'special relationship' at the level of practical politics, there is no question that the years between 1898 and 1914 represent a high watermark in personal relationships and correspondence between significant figures in the two nations. During the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt in particular, informal and semi-official envoys acted as an essential supplement to British-American communication at the official level.⁵⁹ A variety of figures, including U.S. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Conservative MP Arthur Lee and Canadian politician William Lyon Mackenzie King, acted as intermediaries between the two powers, and it is often in these more off-the-record interactions that the greatest degree of openness and candour is to be found. The wealth of personal and informal correspondence in British-American interaction during these years is particularly useful from the point of view of exploring the influence of shared ideology. Communication in such contexts was generally less constrained by formality than the official dialogue, not least because both powers published the majority of their formal diplomatic exchanges and were thus understandably circumspect about the contents of, and the terminology used in, these messages.

In order to assess the role of ideas and images in British-American interaction, the study pays particular attention to the language which policymakers

⁵⁸ R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London, 1981), pp.19-23, 26, 463, 472.

⁵⁹ M. Frewen to Lord Lansdowne, September 16th 1901, Add MS 49727, Arthur Balfour Papers, British Library Manuscript Collections, London [hereafter Balfour MS]; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, pp.131-132, 134-136; N.M. Blake, 'England and the United States, 1897-1899' in D.E. Lee and G.E. McReynolds (eds.), *Essays in History and International Relations: In Honor of George Hubbard Blakeslee* (Worcester, MA, 1949), p.276; D.H. Burton, *British-American Diplomacy, 1895-1917: Early Years of the Special Relationship* (Malabar, FL, 1999), pp.6, 48, 65; Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century*, p.11; Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire*, pp.16, 23.

and other actors employed. This is not simply a matter of identifying ideological content or terminology relating to race and civilisation in communications, as it is also necessary to delve into questions of why and how such language was used. It is incredibly difficult, if not impossible in many cases, for the historian to delineate where ideology acted as a motivating factor in a given policymaker's decisions and where it served primarily as justification or rationalisation of choices made on entirely separate grounds. To put it another way, there is no reliable means to determine whether an actor's employment of ideological language was 'representational', in that it expressed genuine personal beliefs, or 'instrumental', in that it was intended to achieve a particular impact.⁶⁰ In consequence, this study does not dwell at any length on efforts to assess how sincere British and American policymakers were in their expression of ideas relating to race and civilisation, but focuses rather on the issue of what precise 'function' these ideas performed in interaction between the two powers.⁶¹ An understanding of how and to what end key actors engaged with ideology is essential to addressing the question of to what extent the 'community of sentiment' played a role in facilitating cooperation between Britain and the United States in East Asia.

This question is significant because, as indicated above, the central contention of this study is that in spite of a reasonably substantial basis both in shared ideology and shared interests, Britain and the United States did not ultimately cooperate in East Asia on any significant scale. It is worth noting that the term 'cooperation' is used throughout the study to refer specifically to active and, usually though not necessarily, overt coordinated activity, whereby either the two powers agreed on a common policy or one power acted on the request of the other. This definition of cooperation does not include instances where the two powers arrived independently at similar or parallel policies, nor does it include the sharing

⁶⁰ Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*, pp.217-218; G.W. Hoppole, 'Elite Values and Foreign Policy Analysis: Preliminary Findings' in L.S. Falkowski (ed.), *Psychological Models in International Politics* (Boulder, CO, 1979), pp.242-243; Kinder and Weiss, 'In Lieu of Rationality', p.726; J. Rosenau, *Race and International Politics: A Dialogue in Five Parts* (Denver, CO, 1970), p.4; S.M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY, 1987), p.39.

⁶¹ Mock, 'The Function of 'Race' in Imperialist Ideologies', pp.190, 194-200.

of information between the powers in the course of ordinary diplomatic interchange, though both of these represent important steps in the direction of a cooperative approach. With this in mind, the major preoccupation of the chapters which follow is to explain why joint action between the powers for the most part failed to materialise despite the apparently propitious conditions. The remainder of this introduction lays the groundwork for this enquiry, setting out the key trends which the study identifies and the lines of argument it will trace.

With regard to common interests, the major finding of the study is that Britain and the United States were each subject to an overarching concern which they tended to prioritise over the interests which they shared in East Asia. In other words, though a community of interests did exist, it was often more or less nullified by one or both of the powers deferring to other pressures and constraints on their policymaking. On the American side, the key consideration for policymakers was the domestic political situation, which imposed a number of limitations on their freedom of action. In consequence of the nature of the American political system and the role of Congress in particular, U.S. foreign policy was necessarily more responsive to popular opinion than that of the other great powers, including Britain. Policymakers were not always in a position to act on perceived national interests in peripheral areas such as East Asia to the extent, or in the manner, they wished for fear of exciting popular hostility and thereby risking electoral defeat or being hamstrung by Congressional objections. In particular, reflexive Anglophobia remained a potent, if gradually declining, force in the U.S. political scene. For example, Marc-William Palen's recent work on the transatlantic debate over tariff policy has demonstrated the extent to which American economic nationalists mistrusted London's intentions, even denouncing British advocacy of free trade as a 'conspiracy' designed to undermine the fast-growing economy of the United States and render the nation subordinate to Britain.⁶² In view of the persistence of such ingrained suspicion and hostility towards the British, American policymakers were

⁶² Palen, *The Conspiracy of Free Trade*, pp.xv, 183-184, 267; M-W. Palen, 'Foreign Relations in the Gilded Age: A British Free-Trade Conspiracy?', *Diplomatic History* 37 (2013), pp.217, 240; Palen, 'The Imperialism of Economic Nationalism', p.166.

disposed to be wary of overtly aligning themselves with Britain, even if this was desirable or necessary for attaining their goals in East Asia.⁶³

Whereas the American perspective was thus somewhat parochial, the British outlook was decidedly global in scope. In addition to relying heavily on worldwide commerce for its prosperity, Britain's fortunes were intrinsically linked to the welfare and integrity of the Empire. British policy in East Asia was therefore to a large extent subordinate to the broader imperatives of imperial and global policy, and policymakers consistently viewed events in the region through this lens rather than in isolation.⁶⁴ This consideration was particularly significant during the period covered by this study because Britain was subject to acute 'overstretch', attempting to balance limited resources with an expansive catalogue of demands throughout the world. In consequence, British policymakers were forced to carefully prioritise, with East Asia generally relegated to a position of lesser importance in their calculations, and to rely increasingly heavily on relationships with other powers in order to maintain the requisite global reach.⁶⁵

In addition to directly impacting on the extent to which Britain and the United States were able to freely pursue their common interests, these two overarching considerations – domestic politics for the Americans and global policy needs for the British – also contributed to several discernible trends which further

⁶³ M. Beloff, *The Great Powers: Essays in Twentieth Century Politics* (Westport, CT, 1959), p.228; F.R. Dulles, 'John Hay' in N.A. Graebner (ed.), *An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1961), pp.26, 28; Graebner, 'The Year of Transition', p.15; Ions, *James Bryce and American Democracy*, p.205; Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism*, p.188; C.J. Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists: British Foreign Policy, 1878-1902* (London, 1967), pp.232-233; McCormick, *China Market*, p.158; Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism*, pp.127-128, 170-171.

⁶⁴ A.E. Campbell, 'Great Britain and the United States in the Far East', *Historical Journal* 1 (1958), p.155; B. Porter, *Britain, Europe and the World, 1850-1986: Delusions of Grandeur* (London, 1987), p.79; Z.S. Steiner, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914* (Cambridge, 1969), p.107.

⁶⁵ M. Beloff, *Britain's Liberal Empire, 1897-1921* (Basingstoke, 1987), p.100; Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America*, p.340; A.E. Campbell, *Great Britain and the United States*, p.167; E.W. Edwards, 'British Policy in China, 1913-1914: Rivalry with France in the Yangtze Valley', *Journal of Oriental Studies* 15 (1977), p.20; J.A.S. Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy: The Close of the Nineteenth Century* (London 1964), p.130; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, pp.89, 102; P. Kennedy, *The Realities Behind Diplomacy: Background Influences on British External Policy, 1865-1980* (London, 1985), pp.34-35; Porter, *Britain, Europe and the World*, pp.56-57, 60, 71-72; T. Smith, *The Pattern of Imperialism: The United States, Great Britain, and the Late-Industrializing World since 1815* (Cambridge, 1981), p.36.

limited the potential for joint action between the two powers in East Asia. The first of these is a shared preference for passivity in East Asian affairs, with both Britain and the United States exhibiting a pronounced tendency to eschew an active role in the region as far as possible. A.E. Campbell has gone as far as to suggest that the limited cooperation between Britain and the United States in East Asia resulted not so much from an aversion to joint action specifically, but from a mutual rejection of active involvement more generally: 'Britain and the United States shared not only the same interests, but the same reluctance to defend them.'⁶⁶ This common predisposition towards passivity was not the product of any coordination or agreement between the two powers, but rather flowed, at least in part, from their separate overarching concerns. British policymakers favoured a policy of minimal commitment in East Asia chiefly because they were otherwise occupied with a number of crises elsewhere in the world and already working under the constraints of limited resources.⁶⁷ Likewise, U.S. activism in East Asia was effectively precluded by popular apathy and the political risks of becoming embroiled in a region which was not, to all appearances, in any way vital to the national interest.⁶⁸

The second ancillary trend which the study highlights is a distinct mismatch in the two powers' hopes and expectations for cooperation. It was not simply that one power consistently sought cooperation while the other was averse to it, though the British were admittedly much more positive about the general principle of a transatlantic partnership, but rather that the two were often at odds over the kind of joint action they sought to orchestrate. American policymakers, guided by a tradition of isolationism and wary of the deep popular mistrust of 'foreign entanglements', almost exclusively favoured short-term, limited cooperation directed at very specific objectives. British policymakers, by contrast, hoped to

⁶⁶ A.E. Campbell, 'Great Britain and the United States in the Far East', p.167; A.E. Campbell, 'The United States and Great Britain', p.488.

⁶⁷ E.W. Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China, 1895-1914* (Oxford, 1987), p.17; P. Lowe, *Britain in the Far East: A Survey from 1819 to the Present* (London, 1981), p.67.

⁶⁸ W.I. Cohen, *America's Response to China: An Interpretive History of Sino-American Relations* (New York, 1980), pp.48, 58; Thomson, Stanley and Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists*, p.141; M.B. Young, 'American Expansion 1870-1900: The Far East' in B.J. Bernstein (ed.), *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History* (London, 1970), p.186.

secure a longer-term and more comprehensive united front in East Asia, in line with their broader objective of sharing the load of their global responsibilities.⁶⁹ This disjuncture represented a consistent barrier to cooperation, as the British tended to judge American proposals for joint action to be too narrow, while the Americans shied away from what they saw as overly extensive British schemes. The incompatible approaches and expectations of the two powers also account for much of the friction which developed between them with regard to East Asia.

A final trend which runs through the study is the difference in the extent of the two powers' investment in East Asia. The British were responsible for the vast majority of the commerce in China and, though the region was never especially high on the Foreign Office's list of priorities, Britain therefore had a significant amount to lose in East Asia. The Americans, on the other hand, had very little at stake in practical terms, their interest in the markets of East Asia being largely a matter of future possibilities rather than immediate, tangible realities.⁷⁰ The significant gap in the respective stakes of the two powers did not negate the essential similarity of their interests, but the disparity often engendered a difference in perspective which could present a barrier to effective cooperation. The British, driven in part by their reliance on global trade, were keen to ensure that broader regional goals were achieved in a way that did not overly disadvantage their commercial interests. The Americans had no such concerns, and were thus inclined to emphasise abstract principles at the expense of practical details, not least because this approach played better from a domestic political point of view.

While the overarching concerns of British global policy needs and American domestic political constraints, along with the attendant trends described above, go

⁶⁹ R.H. Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt, Culture, Diplomacy and Expansion: A New View of American Imperialism* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1985), p.167; Crapol, 'From Anglophobia to Fragile Rapprochement', p.27; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.56; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, pp.13-14; McCormick, *China Market*, p.136; L.A. McGeoch, 'Lord Lansdowne and the American Impact on British Diplomacy, 1900-1905', *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 7 (1981), pp.13, 16.

⁷⁰ Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, p.150; Cohen, *America's Response to China*, pp.43-44; L.K. Young, *British Policy in China, 1895-1902* (Oxford, 1970), p.2; M.B. Young, 'American Expansion', p.180.

some way towards accounting for the failure of the two powers to cooperate in East Asia, further investigation is required to explain why the shared British-American ideological framework proved ineffective in motivating the powers to overcome obstacles to joint action. The various ideological constructs which have already been detailed – not only Anglo-Saxonism but also the Yellow Peril and other stereotyped images of East Asian peoples – were not only hugely significant in the popular discourse over events and issues relating to East Asia, but also undoubtedly influential, at least on some level, among the key policymakers of both countries. The reality, however, is that this kind of thinking does not appear to have played a significant role in British-American interaction over East Asia; there is an overwhelming lack of evidence in the documentary record for the influence of ideas of race and civilisation. The sparsity of ideological content in communication between the two powers and in their internal policy discussions, though certainly a compelling explanation for the failure of the ‘community of sentiment’ to bring about cooperation in East Asia, is very surprising given the broader context in which British-American interaction took place, and thus bears further examination.

The study puts forward several key contentions regarding the lack of shared racial or civilisational ideology in British-American interaction. The first is that ideological motivations for joint action in East Asia were not only in short supply, but were actually less prominent in British and American policymakers’ thinking than negative images of one another’s national character which, if anything, worked to the detriment of the cause of cooperation. On the American side, the basic image of the British as an opponent of liberty had never completely faded, and although popular Anglophobia did not permeate official circles to any great extent, there remained among American policymakers a definite suspicion of Britain as at heart self-interested, imperialistic and thoroughly ‘old world’. Another aspect of the American image of British character was the notion that the people of Britain were irresolute and ‘flabby’, lacking the backbone to take action and get their hands

dirty.⁷¹ Interestingly, this latter aspersion was actually reflected back to some extent in British images of the Americans and their conduct of foreign policy. A common belief among British policymakers and officials was that the Americans were prone to manoeuvring other powers into doing their dirty work whilst hypocritically claiming the moral high-ground. The British also had a somewhat condescending image of the upstart Americans as vain, brash and impulsive, and they thus held their approach to foreign policy in disdain as unreliable and fundamentally half-baked.⁷² Such images, while not exactly conflicting with or cancelling out shared ideas which were conducive to partnership in East Asia, undoubtedly complicated the ideological picture with regard to cooperation and occasionally contributed to the development of friction between the powers.

The other contentions which the study sets out represent an attempt to account for the dearth of ideas of race and civilisation in British-American interaction. There are obvious limitations as to how far it is possible to draw definite inferences from an absence of evidence, and so the conclusions of the study on this point are necessarily somewhat tentative, but the sporadic instances where shared ideology does make an appearance point towards two significant lines of argument. The first is that British and American policymakers were in the habit of deliberately avoiding or downplaying ideas relating to race and civilisation. Though it is of course impossible to prove with any consistency that the absence of ideology was a product of conscious decisions to avoid referring to it, there is certainly evidence to suggest that in some instances policymakers opted to steer clear of ideological arguments for tactical reasons. The notion of tactical

⁷¹ C.S. Campbell, *Anglo-American Understanding*, p.1; W. Clark, *Less Than Kin: A Study of Anglo-American Relations* (London, 1957), pp.48, 59, 71; J.G. Cook, *Anglophobia: An Analysis of Anti-British Prejudice in the United States* (Boston, MA, 1919), pp.81, 88; E.P. Crapol, *America for Americans: Economic Nationalism and Anglophobia in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Westport, CT, 1973), pp.14-16, 222, 226; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.270; A.C. Turner, *The Unique Partnership: Britain and the United States* (New York, 1971), pp.38, 47.

⁷² H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 8th 1904, FO 800/144, The National Archives, Kew [hereafter TNA]; H.M. Durand to E. Grey, December 28th 1906, FO 371/357/874, TNA; Beloff, *Britain's Liberal Empire*, p.169; A.E. Campbell, *Great Britain and the United States*, pp.193-194; Crapol, *America for Americans*, p.192; M.H. Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door: Manchuria in Chinese-American Relations, 1895-1911* (New Haven, CT, 1973), p.142; Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.273; Turner, *The Unique Partnership*, pp.44-45; Watt, *Succeeding John Bull*, p.27.

employment and avoidance of ideology has been discussed by Fabian Hilfrich in relation to the American imperialism debate of the late nineteenth century. He makes the case that campaigners on both sides of this dispute utilised racial rhetoric when it appeared to serve their agenda, but were quick to abandon it if it seemed to in any way undermine their claims or play into the hands of their opponents.⁷³ A similar dynamic appears to have been at work in British-American interaction over East Asia. Key actors very occasionally employed ideological arguments with a view to achieving a particular impact or purpose, but far more often they shied away from overtly ideological reasoning and language – usually by emphasising more ideologically-neutral aspects of the issue or openly rejecting a given idea – because they deemed it unwise or inappropriate.

A prime example of policymakers tactically playing down ideological influences during this period is the deliberate soft-peddling, by the British in particular, of Anglo-Saxonist ideas of British-American unity and shared destiny. Arthur Lee, in correspondence with Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge in July 1900, expressed his strong desire to assist in the cultivation of good relations between Britain and the United States for the sake of the future of the Anglo-Saxon race, but also acknowledged that this required a ‘silent-working and tactful’ approach and could not be done through ‘brass-band methods’.⁷⁴ Roosevelt appears to have shared these sentiments, commenting in a letter to Lee shortly after he became Vice-President, in March 1901, on the desirability of growing closeness between the nations and the inadvisability of adopting ‘hothouse methods’ in order to bring this about.⁷⁵ A more explicit expression of this kind of thinking is found in a letter of 1905 from British Prime Minister Arthur Balfour to

⁷³ Hilfrich, *Debating American Exceptionalism*, pp.42, 54-55, 74; P. Kennedy, ‘The Pre-War Right in Britain and Germany’ in P. Kennedy and A. Nicholls (eds.), *Nationalist and Racist Movements in Britain and Germany before 1914* (Oxford, 1981), p.6.

⁷⁴ A. Lee to T. Roosevelt, July 19th 1900, Reel 6, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Roosevelt MS]; A. Lee to H.C. Lodge, July 25th 1900, Reel 14, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA [hereafter Lodge MS].

⁷⁵ T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, March 18th 1901 in E.E. Morison (ed.), *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, MA, 1951-1954) [hereafter *Roosevelt Letters*], vol. 3, pp.19-21.

the departing American Ambassador, Joseph Choate, which also offers an indication of the reasoning behind this preference for a more subtle handling of the issue of British-American closeness:

I have always been careful to make my words, strong though they have been, less strong than my convictions, for (as it seems to me) the feeling that the two great co-heirs of Anglo-Saxon freedom and civilisation have a common mission, has more quickly developed on this side of the Atlantic than on the other, - at least, among the general mass of the population, and that there is therefore some danger lest phrases which are suitable enough in Great Britain may seem excessive in America, and may excite, not sympathy, but suspicion or ridicule. There is, in truth, an element of sentiment in the views which I, and many others, hold on this subject which supplies an easy mark for criticism.⁷⁶

Balfour's admission of deliberately understating his Anglo-Saxonist beliefs indicates a recognition on his part that it was the overtly ideological nature of such opinions, the 'element of sentiment', which made them potentially dangerous and likely to provoke hostility in the United States.⁷⁷ The approach taken by Balfour, and also by Lee and Roosevelt, thus represents striking evidence for the tactical avoidance of ideology; Anglo-Saxonist ideas were handled with care on the basis that they had the potential to be counterproductive if utilised too freely.

Balfour's letter to Choate is, quite evidently, a very candid discussion of Anglo-Saxonist thinking, which obviously demonstrates that such ideas were not entirely taboo in British-American interaction. The context of these comments is significant, however, as not only was Choate about to leave his post as Ambassador but Balfour's letter was also predominantly personal and written with no particular political agenda in mind. The letter is in this way indicative of the kind of context in which, this study argues, the relatively rare examples of racial or civilisational ideology tend to be found. When such ideas do crop up, it is usually in communications which are outside of the mainstream of official or even semi-official interaction between the two governments, such as personal correspondence between policymakers and more peripheral figures. Moreover, while there are

⁷⁶ A. Balfour to J. Choate, June 1st 1905, Add MS 49742, Balfour MS.

⁷⁷ Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy*, p.176.

some examples of the employment of ideology in more abstract or speculative exchanges about East Asia or British-American relations in general, they are incredibly uncommon in direct discussions of opportunities for joint action in the region. The final contention of this study with regard to the absence of ideology in British-American interaction over East Asia is thus that policymakers recognised a distinction between more official and functional contexts, in which ideological language was generally avoided, and more informal and abstract contexts, in which it was more acceptable.

The various arguments and trends outlined above are explored in more detail, and with reference to concrete examples, in the chapters which follow. Taken together they represent a multi-faceted, though not necessarily comprehensive, answer to the overarching question of why Britain and the United States failed to cooperate in East Asia in spite of communities both of interest and of ideology. In this way, the study contributes to the broader debate over the nature of the British-American rapprochement, complicating the simplistic narrative of harmonious cooperation between the two powers during this period.

Chapter 1

China under Siege, 1898-1901

The years immediately surrounding the turn of the twentieth century witnessed the blossoming of cordiality between Britain and the United States; in 1898 the British people celebrated the 4th of July as a show of solidarity with the United States, then at war with Spain, and on both sides of the Atlantic there appeared societies promoting more intimate friendship between the nations.¹ During these same years, China was undergoing a time of serious turmoil in consequence of imperialist encroachments from outside and anti-foreign rebellion from within. In theory, the unprecedented degree of goodwill in British-American relations should have been reflected in a cooperative approach to these problems, but the two powers' interaction over East Asia at this point signally failed to live up to this ideal. Instead, Britain and the United States pursued at best parallel policies, and occasionally even found themselves at odds over the best approach to take to the China question.

This chapter makes the case that the major obstacle to cooperation between Britain and the United States through the key events of this period – the scramble for concessions, the Open Door notes and the Boxer Rising – was the constraint placed on American policymakers by domestic politics. Popular Anglophobia, not to mention an aversion to collaboration with other powers more generally, not only discouraged American policymakers from joint action with Britain in pursuit of common goals but actually incentivised them to artificially distance their policy from that of the British. British policymakers were far more open to working with the United States in East Asia but were at times constrained

¹ S. Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement: Anglo-Saxonism and Anglo-American Relations, 1895-1904* (East Brunswick, NJ, 1981), pp.112, 116, 119-120; B. Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement: England and the United States, 1895-1914* (London, 1969), pp.311, 313; M. Tate, 'Hawaii: A Symbol of Anglo-American Rapprochement', *Political Science Quarterly* 79 (1964), pp.572-573; J. Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy: The International Thought of a Conservative Statesman* (Cambridge, 1997), p.181.

by the need to preserve their substantial commercial stake in China. This consideration would occasionally put them at cross purposes with the Americans, who had very little to lose commercially, even though their broader interests were very similar.

The British-American community of interests in East Asia was bolstered by an ideological case for joint action; China was viewed by some as the prime spot for the development of a united front of the Anglo-Saxon nations against the advancement of Slavic power. This chapter demonstrates, however, that ideas such as this were almost entirely absent from the interaction between London and Washington. Similarly, popular stereotypes of the Chinese were markedly rare in official discourse and appear to have been less influential amongst British and American policymakers than negative images of one another, which tended to emerge in moments of friction between the powers. Though the reasons behind the comparative lack of shared ideology relating to race and civilisation in British-American interaction are not entirely clear, this chapter contends that a key factor was policymakers' deliberate avoidance of ideas which had the potential to court controversy either at home or in East Asia.

Though the focus of this chapter is on the years from 1898 onwards, arguably the more significant turning point for East Asian affairs was actually the denouement of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895. This conflict had launched the Japanese onto the world stage and demonstrated the extent of their progress, dramatically dispelling any doubt as to whether the 'backwards' nations of the East could successfully adopt the technology and methods of modern civilisation. Japan's victory spelled disaster for China, however, as the fragility of the Imperial Government and the inability of the Chinese to back up their territorial claims were starkly revealed.² China's weakened position caught the attention of the various

² V. Chirol, *The Far Eastern Question* (London, 1896), pp.v-vi, 9, 62-63; E.W. Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China, 1895-1914* (Oxford, 1987), pp.3-4; C.J. Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists: British Foreign Policy, 1878-1902* (London, 1967), p.228; T.G. Otte, 'The Boxer Uprising and British Foreign Policy: The End of Isolation' in R. Bickers and R.G. Tiedemann (eds.), *The Boxers*,

Western powers with commercial interests in the Empire, with several among them, most notably Russia, seeking to exploit the frailty of the Manchu dynasty in the hope of gaining commercial advantages and even territorial concessions. Though such encroachments on Chinese sovereignty would have been minor in themselves, they foreboded the incremental parcelling out of the country amongst the imperialist powers, either informally by means of exclusive 'spheres of interest' or more terminally in a partition along colonial lines.³ The apparently imminent possibility of the break-up of the vast expanse of the Chinese Empire provided a rich vein of material for prophets of a coming clash of civilisations, with numerous writers in the years prior to the turn of the twentieth century warning that on the fate of China could hang the entire course of the world's future. Specifically, British and American observers not infrequently portrayed the competition for markets and influence in essentially racial terms as a pivotal face-off in the global-historical conflict of Anglo-Saxon against Slav.⁴

In this precarious situation, Britain and the United States found their interests more or less aligned as they shared the same fundamental aims of preserving the regional status quo and averting partition. Both powers stood to gain more commercially by open competition for trade throughout China – a situation summed up by the commonly-used phrase, 'a fair field and no favour' – than by an arrangement predicated on distinct spheres of interest. They therefore stood for the maintenance of all entitlements gained by treaty and in opposition to the assumption by the other powers of any special privileges, particularly such as

China, and the World (Lanham, MD, 2007), p.158; J.C. Thomson, Jr., P.W. Stanley and J.C. Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists: The American Experience in East Asia* (New York, 1981), p.125.

³ C.S. Campbell, *Special Business Interests and the Open Door Policy* (New Haven, CT, 1951), p.25; Chirol, *The Far Eastern Question*, pp.66, 185-188; G.E. Hubbard, *British Far Eastern Policy* (New York, 1943), p.19; T.G. Otte, *The China Question: Great Power Rivalry and British Isolation, 1894-1905* (Oxford, 2007), pp.1-2, 15.

⁴ B. Adams, *America's Economic Supremacy* (New York, 1900), pp.12, 20, 22-25; S. Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, pp.150, 153-155, 157-159, 161-162; A.R. Colquhoun, *China in Transformation* (New York, 1904 [1898]), pp.ix, 381-382; C.A. Conant, *The United States in the Orient: The Nature of the Economic Problem* (Boston, MA, 1900), pp.2, 60-61, 180-181, 190; M.H. Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (New York, 1983), p.177; W. LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity, 1865-1913* (Cambridge, 1998), p.172; A.T. Mahan, *The Problem of Asia and Its Effect upon International Politics* (Boston, MA, 1900), pp.18, 74, 88; P.A. Varg, *The Making of a Myth: The United States and China, 1897-1912* (East Lansing, MI, 1968), p.18.

might allow an individual power to exert excessive influence in or monopolise the trade of a given locality.⁵

Though British and American interests were, in this sense, identical, there was one key difference in the basis of these interests. Britain was at this point the dominant force in Chinese commerce, holding the vast majority of the trade throughout the Empire, and benefitted from the status quo because free competition maximised opportunities for the further expansion of trade. The British had a potential sphere of interest in the Yangtze Valley, but were able to monopolise trade in this vital region without having to resort to exclusionary tactics, and there was therefore nothing to be gained from a portioning-off of the Chinese Empire which limited British trade to this one area.⁶ By contrast, the United States was as yet a fairly minor factor in Chinese commerce, with nothing even resembling a sphere of interest and very little chance of acquiring one. Open trade throughout China was therefore imperative for an expansion of American commerce; partition or exclusion from the other powers' spheres would have been a terminal blow.⁷

The vast difference in the extent to which the two powers were invested in China created potential for division between them, not so much with regard to broad goals but in terms of the specifics of policy. With their solid base of economic interests the British had a great deal more to lose from an adverse turn of events in China, whereas what was at stake for the United States was largely a matter of future opportunities. In practice this difference was not quite as significant as it

⁵ A.W. Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New York, 1938), p.6; P. Joseph, *Foreign Diplomacy in China, 1894-1900: A Study in Political and Economic Relations with China* (London, 1928), pp.120, 141, 231, 234-236, 245; R.W. Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy: A History* (New York, 1962), p.146; T.J. McCormick, *China Market: America's Quest for Informal Empire, 1893-1901* (Chicago, IL, 1967), pp.63-64.

⁶ W.L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902* (New York, 1935), pp.389, 461; R.S. McCordock, *British Far Eastern Policy, 1894-1900* (New York, 1931), p.240; Otte, 'The Boxer Uprising and British Foreign Policy', pp.158-159; M.H. Wilgus, *Sir Claude MacDonald, the Open Door, and British Informal Empire in China, 1895-1900* (New York, 1987), pp.39, 73.

⁷ N.M. Blake, 'England and the United States, 1897-1899' in D.E. Lee and G.E. McReynolds (eds.), *Essays in History and International Relations: In Honor of George Hubbard Blakeslee* (Worcester, MA, 1949), p.261; T. Dennett, 'The Open Door Policy as Intervention', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 168 (1933), p.79; Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy*, p.146; McCormick, *China Market*, pp.91, 129, 135.

might seem, however, as the hypothetical nature of American interests in China was to a large extent elided by a firm belief amongst opinion leaders in the U.S. that the expansion of trade in China was a fundamental national interest. The assumption that future American prosperity, and perhaps even the survival of the nation, was dependent on commercial expansion and success in East Asia stemmed from widely-discussed theories regarding the dangers of 'overproduction' and the limitless potential of the China market. Influential writers such as Charles Conant warned that the American economy was at risk of stagnation and ultimate collapse on account of a 'glut' of products. They promoted the idea that the only solution to this threat was for American businessmen to secure their share of China's trade and tap into the unbridled consuming power of her 'four hundred million customers'.⁸

In spite of their common interest in ensuring the widest possible field for the expansion of commerce in China, prior to 1898 neither Britain nor the United States were prepared to take an active role in East Asia. Each power exhibited during this period a strong preference for passivity which can be accounted for by reference to the overarching concerns which set the parameters for their respective policies in China. These were domestic political considerations on the part of the United States and the demands of global policy for the British.

Throughout the latter part of the 19th century, American statesmen had cultivated the notion that the United States, in contrast to the European powers, was entirely innocent of ulterior motives in its policy towards China. They attempted to project an image of the United States as China's friend and protector,

⁸ B. Adams, *America's Economic Supremacy*, pp.20, 32; Conant, *The United States in the Orient*, pp.9-10, 79, 114-115, 156; J.R. Eperjesi, *The Imperialist Imaginary: Visions of Asia and the Pacific in American Culture* (Hanover, NH, 2005), pp.75, 77-78; H.R. Isaacs, *Scratches on Our Minds: American Views of China and India* (White Plains, NY, 1980), p.125; M.F. Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York, 2000), pp.16, 21, 25, 27; McCormick, *China Market*, pp.18-19, 26, 31, 51, 53; G. Rystad, *Ambiguous Imperialism: American Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics at the Turn of the Century* (Stockholm, 1975), pp.36, 38-39; M. Schaller, *The United States and China: Into the Twenty-First Century* (New York, 2002), p.17; Thomson, Stanley and Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists*, pp.99, 122.

remaining aloof from and even resisting the selfish designs of the imperialists.⁹ Arguably American policy failed to live up to this ideal in practice as, by virtue of the treaty system and a process which has been described as ‘hitchhiking imperialism’, the U.S. was able to glean the advantages which the more aggressive powers wrung out of China while maintaining, at least in theory, Chinese goodwill.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the principle that American policy was fundamentally altruistic was an important one, and popular devotion to this ideal, combined with the habitual American suspicion of interventionist foreign policy outside of the Western Hemisphere, acted as significant brake on the actions of American policymakers with regard to China. The broad goal of preserving the status quo and the freedom of commerce was uncontroversial, but any means of achieving this outcome which appeared to represent coercion of China or, crucially, which aligned the United States with any of the imperialist powers was politically very risky. This effectively compelled American policymakers to limit themselves to a detached and passive approach to the situation or, in the eyes of the other powers, a policy of pious words but precious few deeds.¹¹

The British Government was not subject to the same domestic political limitations as the United States – indeed, if anything, British public opinion favoured a more definite and aggressive policy in East Asia – but policymakers were very conscious of the wider global situation and the limited nature of British power.

⁹ C. Denby, *China and Her People: Being the Observations, Reminiscences, and Conclusions of an American Diplomat*, vol. 1 (Boston, MA, 1906), p.3; C.W. Hayford, ‘The Open Door Raj: Chinese-American Cultural Relations, 1900-1945’ in W.I. Cohen (ed.), *Pacific Passage: The Study of American-East Asian Relations on the Eve of the Twenty-First Century* (New York, 1996), p.140; A. Iriye, *Across the Pacific: An Inner History of American-East Asian Relations* (New York, 1967), pp.15-16; Varg, *The Making of a Myth*, pp.1-2, 4.

¹⁰ D.L. Anderson, *Imperialism and Idealism: American Diplomats in China, 1861-1898* (Bloomington, IN, 1985), pp.1-2, 10; W.I. Cohen, *America’s Response to China: An Interpretative History of Sino-American Relations* (New York, 1980), pp.10, 12, 29; H. Deane, *Good Deeds and Gunboats: Two Centuries of American-Chinese Encounters* (Beijing, 2003), p.6; J.K. Fairbank, ‘“American China Policy” to 1898: A Misconception’, *Pacific Historical Review* 39 (1970), pp.410-413, 415.

¹¹ D.L. Anderson, *Imperialism and Idealism*, p.11; S. Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, p.156; Dennett, ‘The Open Door Policy as Intervention’, pp.80-81; R.A. Esthus, ‘The Changing Concept of the Open Door, 1899-1910’, *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 46 (1959), p.437; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, p.199; Varg, *The Making of a Myth*, p.11; M.B. Young, ‘American Expansion 1870-1900: The Far East’ in B.J. Bernstein (ed.), *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History* (London, 1970), pp.180, 186.

British resources were thinly-stretched across the Empire at this point and policymakers faced a number of challenging situations in various other parts of the world, including brewing crises in South Africa and the Near East. Britain was therefore fundamentally ill-equipped to embark on a policy of active involvement in the China question.¹² Furthermore, as significant as British commercial interests in China were, London's priority in Asia was unquestionably the Empire in India. Preoccupied with the danger of Russian advances in central Asia which could threaten the Indian frontier, policymakers were prepared to concede a degree of latitude for Russia to expand in East Asia instead. A passive policy in China was thus desirable not only for reasons of economy, but also as a means of securing more significant interests elsewhere.¹³

Matters came to a head in China in the winter of 1897-1898, as the European powers embarked on a series of land grabs which would become known as the 'scramble for concessions'. Germany set the ball rolling by demanding the lease of the port of Jiaozhou (Kiaochow) on the pretext of compensation for the murder of missionaries, and this in turn prompted the Russian Government to stake a claim to Port Arthur and Talienwan in the region of Manchuria.¹⁴ This latter development in particular was a serious cause for concern amongst British policymakers, who feared that the Russians might utilise these concessions to place limitations on the trade of other nations and limit the freedom of action of the Chinese Government, triggering an inexorable march towards partition.¹⁵ In the

¹² J. Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830-1970* (Cambridge, 2009), p.134; J. Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians: The Dynamics of Territorial Expansion', *English Historical Review* 112 (1997), pp.619, 622; Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism*, pp.461-462; Otte, *The China Question*, pp.39, 63.

¹³ G.N. Curzon, *Problems of the Far East* (London, 1894), pp.xii, 11; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, pp.17-18; D. Gillard, *The Struggle for Asia, 1828-1914: A Study in British and Russian Imperialism* (London, 1977), p.158; A.L. Kennedy, *Salisbury, 1830-1903: Portrait of a Statesman* (London, 1953), pp.270, 272; Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism*, p.400; I.H. Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires, 1894-1907* (London, 1985), p.17; Wilgus, *Sir Claude MacDonald*, pp.39, 43; L.K. Young, *British Policy in China, 1895-1902* (Oxford, 1970), pp.25, 38, 40-41.

¹⁴ K. Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England, 1830-1902* (Oxford, 1970), p.164; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.30.

¹⁵ T. Sanderson Memo, December 23rd 1897, FO 800/2, The National Archives, Kew [hereafter TNA]; A. Balfour Memo, March 22nd 1898, Add MS 49746, Arthur Balfour Papers, British Library Manuscript

early months of 1898, the British Government thus wrestled with the dilemma of whether to take a stand against the actions of Russia and Germany in the hope that forceful action would convince them to back down, or instead to acquiesce in the seizure of Chinese territory and claim a compensatory concession so as to avoid being left behind by the more aggressive powers.¹⁶

The British preference for a passive policy in China strongly inclined them against actively opposing Russian and German encroachments, but they were almost equally hesitant about contributing to the slide towards spheres of interest by further chipping away at Chinese territorial integrity. Policymakers in London identified one potential means of escaping from the bind which the scramble for concessions had created in joint action with the United States. British leaders had for some time looked for greater American involvement in East Asia, hoping that this would bolster their position and facilitate the maintenance of Chinese sovereignty and open trade. Though they had tended to limit their ambitions for a common British-American approach to the China question to parallel policies as opposed to actual cooperation, the exigencies of the situation in early 1898 encouraged them to seek direct American assistance.¹⁷ In early March, the British Ambassador at Washington, Sir Julian Pauncefote, communicated an official overture to the U.S. Government, essentially proposing that the two powers pledge to come out jointly against any alterations to the status quo in China which represented a threat to their shared interests. Lord Salisbury, who at this stage was fulfilling the roles of both Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, wrote of the

Collections, London [hereafter Balfour MS]; Foreign Office to N. O'Connor (draft), March 30th 1898, CAB 37/46/30, TNA; Joseph, *Foreign Diplomacy in China*, p.267; L.K. Young, *British Policy in China*, pp.68, 91-92.

¹⁶ A. Balfour Memo, March 14th 1898, Add MS 49746, Balfour MS; Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.164; Joseph, *Foreign Diplomacy in China*, p.286.

¹⁷ Lord Salisbury to Queen Victoria, February 23rd 1898, CAB 41/24/30, TNA; A.E. Campbell, 'Great Britain and the United States in the Far East', *Historical Journal* 1 (1958), pp.155, 167; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.56; P. Kennedy, *The Realities Behind Diplomacy: Background Influences on British External Policy, 1865-1980* (London, 1985), p.116; R.F. Mackay, *Balfour: Intellectual Statesman* (Oxford, 1985), p.207; R.G. Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism, 1898-1900* (Brisbane, 1965), p.110; T.M. Sobottke, 'The Imperial Enterprise: Anglo-American Reaction to the Spanish-American and Boer Wars, 1898-1902' (PhD Thesis, Marquette University, 2008), p.106.

'anxiety' which the British Government felt as to whether they could count on American cooperation in opposing action 'tending to restrict the opening of China to the commerce of all nations'.¹⁸ Pauncefote met with President McKinley on a number of occasions and attempted to convince him to assent to the British proposal by dwelling on, 'the identity of British and American interests in China, and the great importance of presenting a united front to the designs of certain Powers which menaced the freedom of trade with that vast Empire.'¹⁹

Undergirding this official British overture was an informal dialogue which had been going on in London in the early months of 1898 on the subject of China and the possibility of British-American cooperation, centred around the Secretary of the U.S. Embassy, Henry White. White, who was personally in favour of some form of joint action in China, had a number of private conversations with various figures within the British Government which laid the groundwork for the March 1898 proposal. These meetings, the details of which White shared with all the major players in American foreign policy, offer a considerably more candid insight into the British desire for cooperation than Pauncefote's official communications with McKinley. The British participants in these conversations did not, however, make any reference to a racial or other ideological basis for British-American joint action, sticking firmly, as in the official interaction, to the language of shared interests.²⁰ For example, Arthur Balfour, Salisbury's deputy, emphasised the common desire of Britain and the United States to keep Chinese trade open, making the case that if

¹⁸ Lord Salisbury to J. Pauncefote, March 7th 1898, FO 405/76, TNA; L.M. Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship: A Study in World Politics, 1898-1906* (London, 1938), p.78; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.50.

¹⁹ J. Pauncefote to Lord Salisbury, March 8th 1898, FO 405/76, TNA; J. Pauncefote to Lord Salisbury, March 17th 1898, FO 5/2361, TNA.

²⁰ H. White to H.C. Lodge, January 18th 1898, Reel 13, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA [hereafter Lodge MS]; H. White to J. Hay, February 21st 1898, Box 28, Henry White Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter White MS]; H. White to W. Day, March 2nd 1898, Reel 5, White MS; H. White to J. Hay, March 6th 1898, Box 28, White MS; H. White to J. Sherman, March 18th 1898, M30/180, RG-59, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD [hereafter NARA].

the two powers were to combine their strength behind this proposition it would effectively 'settle the question'.²¹

The absence of the language of ideology in these meetings is chiefly notable because White's letters back to his friends and superiors in Washington imply that his conversations with key British figures more generally did touch upon racial themes, and Anglo-Saxonist ideas specifically. On more than one occasion, White referred to Balfour's deeply-held desire that 'the two great branches of our race should be brought together' in some sort of joint action that would be of benefit to the world.²² There is no question that White understood British hopes for cooperation in China to be at least partially based on Anglo-Saxonist notions of the desirability of British-American unity and partnership, and so it is somewhat surprising that this side of the question was apparently not broached in discussions of the British overture. This omission would tend to suggest that policymakers understood the kind of ideological language which not infrequently appeared in the context of abstract discussion about British-American relations to be somewhat less suitable in reference to specific practical questions.

The Americans took their time in giving an answer to the British overture, much to the discomfiture of Salisbury and the Foreign Office, and when McKinley did eventually respond it was in a decidedly cagey fashion.²³ Though he expressed 'sympathy' with the British position on the maintenance of open trade in China, the President was careful to emphasise the impossibility of the administration committing the U.S. Government to anything without Congressional sanction. Tellingly, McKinley concluded by making reference to one of the standard tropes of American diplomacy:

He does not see any present reason for the departure of the United States from its traditional policy respecting foreign alliances, and, as far as

²¹ H. White to H.C. Lodge, March 5th 1898, Reel 13, Lodge MS.

²² Ibid.; H. White to J.A. Porter, March 18th 1898, Reel 5, White MS.

²³ J. Pauncefote to Lord Salisbury, March 9th 1898, FO 405/76, TNA; Lord Salisbury to J. Pauncefote, March 15th 1898, FO 5/2364, TNA; Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism*, p.472.

practicable, avoiding any interference in the connection of European complications.²⁴

The President's rebuff was supplemented by a somewhat apologetic explanation from Assistant Secretary of State William R. Day, who emphasised the concurrence of the U.S. Government with the British policy of upholding open trade in China, but pointed out that the rapidly escalating friction with Spain was a significant limiting factor on American action. Day also reiterated, however, McKinley's comments about avoiding involvement in European affairs, referring to, 'the settled policy of the United States, which is opposed to "entangling alliances"'.²⁵

McKinley's rejection of the British overture does not indicate that American policymakers failed to grasp the potential value of working with Britain in East Asia in pursuit of shared goals. Rather, as Day had explained to Pauncefote, American eyes were firmly fixed on the Cuban situation, which was soon to explode into overt hostilities, and China was therefore simply not a priority at this point.²⁶ There was also a more fundamental reason behind the American demurral, however, which would continue to limit the potential for joint action long after the conclusion of the Spanish-American War. The references in the responses of both Day and McKinley to the traditional American policy of avoiding foreign entanglements suggest that the domestic political objections to cooperation with Britain weighed heavily on the administration's thinking. American policymakers were acutely aware of popular hostility towards any sort of collaboration with the imperialist powers and especially, due to the strong undercurrent of Anglophobia in the American political scene, a policy of working hand-in-hand with the British.²⁷

²⁴ J. Pauncefote to Lord Salisbury, March 16th 1898, FO 405/76, TNA.

²⁵ J. Pauncefote to Lord Salisbury, March 16th 1898, FO 405/76, TNA; J. Pauncefote to Lord Salisbury, March 17th 1898, FO 5/2361, TNA.

²⁶ W. Day to J. Hay, July 14th 1898, Reel 10, John Hay Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Hay MS]; W. LaFeber, *The Clash: A History of U.S.-Japan Relations* (New York, 1997), p.59; Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy*, p.149.

²⁷ L.L. Gould, *The Presidency of William McKinley* (Lawrence, KS, 1980), pp.201-202; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, p.199; McCormick, *China Market*, p.100; Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism*, p.168.

British policymakers appear to have grasped the American position, and although White's correspondence in the latter part of 1898 indicates that they had by no means abandoned the conviction that British-American cooperation was the best approach to the China question, there was no further official correspondence on the subject.²⁸ Thus resigned to the reality that no American support was forthcoming, the British Government registered a token protest against the appropriation of Chinese territory, before reluctantly following suit and demanding the lease of the port of Wei Hai Wei. The theory was that this concession would counterbalance those taken by Russia and Germany, but in reality the acquisition of Wei Hai Wei was primarily a sop to public opinion and a prime example of the British following the path of least resistance in order to avoid a confrontation.²⁹ In the months that followed, British China policy began to lean increasingly towards the more aggressive approach favoured by the other European powers. Unable to rely on the support of the United States, British policymakers instead sought to safeguard their position in the Yangtze Valley so that they would have something to fall back on in the event of the division of China into spheres of interest.³⁰ In particular, an agreement with Russia entailing the mutual recognition of spheres became a key goal of British policy, on the basis that this would postpone a conflict of interests with the Russians and the risky business of further concession-grabbing while protecting the most vital of Britain's commercial interests. The resulting Scott-Muraviev agreement of April 1899, though in theory confined to the issue of

²⁸ H. White to J. Hay, Undated (probably October) 1898, Reel 5, White MS; H. White to J. Hay, October 29th 1898, Reel 5, White MS; H. White to J. Chamberlain, December 26th 1898, Box 16, White MS.

²⁹ A. Balfour to Queen Victoria, March 26th 1898, CAB 41/24/34, TNA; McCordock, *British Far Eastern Policy*, pp.240, 242-243; N.A. Pelcovits, *Old China Hands and the Foreign Office* (New York, 1948), pp.223-224.

³⁰ J.A.S. Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy: The Close of the Nineteenth Century* (London 1964), p.20; Hubbard, *British Far Eastern Policy*, pp.20, 24; Joseph, *Foreign Diplomacy in China*, pp.293, 302, 304, 346-347, 349-350, 352; G. Kennan, *American Diplomacy, 1900-1950* (London, 1952), p.27; McCordock, *British Far Eastern Policy*, p.228.

railway construction, marked a significant shift in the direction of the policy of spheres.³¹

British accommodation with the erosion of China's territorial integrity and the development of exclusive preserves left the United States, now an Asiatic power in its own right following the acquisition of the Philippines from Spain, somewhat isolated in its defence of completely open trade. Unable to retreat to entrenching a sphere of their own, American policymakers had to find an alternative way to ensure that they were not excluded from the commerce of the Chinese Empire. The means they opted for was a diplomatic initiative for the preservation of the 'Open Door' – the principle that all powers should have equal access to the markets of China, unhindered by exclusive arrangements or special privileges – enshrined in a duo of circular notes issued in September 1899 and July 1900.

Secretary of State John Hay's first Open Door note set out American expectations as to what commerce in China should look like and invited the other powers to adhere to these. The conditions which Hay specified were not extensive: existing treaty ports should remain open to the trade of all, the customs tariff should continue to be administered by the Chinese and applied equally for all nations and there should be no differentiation in dues for harbours or railways.³² Not only were these provisions far from comprehensive, but the wording of the note implicitly acknowledged the existence of spheres of interest as something of a *fait accompli*. Consequently, although Hay did emphasise that the United States did not accept the validity of any claims to special rights or privileges conferred by such spheres, the note represented a grudging accommodation with rather than a

³¹ A. Balfour Memo, July 13th 1898, CAB 37/47/52, TNA; A. Balfour to Lord Salisbury, August 30th 1898, Add MS 49691, Balfour MS; Lord Salisbury Memo, February 15th 1899, CAB 37/49/14, TNA; Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy*, pp.138, 140; Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism*, pp.468, 476, 681-684; P. Lowe, *Britain in the Far East: A Survey from 1819 to the Present* (London, 1981), p.66; Wilgus, *Sir Claude MacDonal*, p. 159; M.B. Young, *The Rhetoric of Empire: American China Policy, 1895-1901* (Cambridge, MA, 1968), p.117.

³² J. Hay to J. Choate, September 6th 1899 in U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter *FRUS*] 1899, [University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries Digital Collections](http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS) <<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS>> (accessed 09/08/13), pp.131-133.

challenge to the general principle of powers marking out zones in which they intended to be predominant.³³

The limited scope of the note has led some historians to suggest that the Open Door policy was little more than an exercise in appeasing public opinion at home, designed only to give the impression that the U.S. Government supported its businessmen in China and stood with the Chinese in opposition to the encroachments of the imperialist powers.³⁴ By contrast, another group of historians, most prominently William Appleman Williams, have developed an interpretation of the Open Door policy which portrays it as an activist programme of economic imperialism, designed to pave the way for American commercial dominance in East Asia.³⁵ Neither of these readings of Hay's intervention in the China question is entirely satisfactory; the former underestimates the extent to which policymakers hoped the note would have a practical impact, while the latter gives too much credit to the mythology which grew up surrounding the Open Door notes and conflates later expansions of the policy with the more limited original proposition. Neither a public relations gimmick nor an active new departure, the first Open Door note was rather a formalised expression of the established, and essentially passive, American policy in China. Though it was unequivocal as to American expectations for the continuance of open trade, the note entailed no actual commitment on the part of the United States, relying entirely on the willing assent of the other powers without even the slightest hint of recourse if the conditions were violated. The Open Door policy was thus a defensive response to the deteriorating situation in China; it was the strongest course at Hay's disposal

³³ J. Hay to J. Choate, September 6th 1899, *FRUS* 1899, pp.131-133; D.L. Anderson, *Imperialism and Idealism*, p.178; F.R. Dulles, *China and America: The Story of their Relations since 1784* (Princeton, NJ, 1946), p.110; Hubbard, *British Far Eastern Policy*, p.28; Joseph, *Foreign Diplomacy in China*, p.373; W.J. Pomeroy, *American Neo-Colonialism: Its Emergence in the Philippines and Asia* (New York, 1970), p.154; M.B. Young, 'American Expansion', p.192.

³⁴ Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, pp.153-154; Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy*, p.215; Thomson, Stanley and Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists*, pp.127-128.

³⁵ McCormick, *China Market*, pp.128-129; W.A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York, 1972), pp.45, 50.

given that any sort of active intervention was effectively ruled out by insufficient popular backing.³⁶

The Open Door policy is sometimes cited by historians as an example of British-American cooperation in East Asia, precisely the kind of occurrence which this study argues was so rare in this period. These scholars treat Hay's note of September 1899 as a collaborative venture on the basis that it was essentially a belated acceptance by the U.S. of the British suggestion for a joint guarantee of open trade in China.³⁷ There are a number of problems with this interpretation, not least its somewhat broad definition of collaboration, but the main issue is that it is built on decidedly shaky foundations in terms of evidence. A key element of the claim that the Open Door note represented British-American cooperation is the central role played by Alfred Hoppisley, a British employee of the Chinese Customs Service, in the formulation of the policy. Hoppisley corresponded extensively with Hay and William Rockhill, the State Department's Far Eastern expert, and his suggestions regarding the protection of the Open Door were incorporated by Rockhill into the memorandum which formed the basis of the final circular note.³⁸ Crucially, however, Hoppisley's intervention with the U.S. Government was not driven by the goal of bringing about British-American joint action. Hoppisley did not have particularly strong connections with the British Government, and his overriding concern was not for British interests *per se* but for the stability of China

³⁶ D.L. Anderson, *Imperialism and Idealism*, pp.171, 187-188, 190-191; Esthus, 'The Changing Concept of the Open Door', pp.435, 452-453; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, pp.78-79; Iriye, *Across the Pacific*, p.81; Kennan, *American Diplomacy*, pp.37-39; F.A. Ninkovich, 'Ideology, the Open Door, and Foreign Policy', *Diplomatic History* 6 (1982), p.190; Thomson, Stanley and Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists*, pp.132-133.

³⁷ H.C. Allen, *Great Britain and the United States: A History of Anglo-American Relations, 1783-1952* (London, 1954), pp.586-588; J.B. Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle: The Interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain* (New Haven, CT, 1945), p.253; Dennett, 'The Open Door Policy as Intervention', pp.81-82; Hubbard, *British Far Eastern Policy*, pp.27-28; A. Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism: U.S. Foreign Policy to 1914* (London, 1977), p.167; Joseph, *Foreign Diplomacy in China*, pp.323, 378, 382-383, 412-413.

³⁸ Rockhill to Hoppisley, August 29th 1899, MS AM 2121/2108, William W. Rockhill Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (hereafter Rockhill MS); Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, pp.62-63; Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism*, pp.686-687; Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy*, pp.213-214; Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism*, pp.137-140.

and the preservation of the Customs Service, which he feared might not survive another round of concession-grabbing.³⁹ Moreover, he was actually fairly critical of British policy, and his proposal that the powers should give additional guarantees that they would respect the Open Door was in large part prompted by the perceived capitulation of the British to the policy of spheres, not least in the aforementioned deal with Russia.⁴⁰

Hippisley's disapproval of British policy in China following the scramble for concessions was shared by Rockhill, who took the view that Britain had shown herself no more altruistic than the other imperialist powers and, far from deserving American support, ought to be held to account for deviating from the principle of free and fair trade. Rockhill's opinions – most notably his assurance to Hay that the Open Door policy was, 'not a British one, for Great Britain is as great an offender in China as Russia itself' – cast serious doubt on any suggestion that the Open Door note was conceived as a cooperative British-American project.⁴¹ Such comments should be taken with a pinch of salt, however, in light of the context surrounding these formative discussions of the Open Door policy. One of the primary themes of the Rockhill-Hippisley correspondence is the concern that too close an association with Britain had the potential to derail the whole venture. Both men were adamant that for the Open Door policy to succeed it would require the United States to be seen to take the initiative and Britain merely to follow, both because the Chinese would be suspicious of any European-led arrangement and, more significantly, because it would be politically impossible for the United States to pursue a policy

³⁹ A. Hippisley to W. Rockhill, July 25th 1899 (enclosed in W. Rockhill to J. Hay, August 3rd 1899), Reel 9, Hay MS; Cohen, *America's Response to China*, p.48; J.K. Fairbank, *The United States and China* (Cambridge, MA, 1983), p.321; Kennan, *American Diplomacy*, pp.29-31; Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism*, pp.164-165; Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, pp.75-76.

⁴⁰ A. Hippisley Memo, August 17th 1899, MS AM 2121/1123, Rockhill MS.

⁴¹ W. Rockhill to J. Hay, August 28th 1899, Reel 9, Hay MS; W. Rockhill to A. Hippisley, August 29th 1899, MS AM 2121/2108, Rockhill MS; S. Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*, p.156; A.E. Campbell, 'Great Britain and the United States in the Far East', pp.167-168; C.S. Campbell, *From Revolution to Rapprochement: The United States and Great Britain, 1783-1900* (New York, 1974), pp.198-199; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.77; McCormick, *China Market*, pp.127-128, 135.

which the public regarded as British in origin.⁴² It was this concern, rather than rancour towards Britain, which led Rockhill to emphasise that the Open Door policy was not in line with the British stance towards China, even to the point of exaggerating the extent of the conflict between the policy and the British position.

The whole process of formulating the Open Door note was carefully handled so as to ensure that it recommended itself to the Senate and the public as a distinctly American policy. Hippisley fretted in particular about the issue of timing, worrying that the visit to the U.S. by Lord Charles Beresford, who was engaged in promoting the cause of British-American intervention on behalf of China, or a move by the British Government in the direction of the Open Door might effectively force the American Government into inaction, at least until after the elections in 1900.⁴³ Rockhill shared his friend's anxiety on this point, commenting with regard to Beresford's visit that they, 'must act with great care, so as not to convey to this country the impression that we are simply falling in line with British views.'⁴⁴ With this in mind, Rockhill went to some effort to obscure the fact that the bulk of the ideas behind the Open Door policy, and even much of the wording of the circular itself, were Hippisley's. Rockhill had initially intended to publish Hippisley's ideas in the hope of marshalling support for the Open Door policy, but for 'obvious reasons' he judged that it was preferable for them to be under his name rather than that of his British friend. The same reasoning determined that when, instead of publishing them, Rockhill submitted the suggestions to Hay for the perusal of the President, Hippisley's name was not mentioned at all.⁴⁵ The extent of this preoccupation with presenting the Open Door policy as distinctly American indicates that the overriding

⁴² A. Hippisley to W. Rockhill, July 25th 1899 (enclosed in W. Rockhill to J. Hay, August 3rd 1899), Reel 9, Hay MS; W. Rockhill to A. Hippisley, August 3rd 1899, MS AM 2121/2104, Rockhill MS; A. Hippisley to W. Rockhill, August 21st 1899, MS AM 2121/1124, Rockhill MS; W. Rockhill Memo, August 28th 1899 (enclosed in W. Rockhill to J. Hay, August 28th 1899), Reel 9, Hay MS; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.76; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.213.

⁴³ A. Hippisley to W. Rockhill, August 16th 1899, AM MS 2121/1122, Rockhill MS; A. Hippisley to W. Rockhill, August 21st 1899, MS AM 2121/1124, Rockhill MS; A. Hippisley to W. Rockhill, September 26th 1899, MS AM 2121/1128, Rockhill MS.

⁴⁴ W. Rockhill to A. Hippisley, August 18th 1899, MS AM 2121/2105, Rockhill MS.

⁴⁵ W. Rockhill to A. Hippisley, August 26th 1899, MS AM 2121/2106, Rockhill MS; W. Rockhill to A. Hippisley, August 29th 1899, MS AM 2121/2108, Rockhill MS.

consideration for American policymakers was the domestic political repercussions of any action taken in East Asia. Hay was all too aware of the limitations imposed upon his action by what he referred to as 'the senseless prejudices' of the people and the Senate, and understood that however desirable a cooperative approach might have been it was simply not a feasible option due to the persistent power of Anglophobia in U.S. politics.⁴⁶

For all the effort to portray the Open Door note as a thoroughly independent initiative which was not especially in line with British policy, it is clear that American policymakers believed the circular to be at the very least compatible with British interests.⁴⁷ Though the version of Hay's note which the British Government received was substantially identical to those which were sent to the other powers, certainly offering no hint of particular closeness between the two nations, its presentation by the American Ambassador, Joseph Choate, did to some extent imply that the policy had been conceived with Britain at least partly in mind. Choate expressed President McKinley's belief that the Open Door was a matter, 'in which the interest of the two nations differs, not in character, but in degree only', and embellished the note with the comment that the American proposal appeared to be in 'exact accord' and 'entire harmony' with British policy and interests.⁴⁸ This sort of language is fairly unremarkable in itself, and certainly did not represent an attempt by the Americans to make an ideological case for British support, but after Rockhill's endeavours to portray the Open Door policy as a purely American initiative it is perhaps surprising that Choate elected to highlight the extent to which the note reflected common British and American interests.

⁴⁶ J. Hay to W. Rockhill, August 7th 1899, MS AM 2121/1054, Rockhill MS; J. Hay to H. White, September 24th 1899, Box 28, White MS; D.L. Anderson, *Imperialism and Idealism*, pp.176-177; Dulles, *China and America*, p.108; LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity*, p.175; McCordock, *British Far Eastern Policy*, p.295.

⁴⁷ S.F. Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (New York, 1955), p.484; A.P. Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century: Of Friendship, Conflict and the Rise and Decline of Superpowers* (London, 1995), p.21; T.J. Liu, *A History of Sino-American Diplomatic Relations, 1840-1974* (Taipei, 1978), p.52.

⁴⁸ J. Hay to J. Choate, September 6th 1899, *FRUS* 1899, pp.131-133; J. Choate to Lord Salisbury, September 22nd 1899, *FRUS* 1899, pp.133-135.

Choate's comments were probably in large part a reflection of the confidence among American policymakers that the British would be thoroughly on board with the principles set out in the note and the policy of the Open Door more generally. This confidence was not entirely well-founded, however, and the British response to Hay's circular was actually rather tentative and equivocal. When, after a delay of several weeks, Salisbury did respond to Choate's representation, it was not to confirm British adherence but to raise an objection to the American formulation. The British concern was with the inclusion, under the header of 'leased territory', of the Kowloon extension to Hong Kong, in which the customs system was tied not to the rest of China but to the Crown Colony. Perhaps worse than this specific objection, which the State Department was perfectly willing to accommodate, was Salisbury's suggestion that 'leased territory' might be best left out of the declaration altogether, a proposition which implied that the British Government was reluctant to commit to anything specific or binding.⁴⁹

The relatively unenthusiastic response of the British Government to the Open Door note should not be taken to indicate any significant divergence between Britain and the United States on the broad principle of preserving equality of commercial opportunity throughout China, though it does offer ample evidence that the policy was not a collaborative one in any meaningful sense. The point of difference between the two powers was one of methods, not of goals, and was largely a reflection of the widely differing extent of investment of the two powers in China. The United States had, in practical terms, nothing substantial to lose from the failure of the enterprise, and American policymakers were therefore in a position to attach relatively little significance to the specifics of the arrangement. The British, on the other hand, had to bear in mind their considerable commercial stake in China, and were therefore far more cautious about committing themselves even to the fairly limited provisions set out in the Open Door note. Salisbury's

⁴⁹ Lord Salisbury to J. Choate, October 14th 1899, FO 5/2408, TNA; J. Choate to J. Hay, October 21st 1899, M30/186, RG-59, NARA; J. Choate to J. Hay, October 25th 1899, M30/186, RG-59, NARA; W. Rockhill Memo, Undated (Late 1899), MS AM 2121/2113, Rockhill MS; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.77; Neale, *Britain and American Imperialism*, p.169.

major concern was that Germany and Russia would not abide by the American proposition, and he was understandably extremely loath to agree to anything which might put Britain at a disadvantage to its rivals.⁵⁰

The difference between Britain and the U.S. over the Open Door note was short-lived, as the two governments swiftly worked out a form of wording which suited British needs but did not leave the way open for the other powers to emasculate the declaration with their own exceptions and caveats. By the end of November 1899, the British Government had pledged to uphold the principles of the Open Door in Wei Hai Wei specifically and in any future British territory or spheres of interest in China.⁵¹ This outcome was satisfactory from the point of view of both powers, and it would be fair to say that with regard to the overall thrust of the Open Door policy Britain and the United States were very much on the same page by the end of 1899. This point had been reached, however, with minimal direct interaction between the two powers over the issue, owing to the extreme care which American policymakers had taken to ensure that the Open Door initiative was not tainted in the mind of the American people by any suggestion of British inspiration. Given these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that there was no place in what limited conversation there was between the two powers for ideas regarding the unity of the English-speaking peoples and their shared mission in Asia. Though such notions would have had clear utility to American policymakers in encouraging the British to get behind the Open Door initiative, the vagaries of U.S. domestic politics rendered even the more neutral language of shared interests a risky prospect.

⁵⁰ J. Choate to J. Hay, November 3rd 1899, M30/186, RG-59, NARA; C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. 1 (London, 1972), p.100; P. Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, p.67; L.K. Young, *British Policy in China*, p.99.

⁵¹ J. Choate to J. Hay, November 1st 1899, Reel 6, Hay MS; J. Hay to J. Choate, November 2nd 1899, M77/92, RG-59, NARA; J. Hay to J. Choate, November 13th 1899, Box 14, Joseph H. Choate Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Choate MS]; J. Choate to Lord Salisbury, November 15th 1899, FO 5/2408, TNA; Lord Salisbury to J. Choate, November 30th 1899, FRUS 1899, p.136; F. Villiers to J. Choate, November 30th 1899, MS AM 2121/2739, Rockhill MS.

With the Open Door policy in place, Britain and the United States were in a position to continue their broadly passive policies in China. This approach would become increasingly untenable, however, through the spring and summer of 1900, as sporadic anti-foreign violence in China coalesced into a serious threat to Western interests. The Boxer movement had been brewing since the previous year – Edwin Conger, the American Minister to China, sent the first report of Boxer activity on a significant scale to the State Department in December 1899 – as tensions over foreign encroachments and missionary activity reached a crescendo and combined with the long-standing Chinese tradition of secret societies.⁵² Despite awareness of the rising tide of violence, the Western powers were slow to recognise the significance of the threat, and were thus taken by surprise when, rather than fizzling out, the Boxer movement received support and encouragement from China's rulers and culminated in a widespread outbreak which, in June 1900, cut Beijing (Peking) off from external access and communication.⁵³

With their diplomatic representatives besieged in the Chinese capital, Britain and the United States, along with Japan and the other European powers, were forced to increase their military presence in China and coordinate their forces to put down the rising. Then, once the siege of the legations was lifted and the Boxers defeated, this uneasy conglomeration of powers had to work together to negotiate a settlement with what remained of the Chinese Government. The Boxer Rising and its aftermath presented a natural opportunity for British-American cooperation, not least because a degree of joint action was necessitated by the situation in any case. The two governments had very similar interests, with both working for the minimisation of the conflict and the preservation, as far as possible, of the sovereignty of China and the Open Door for trade. As things developed, however, this community of interest was largely outweighed by the different priorities which

⁵² E. Conger to J. Hay, December 7th 1899, *FRUS* 1900, pp.77-84.

⁵³ E. Conger, to J. Hay, June 11th 1900, *FRUS* 1900, pp.144-151; N. Brailey, 'Sir Ernest Satow, Japan and Asia: The Trials of a Diplomat in the Age of High Imperialism', *Historical Journal* 35 (1992), p.146; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, p.195; Otte, 'The Boxer Uprising and British Foreign Policy', pp.159-161; Z.S. Steiner, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914* (London, 1969), p.40; L.K. Young, *British Policy in China*, p.131.

guided British and American policymakers in their responses to the crisis, meaning that interaction between the powers was considerably less harmonious than they might have hoped or expected.

Initially, British and American policymakers had very similar views on the Boxer Rising, partly in consequence of the external constraints on their decision-making. The British Government, preoccupied with the conflict in South Africa and feeling the pinch of global overstretch, was averse to committing the nation's increasingly scarce resources to an uncertain situation in China. American policymakers, with at least one eye on the coming elections, were likewise keen to avoid becoming embroiled in East Asia for fear of the damage this might do to McKinley's campaign.⁵⁴ Both powers thus attempted to minimise their involvement and sought out the most passive response available to them. Though it was vital for both governments to be seen to be sufficiently attentive to protecting the lives and property of their nationals, they were equally determined to avert a major foreign intervention, both to avoid having to intervene themselves and because such an incursion would provide the more aggressive powers with opportunities for self-aggrandisement and greatly increase the danger of partition.⁵⁵ In consequence, both powers maintained the slightly obtuse position that the Boxer crisis did not constitute a state of war between the powers and the Chinese Government, the hope being that this would limit the scale of foreign intervention and ease the restoration of order.⁵⁶ Furthermore, British and American policymakers were slow

⁵⁴ H. White to H.C. Lodge, June 16th 1900, Reel 15, Lodge MS; Cohen, *America's Response to China*, pp.56-58; Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy*, p.306; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, pp.195-196; C.J. Lowe, *The Reluctant Imperialists*, p.237; McCordock, *British Far Eastern Policy*, pp.333-334; R.M. Miller, 'The United States during the Boxer Rebellion' (MA Thesis, University of Texas, 2004), p.22; Otte, 'The Boxer Uprising and British Foreign Policy', pp.160, 162, 170; L.K. Young, *British Policy in China*, p.115; M.B. Young, *The Rhetoric of Empire*, pp.149, 153-154, 157.

⁵⁵ Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States*, p.487; Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy*, pp.304, 308; J.D. Hargreaves, 'Lord Salisbury, British Isolation and the Yangtze Valley, June-September 1900', *Historical Research* 30 (1957), pp.62-63; Liu, *A History of Sino-American Relations*, p.57; P. Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, pp.69-70; Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*, p.275.

⁵⁶ J. Pauncefote to Lord Salisbury, June 22nd 1900, FO 5/2430, TNA; Lord Salisbury to J. Pauncefote, June 22nd 1900, FO 405/92, TNA; J. Choate to T. Sanderson, July 2nd 1900, FO 5/2443, TNA; J. Hay to J. Choate, July 17th 1900, Box 14, Choate MS; A. Adee Memo, August 20th 1900, Reel 11, William McKinley Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter McKinley

to agree to the expansion of combined military action and, initially at least, interposed objections to the appointment of a Commander-in-Chief to coordinate the activity of the coalition forces.⁵⁷

American policymakers had the added incentive for limiting foreign intervention that overt collaboration with the imperialist powers was distinctly undesirable from a political point of view, especially at a time when the Republican Party was attempting to make the case to the American people that U.S. rule in the Philippines was of an entirely different character to the grasping colonialism of the European powers. Thus, as the situation deteriorated in early 1900, Hay consistently emphasised in his instructions to Conger that the United States must act 'singly and without the cooperation of other powers'.⁵⁸ As the violence of the Boxers intensified, however, some degree of concerted action became essential if American lives and property were to be protected and Beijing relieved, and so in early June 1900 Hay shifted ground and accepted that concurrent action with the other powers was acceptable in certain situations.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, American policymakers and officials remained deeply dubious of a cooperative approach, fearing that it would compromise their all-important freedom of action. They were particularly concerned about the possibility of being drawn into, or at least appearing complicit in, the 'selfish designs' and 'hidden schemes' which they suspected other powers to be devising to take advantage of the fragile state of

MS]; Dulles, *China and America*, p.119; P.A. Varg, 'William Woodville Rockhill's Influence on the Boxer Negotiations', *Pacific Historical Review* 18 (1949), p.373; E.H. Zabriskie, *American-Russian Rivalry in the Far East: A Study in Diplomacy and Power Politics, 1895-1914* (Philadelphia, PA, 1946), p.62.

⁵⁷ Lord Salisbury to J. Pauncefote, May 22nd 1900, FO 5/2430, TNA; J. Choate to J. Hay, July 17th 1900, Box 17, Choate MS; H. Corbin to A. Chafee, July 19th 1900, Reel 11, McKinley MS; J. Pauncefote to Lord Salisbury, July 27th 1900, FO 5/2428, TNA; Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, p.167; Gillard, *The Struggle for Asia*, p.169; P. Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, p.68; L.K. Young, *British Policy in China*, p.117.

⁵⁸ J. Hay to E. Conger, March 22nd 1900, *FRUS* 1900, pp.111-112; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.80; Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism*, pp.169-170; Miller, 'The United States during the Boxer Rebellion', p.59; M.B. Young, *The Rhetoric of Empire*, p.150.

⁵⁹ J. Hay to E. Conger, June 8th 1900, *FRUS* 1900, p.143; T. Dennett, *Americans in Eastern Asia* (New York, 1941), pp.665-666; M.B. Young, *The Rhetoric of Empire*, p.157.

China.⁶⁰ Hay consequently made the American position abundantly clear to Conger: 'There must be nothing done which would commit us to future action inconsistent with your standing instructions. There must be no alliances.'⁶¹ Washington's strictures against concerted action applied equally strongly to the British as they did to the other imperialist powers. This was a result not only of political concerns, but also of the influence of an image of British policy as fundamentally self-serving and 'old world', in contrast to the more altruistic approach of the United States. American policymakers were doubtful of British intentions with regard to China and wary lest the crisis should lead them to follow through on their earlier dalliance with the policy of spheres by attempting to consolidate their 'ear mark' in the Yangtze Valley.⁶²

These suspicions aside, American and British policymakers did recognise that their interests were aligned to a greater degree than with any other power and consequently engaged in very full communication and information sharing throughout the crisis.⁶³ Though this represented a significant advance, indicating that American policymakers were now open to some level of coordination with the British in the pursuit of shared goals, it was by no means a guarantee of joint action. In fact, the behind-the-scenes nature of this activity was crucial to its feasibility from the point of view of the United States. American domestic politics continued to act as a limiting factor on overt British-American consultation, a point rather aptly illustrated by the communication between the two governments over the second Open Door note.

In early July 1900, the U.S. issued another circular note, this one designed to explain the American position on the Boxer crisis and reiterate the principles of the

⁶⁰ H. White to J. Hay, June 9th 1900, Box 28, White MS; H. White to H.C. Lodge, June 16th 1900, Reel 15, Lodge MS; L. Kempff to J. Long, June 25th 1900, Reel 10, McKinley MS; L. Kempff to J. Long, July 1st 1900, Reel 10, McKinley MS.

⁶¹ J. Hay to E. Conger, June 10th 1900, *FRUS* 1900, p.143.

⁶² J. Choate to J. Hay, June 20th 1900, Reel 7, Hay MS; J. Goodnow to J. Hay, July 8th 1900, Reel 11, McKinley MS.

⁶³ J. Choate to Lord Salisbury, July 20th 1900, FO 5/2443, TNA; J. Choate to Lord Salisbury, July 22nd 1900, FO 5/2443, TNA; J. Choate to J. Hay, July 24th 1900, M30/187, RG-59, NARA; J. Choate to J. Hay, July 25th 1900, M30/187, RG-59, NARA.

Open Door policy. In addition to the conditions laid out in the note of September 1899 – the maintenance of treaty rights and ‘the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire’ – the second Open Door note also included a further goal: the preservation of ‘Chinese territorial and administrative entity’.⁶⁴ This addition did make the second Open Door note somewhat broader in scope than the first, but historians have still tended to characterise it as an essentially passive approach to the China question.⁶⁵ The July note, in practical terms at least, asked very little of the powers, as unlike the first Open Door note it did not invite any kind of response. This omission was useful from the British point of view, as it allowed Salisbury to express his thorough concurrence with the American position without having to scruple over the form of wording as he had the previous autumn.⁶⁶

Indications of British agreement with and appreciation of the position set out in the circular were undoubtedly welcome in Washington, but an intriguing series of communications regarding the note demonstrates that the U.S. Government remained intent on distancing the policy of the Open Door from the British. In communicating the circular to Lord Salisbury, Choate had added a final sentence of his own, commenting that the policy set out, ‘seems to me substantially identical with that which your Lordship has from time to time indicated to me as that of Her Majesty’s Government’.⁶⁷ This innocuous phrase, much to Choate’s surprise, was the cause of significant anxiety at the State Department. Hay’s concern, as he explained to the Ambassador in a private letter, was that, ‘the note presented by you to England conveys an impression of unity of action with that country differentiating our relations with England from those we hold with other

⁶⁴ J. Choate to Lord Salisbury, July 5th 1900, FO 5/2443, TNA; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, pp.80-81; Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy*, pp.216-217; Varg, ‘William Woodville Rockhill’s Influence on the Boxer Negotiations’, p.373; Zabriskie, *American-Russian Rivalry in the Far East*, pp.61-62.

⁶⁵ A.E. Campbell, ‘Great Britain and the United States in the Far East’, p.172; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.81; Iriye, *Across the Pacific*, pp.88-89; Thomson, Stanley and Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists*, pp.131-132.

⁶⁶ J. Choate to J. Hay, July 7th 1900, *FRUS* 1900, p.345; McCordock, *British Far Eastern Policy*, p.330; L.K. Young, *British Policy in China*, p.147.

⁶⁷ J. Choate to Lord Salisbury, July 5th 1900, FO 5/2443, TNA.

Powers.⁶⁸ He consequently instructed Choate to request that the record be altered so that the note received by the Foreign Office would be identical to that sent to the other powers.⁶⁹ This incident throws into sharp relief the continuing hold of domestic political concerns over American policymakers. As Choate quite correctly noted, his addition did not necessarily imply any kind of advance consultation with Britain. Nevertheless, it was sufficient to rattle the State Department; even the merest suggestion of coordination with Britain or deference to British interests was potentially toxic in advance of November's election.⁷⁰ Thus, despite the concurrence of Britain and the United States on all major points during the Boxer Rising, overt collaboration evidently remained several steps too far in consequence of the constraints imposed by American domestic politics.

These constraints also continue to offer a plausible explanation for the complete absence of Anglo-Saxonist ideology in interaction between Britain and the United States at this point. Such was American diligence in avoiding even the slightest indication of British-American intimacy that policymakers in London can hardly have been left in any doubt that such ideas would have been ill-received in Washington. Anglo-Saxonist ideas were not the only relevant ideological factor in the situation, however, as notions of a Yellow Peril threat and stereotypes of Chinese character were also broadly influential at the popular level. The Boxer Rising represented a definite high-point for negative images of the Chinese in the West, and there was no shortage of racialised portrayals of the violence in print. Stories of cruel and bloodthirsty mobs driven by an unreasoning hatred of Westerners resounded around the world, confirming the very worst Oriental stereotypes and providing fodder for Yellow Peril fiction for decades to come.⁷¹

⁶⁸ J. Hay to J. Choate, July 18th 1900, Box 14, Choate MS.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ J. Choate to J. Hay, August 1st 1900, Box 17, Choate MS; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, p.199; Miller, 'The United States during the Boxer Rebellion', p.83.

⁷¹ R. Bickers, *Britain in China: Community, Culture and Colonialism, 1900-1949* (Manchester, 1999), pp.34, 44; R.G. Forman, 'Peking Plots: Fictionalizing the Boxer Rebellion of 1900', *Victorian Literature and Culture* 27 (1999), p.20, E.A. Glenn, 'Imperial Yellow: Local Phenomena, Transnational Fears, and the Changing Image of the Chinese in Early Twentieth-Century Britain' (MA Thesis, University of Utah, 2012), pp.12, 16, 26; Iriye, *Across the Pacific*, p.89; M.L. Krenn, *The Color of Empire: Race and*

Despite the ubiquity of this sort of ideology there are precious few examples of the employment of racial stereotypes or Yellow Peril ideas by British and American policymakers and officials. President McKinley did imply in his Annual Message of December 1900 that the source of the Boxers' anti-foreignism was to be found 'deep in the character of the Chinese race', but beyond this, evidence that these ideas penetrated official discourse is distinctly limited.⁷²

One possible reason for the sparseness of stereotypes and racial terminology is that they were deliberately avoided as potentially inflammatory, a significant consideration given that both Britain and the United States wished to avoid exacerbating the situation in China or supplying any further excuses for the other powers to seek retribution. There is evidence that American policymakers took a certain amount of care over the terms in which the crisis was discussed. For example, when Conger used anti-Chinese language and alluded to racial stereotypes in a report in the immediate aftermath of the siege of the legations it caused something of a stir in the State Department. Conger's statements apparently raised questions in the minds of his superiors as to his fitness to carry out his duties in China, and the offending section of the report was swiftly excised from the official record.⁷³ In light of the lack of further evidence of racial ideas being used or suppressed in this way, it is not possible to categorically put the absence of such ideas at the official level down to the tactical avoidance of ideas which policymakers deemed dangerous. The aforementioned example is certainly suggestive, however, and it seems reasonable to infer that there was a degree of conscious censorship of negative images of the Chinese by British and American policymakers, on the basis

American Foreign Relations (Washington, D.C., 2006), p. 58; C. Mackerras, *Western Images of China* (Oxford, 1989), p.67; Otte, 'The Boxer Uprising and British Foreign Policy', p.161; G. Prince, 'The Yellow Peril in Britain, 1890-1920' (MA Thesis, McGill University, 1987), p.50; Schaller, *The United States and China*, p.33; J.G. Utley, 'American Views of China, 1900-1915: The Unwelcome but Inevitable Awakening' in J. Goldstein, J. Israel and H. Conroy (eds.), *America Views China: American Images of China Then and Now* (Bethlehem, PA, 1991), pp.115-116.

⁷² W. McKinley, 'Fourth Annual Message', December 3rd 1900, [The American Presidency Project](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/) <<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/>> (accessed 07/11/13); G. Sinkler, *The Racial Attitudes of American Presidents: From Abraham Lincoln to Theodore Roosevelt* (Garden City, NY, 1971), p.356.

⁷³ E. Conger to J. Hay, August 20th 1900, Reel 11, McKinley MS; A. Adee to W. McKinley, August 21st 1900, Reel 11, McKinley MS.

that such images did not sit comfortably with their agenda of limiting the scale of the conflict in China.

As long as the siege of the legations continued there was little to divide the positions of Britain and the United States, but the situation became more complicated once international forces relieved Beijing and brought the uprising to an end. Harmony between British and American policies was almost immediately disrupted following the end of the siege, after the Russian Government suggested that the powers should withdraw their troops and representatives from the Chinese capital. American policymakers, though recognising that this approach had significant drawbacks, were above all keen to get U.S. troops out of China as quickly as possible with an eye to the impending election and therefore came out in support of the Russian proposal.⁷⁴ In contrast, the British Government, after a period of hesitation, declared strongly against a hasty withdrawal on the grounds that it meant relinquishing a major bargaining chip with the Chinese, potentially making it much more difficult to secure a suitable, lasting settlement.⁷⁵

This disagreement over the question of withdrawal from Beijing offers an interesting insight into the mutual images the two nations held of one another. Though admittedly not a reflection of official views as such, the response of influential Senator Henry Cabot Lodge to the British position on withdrawal is indicative of a common American image of British foreign policy. In a letter of September 1900 to Henry White, Lodge vented his frustration with the 'helpless' approach of the British Government: 'instead of drawing toward us they are drawing away and leaving us to unite with others, for we know exactly what we are about and propose to put it through if it can possibly be done.'⁷⁶ In a later letter, he

⁷⁴ A. Adee to J. Choate, August 30th 1900, M30/187, RG-59, NARA; J. Hay to J. Choate, September 8th 1900, Box 14, Choate MS; E. Root to W. McKinley, September 11th 1900, Reel 12, McKinley MS; J. Hay to W. McKinley, September 11th 1900, Box 4, Hay MS; W. McKinley to J. Hay, September 14th 1900, Reel 8, Hay MS; Dulles, *China and America*, p.121.

⁷⁵ S. Brodrick to F. Lascelles, September 4th 1900, FO 800/6, TNA; J. Chamberlain Memo, September 10th 1900, CAB 37/53/65, TNA; H. White to J. Hay, September 25th 1900, M30/187, RG-59, NARA; H. White to H.C. Lodge, September 26th 1900, Reel 15, Lodge MS.

⁷⁶ H.C. Lodge to H. White, September 3rd 1900, Box 16, White MS.

reiterated his critique of the 'vacillation and uncertainty' of policymakers in London: 'The impression here is not that England is unfriendly but that she is incompetent and neither sees her true policy nor follows it out boldly after the start'.⁷⁷ Though Lodge represents just one, admittedly somewhat anti-British, viewpoint, the image he conjures of the British as bumbling, irresolute and generally lacking in backbone is one which many American policymakers and officials at this point would have recognised.

Ironically, many British policymakers held a not too dissimilar image of American foreign policy, believing the U.S. to be somewhat fickle and unreliable when it came to actually getting things done. A Cabinet memorandum on the withdrawal question written by Joseph Chamberlain indicates the low expectations which British policymakers had as to the prospect of American assistance in resolving the Boxer crisis. Despite expressing his confidence that Britain's 'natural allies' genuinely shared the same goals in China, Chamberlain was entirely unconvinced that the McKinley administration would actually work towards the attainment of these goals. He concluded that Britain simply could not count on American support owing to the slavishness of the U.S. Government to the 'wire-pullers and bosses' who dominated the political scene and effectively dictated foreign policy.⁷⁸ Chamberlain's views are fairly representative of elite British disdain for the overly-democratic nature of the American political system, which made even the most important matters subject to popular whims, and no doubt many of his colleagues held similar images of U.S. foreign policy as inherently weak-willed and erratic.⁷⁹

The disagreement between the two powers over the withdrawal question was neither serious nor protracted – American policymakers swiftly recognised the danger of being left isolated and gave up on the notion of leaving Beijing – but it was not entirely without significance. In the initial stages of the negotiations,

⁷⁷ H.C. Lodge to H. White, October 8th 1900, Box 16, White MS.

⁷⁸ J. Chamberlain Memo, September 10th 1900, CAB 37/53/65, TNA.

⁷⁹ Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy*, p.189; L.K. Young, *British Policy in China*, pp.236-237.

though, Britain and the United States were broadly on the same wavelength, working above all for the goals laid down in the American circular of July 1900: Chinese territorial integrity and the Open Door for commerce throughout the Empire.⁸⁰ This basic community of interest between the two powers in the Boxer negotiations was not lost on policymakers on either side but, as had been the case throughout this period, an openly cooperative approach to achieving shared goals remained unattainable. The major obstacle was, as John Hay observed in September 1900, the usual limitation on British-American collaboration: 'If it were not for our domestic politics we could, and should, join with England, whose interests are identical with ours and make our ideas prevail.'⁸¹ As the Boxer negotiations progressed, however, Britain and the United States not only failed to cooperate but actually found themselves, more often than not, on opposite sides of disputed questions, which occasioned a certain amount of strain in the relationship.⁸² The divergence in the attitudes of the two powers towards the withdrawal question to a large extent set the tone for the rest of the negotiations. The desirability of a swift settlement from a domestic political point of view would dominate American thinking throughout the negotiations, even once the election had been and gone, meaning that policymakers in Washington tended to look for quick fixes and ways to minimise complications.⁸³ On the British side, policymakers were mindful of the nation's considerable commercial stake in China, and therefore tended to favour those positions which appeared most likely to ensure a stable field

⁸⁰ A. Adey to J. Choate, August 30th 1900, M30/187, RG-59, NARA; J. Chamberlain Memo, September 10th 1900, CAB 37/53/65, TNA; J. Hay to W. Reid, September 20th 1900 in H. Adams and C.L.S. Hay (eds.), *Letters of John Hay and Extracts from his Diary*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C., 1908), pp.192-193; D. Hill to E. Conger, September 29th 1900, Reel 13, McKinley MS; W. Rockhill to J. Hay, October 3rd 1900, Reel 9, Hay MS; A.E. Campbell, 'Great Britain and the United States in the Far East', p.172; McCormick, *China Market*, p.178.

⁸¹ J. Hay to A. Adey, September 14th 1900, Box 3, Hay MS.

⁸² Varg, 'William Woodville Rockhill's Influence on the Boxer Negotiations', pp.376-378, 380; M.B. Young, *The Rhetoric of Empire*, pp.187, 199.

⁸³ J. Hay to A. Adey, September 14th 1900, Box 3, Hay MS; J. Hay to W. McKinley, September 17th 1900, Box 3, Hay MS; J. Hay to E. Conger, October 19th 1900, Box 4, Hay MS; McCormick, *China Market*, p.165.

for future trade, whilst opposing those which would be detrimental to established interests.⁸⁴

One of the most contentious points of the negotiations was the question of what degree of retribution the powers should demand against the responsible individuals. The American position was that an overly harsh stance on punishments might be counterproductive, and that the powers should therefore err on the side of moderation. Policymakers in Washington favoured a less severe settlement overall, in part because they hoped this would make for easier negotiations with the Chinese, but also because punitive measures had the potential to weaken the Imperial Government still further and leave it vulnerable to foreign exploitation.⁸⁵ Though the British concurred to some extent on this latter point, they were unwilling to water down demands for strict punishment purely for the sake of expediency, and Lord Lansdowne, the recently-appointed Foreign Secretary, disparaged the American preference for leniency as 'weak kneed'.⁸⁶ In general, the greater attentiveness of the British to the details of the settlement meant that they judged the American approach of pressing for moderation and a speedy resolution, regardless of the specifics of the issue, to be short-sighted. In January 1901, Lansdowne expressed his concerns on this point to Salisbury, pointedly commenting, 'we ought not to allow the general desire to be quit of a cumbersome job to render us too easy going'.⁸⁷

Criticisms such as this were fairly common in British assessments of American conduct during the negotiations, and the frustration expressed by policymakers and officials gives a further insight into the prevalent image of U.S.

⁸⁴ J. Chamberlain Memo, September 10th 1900, CAB 37/53/65, TNA.

⁸⁵ W. Rockhill to J. Hay, February 4th 1901, Reel 9, Hay MS; W. Rockhill Report, December 12th 1901, *FRUS* 1901 (Appendix 1); Dennett, *Americans in Eastern Asia*, p.659; Gould, *The Presidency of William McKinley*, p.233; McCormick, *China Market*, p.179; Miller, 'The United States during the Boxer Rebellion', p.141.

⁸⁶ Lord Lansdowne to J. Pauncefote, November 28th 1900, FO 405/97, TNA; J. Choate to J. Hay, December 8th 1900, Box 17, Choate MS; W. Rockhill to J. Hay, February 4th 1901, Reel 9, Hay MS; E. Satow to Lord Lansdowne, March 14th 1901, FO 800/119, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to C. MacDonald, April 4th 1901, FO 800/134, TNA.

⁸⁷ Lord Lansdowne to Lord Salisbury, January 6th 1901, FO 800/144, TNA.

foreign policy. As suggested above, the British tended to view the Americans as somewhat unreliable, and had limited faith in their assistance on a practical level. This image is reflected to some extent in Lansdowne's 'weak kneed' comment, but the Foreign Secretary's jibe also draws on another significant image which was the basis of many of the complaints regarding the line taken by the U.S. in the negotiations. British officials were scathing about the tendency of the Americans 'to pose as the friend of Asiatic races oppressed by Europe', seeing this as nothing but a ploy to win special favour from the Chinese while still benefitting from the efforts of those powers who were willing to get their hands dirty.⁸⁸ It was the perceived duplicity of American attempts to affect the role of China's beneficent protector during the negotiations that prompted British official Francis Bertie to accuse the Americans of 'playing a shabby game in China'.⁸⁹

British frustration over the American approach to in the Boxer negotiations had its counterpart in the frequent complaints of American policymakers and officials over the failure of the British to adequately support them in their efforts to bring about a resolution. The main example of this perceived deficiency on the part of the British was in relation to the question of the indemnity which was to be demanded from China in reparation for the outrages committed by the Boxers. The American Government sought to avoid both an excessive indemnity, which had the potential to destabilise the Empire and invite further foreign intervention, and a protracted process of haggling over the specifics of the bill, which would scupper any hope of a prompt settlement. From the beginning of the negotiations the United States proposed that a lump sum of money should be agreed upon, based on what China was capable of paying rather than on the powers' demands. The exact shares each power would receive could then be decided at a later date, removing much of the involved and technical discussion from the negotiations with

⁸⁸ C. MacDonald to Lord Lansdowne, February 17th 1901, FO 800/134, TNA; E. Satow to Lord Lansdowne, May 24th 1901, FO 800/119, TNA.

⁸⁹ F. Bertie to F. Lascelles, March 20th 1901, FO 800/6, TNA.

the Chinese and allowing for a reasonably fast settlement.⁹⁰ The American plan was not well received by the rest of the powers, however, and Rockhill, who had been appointed U.S. Commissioner to China for the negotiations, struggled to get a hearing for the idea.⁹¹

The British, sharing the same motivation as the Americans for wishing to minimise the detrimental impact of the indemnity on China, were initially amenable to the principle of capping the sum according to Chinese means.⁹² As the negotiations dragged on, however, they moved increasingly away from the American line and towards the position of those powers demanding a more extensive indemnity. This was probably a matter of simple pragmatism, an effort to move things along by finding a middle ground, but to Rockhill it represented a betrayal with its roots firmly in the intrigues of European power politics and not the actual exigencies of the Chinese situation.⁹³ Rockhill judged the British to have been guilty throughout the negotiations of playing politics and compromising with rather than opposing the imperialist powers in their exploitation of China, and he generally drew little distinction between Britain and the more aggressive nations in his reports. This critique of British conduct reflected a clear image of the British as self-serving and imperialistic, not sharing the commitment of the United States to the welfare and protection of China.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ J. Hay to E. Conger, November 16th 1900, Reel 14, McKinley MS; W. McKinley, 'Fourth Annual Message', December 3rd 1900; J. Hay to E. Conger, December 30th 1900, Reel 14, McKinley MS; J. Hay to A. Hippisley, January 5th 1901, Reel 2, Hay MS; J. Choate to Lord Lansdowne, April 9th 1901, FO 5/2471, TNA; W. Rockhill Report, December 12th 1901, *FRUS* 1901 (Appendix 1); McCormick, *China Market*, p.182.

⁹¹ W. Rockhill to J. Hay, April 18th 1901, Reel 9, Hay MS; Lord Lansdowne to J. Pauncefote, April 24th 1901, FO 405/105, TNA; J. Choate to J. Hay, April 26th 1901, Box 17, Choate MS.

⁹² Lord Lansdowne to F. Lascelles, April 13th 1901, FO 405/105, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to E. Satow, April 15th 1901, FO 405/105, TNA; J. Choate to J. Hay, April 18th 1901, Reel 15, McKinley MS; W. Rockhill to J. Hay, April 23rd 1901, *FRUS* 1901 (Appendix 2), pp.141-143.

⁹³ W. Rockhill to J. Hay, May 22nd 1901, *FRUS* 1901 (Appendix 2), pp.171-173; E. Satow to Lord Lansdowne, May 24th 1901, FO 800/119, TNA; W. Rockhill to J. Hay, May 25th 1901, *FRUS* 1901 (Appendix 2), p.175.

⁹⁴ W. Rockhill to J. Hay, February 4th 1901, Reel 9, Hay MS; W. Rockhill to J. Hay, February 18th 1901, Reel 9, Hay MS; W. Rockhill to J. Hay, April 18th 1901, Reel 9, Hay MS; W. Rockhill to A.C.M. Lodge, May 27th 1901, Reel 16, Lodge MS.

American frustration with the British peaked in the summer of 1901, when British stubbornness over the apparently insignificant issue of the Chinese customs tariff constituted the only obstacle in the way of concluding a settlement which was, in American eyes at least, already long overdue.⁹⁵ The problem was a proposal to increase the tariff as a means of ensuring that the Chinese would have sufficient revenue to cover the indemnity payments, an arrangement which would have disproportionately disadvantaged the British as the major importer of goods into China. British policymakers were only prepared to accept the tariff increase if additional commercial reforms were agreed upon, a trade-off which would have extended the process of negotiations still further.⁹⁶ Britain and the United States thus arrived at the denouement of the Boxer negotiations at odds on account of their differing priorities. The Americans, still looking for the fastest possible way out of the politically undesirable concert with the imperialist powers, chafed at the seemingly unnecessary delay, while the British, with considerably more at stake in terms of commerce than the other powers, doggedly refused to sacrifice their interests for the sake of an easy settlement.

Though it took several months more to iron out the final details, the negotiations did eventually come to a conclusion in the latter half of 1901. With the end of the Boxer affair, Western attention began to shift away from China proper and towards Manchuria, which within a few years was to become a battleground of global significance. The Chinese Empire thus survived one of its most testing times, intact though hardly unscathed, and Britain and the United States were able to claim, for the moment at least, that the Open Door and the integrity of China had been secured against the greed of the imperialist powers and the ravages of

⁹⁵ W. Rockhill to J. Hay, June 25th 1901, *FRUS* 1901 (Appendix 2), p.252; W. Rockhill to J. Hay, July 16th 1901, *FRUS* 1901 (Appendix 2), p.376; W. Rockhill to J. Hay, August 9th 1901, *FRUS* 1901 (Appendix 2), p.298.

⁹⁶ A. Balfour to King Edward VII, April 26th 1901, CAB 41/26/8, TNA; Cabinet Memo, May 8th 1901, CAB 37/57/44, TNA; J. Choate to J. Hay, July 19th 1901, M30/189, RG-59, NARA; Lord Salisbury to King Edward VII, July 27th 1901, CAB 41/26/18, TNA; T.G. Otte, "Not Proficient at Table-Thumping": Sir Ernest Satow at Peking, 1900-1906', *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 13 (2002), p.171.

internal conflict. As this chapter has demonstrated, however, this outcome was not to any significant degree a result of joint action by the two powers.

A community of interest based on the maintenance of the status quo and free commerce throughout China proved insufficient to overcome the central barrier to British-American cooperation: the domestic political constraints on the United States Government. Popular opposition to the U.S. becoming entangled in the affairs of the imperialist powers dictated an independent and essentially passive course for American policymakers. Moreover, so severe was the political risk to the McKinley administration of appearing to pander to London that American policymakers endeavoured to portray the Open Door policy as a decidedly un-British, if not actually anti-British, response to the situation in China. The British Government, precluded from an interventionist approach to the China question by the pressing nature of other global concerns, deviated somewhat from the path of free and fair trade when American support did not materialise. Though this concession to the preservation of Britain's substantial commercial interests did not cause any significant friction or division in itself, it did portend further differences between the two powers when it came to resolving the various problems presented by the Boxer Rising.

The friction and mutual irritation which came to the surface during the Boxer negotiations was influenced by, and in turn reinforced, certain negative images which the two powers held of one another. American officials interpreted British actions through the lens of 'old world' imperialism and accounted for divergence between the two powers with reference to the British tendency towards vacillation. The British, for their part, viewed American policy as a cynical attempt to have their cake and eat it in China or, perhaps even worse, merely a submissive reflection of the currents of popular opinion. These images, though not quite as prominent during these years as they would become over the following decade, were more in evidence amongst policymakers and officials of both countries than negative stereotypes of the Chinese, in spite of the currency of these latter ideas in

popular culture. The surprising paucity of racial ideas in discussion of the Boxer Rising is consistent, however, with the lack of ideological content more generally in British-American interaction during this period. Though Anglo-Saxonist ideas did make an appearance in abstract discussions of relations between the powers, such as in conversations between Henry White and British policymakers in early 1898, the absence of such ideology in practical communication over East Asia is pronounced. This chapter has suggested that this omission was in part a deliberate, tactical move on the part of British and American policymakers, who were concerned that ideological arguments represented a risky prospect with the potential to hinder rather than advance their respective agendas.

A further reason for the general absence of ideological content in British-American interaction during these years may have been the somewhat circumscribed nature of communication between the two powers. Though there were no real problems at the official level, informal channels, where more candid expressions were likely to be voiced, were either underutilised or lacking altogether. Neither McKinley nor Salisbury was particularly interested in cultivating opportunities for informal interaction, and the personal factor was thus largely absent from the transatlantic relationship during these years. This state of affairs would be dramatically altered following McKinley's death in 1901, however, as the arrival of Theodore Roosevelt at the White House heralded an era in which personal relations and informal communication would become absolutely central to British-American interaction.

Chapter 2

'A Yellow Peril or a Slav Peril': The Russo-Japanese War

The war that broke out between Japan and Russia in February 1904 was a pivotal point in the history of the relations of East and West. After the peace of Portsmouth at the end of August 1905, and in fact to a great extent after the first Japanese victories, long-standing assumptions about the natural relations between Occidental and Oriental nations ceased to be tenable.¹ The conflict was also significant in terms of its impact on relations between Britain and the United States, providing a number of opportunities for the deepening of the nations' relationship through informal and personal interactions between the two governments. Such progress was marred, however, by the distinct friction which resulted from the failure of ostensibly identical interests to be realised in the form of practical cooperation.

In contrast to British-American interaction over China at the turn of the twentieth century, the main pressure for cooperation during the Russo-Japanese War came not from Britain but from the United States. The major barrier to joint action in this instance was therefore not American domestic politics but, this chapter contends, the British need to defer to global priorities over regional interests. Not only did British policymakers have a slightly different perspective on the conflict in consequence of their global concerns, they were also firmly opposed to intervening in any way which risked undermining their Alliance with the

¹ J.M. Henning, 'White Mongols? The War and American Discourses on Race and Religion' in R. Kowner (ed.), *The Impact of the Russo-Japanese War* (London, 2007), p.153; R. Kowner, 'Between Contempt and Fear: Western Racial Constructions of East Asians since 1800' in R. Kowner and W. Demel (eds.), *Race and Racism in Modern East Asia: Western and Eastern Constructions* (Leiden, 2013), pp.109, 117; M.L. Krenn, *The Color of Empire: Race and American Foreign Relations* (Washington, D.C., 2006), p.60; M. Lake and H. Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equalities* (Cambridge, 2008), pp.2-3, 166-167; J-P. Lehmann, *The Image of Japan: From Feudal Isolation to World Power, 1850-1950* (London, 1978), p.149.

Japanese. The failure of the two powers to cooperate was not simply a product of British stubbornness on this point, however, and this chapter also makes the case that the mismatch in British and American conceptions of desirable cooperation had a significant part to play in the tension which developed between them. The British were eager to arrange for joint action with the United States, but they insisted that this should take the form of a broad understanding or commitment, whereas the Americans were only interested in working in tandem on a very limited scale.

As suggested above, the Russo-Japanese War was a hugely significant moment in terms of ideology, as it dramatised the theory that East Asia would form the crux of a coming conflict for the future of civilisation. The outcome of the war was discussed by numerous observers in terms of its meaning for the destiny of the English-speaking peoples. On the one hand, the possibility of a Russian victory intensified existing speculation about a global conflict between Anglo-Saxon and Slav.² On the other, Japan's unprecedented success ignited fears of a future Asian challenge to the West, and by the end of the war predictions of a coming Yellow Peril focused almost exclusively on the triumphant Japanese.³ Though such ideas had a slightly greater influence on British-American interaction than they had done in previous years, largely on account of the significant increase in personal contacts and informal diplomacy, they were still not nearly as prominent as might be expected. This chapter suggests that the paucity of this kind of ideology in communication between the powers was at least in part down to the conscious avoidance and suppression of potentially problematic ideas on the part of British and American policymakers.

The roots of the Russo-Japanese War lie in the region of Manchuria, which was still officially an integral part of the Chinese Empire but had been partially

² S. Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement: Anglo-Saxonism and Anglo-American Relations, 1895-1904* (East Brunswick, NJ, 1981), pp.160-161; B.L. Putnam Weale, *Manchu and Muscovite* (London, 1904), pp.498, 516, 529; W. Von Schierbrand, *America, Asia and the Pacific: With Special Reference to the Russo-Japanese War and its Results* (New York, 1904), pp.3-5, 249, 285, 287-289.

³ C.E. Neu, *The Troubled Encounter: The United States and Japan* (New York, 1975), pp.45-46; E.O. Reischauer, *The United States and Japan* (Cambridge, MA, 1957), p.20; S.H. Zebel, *Balfour: A Political Biography* (Cambridge, 1973), p.109.

occupied by the Russians since the Boxer Rising. Russian attempts to establish predominance in Manchuria had been a source of contention with the other powers throughout 1901 and 1902, but the question came to a head in a more serious way in 1903 following numerous missed deadlines for the evacuation of Russian troops.⁴ The Japanese Government became increasingly impatient at Russian prevarication, and the two powers entered into an extended and strained process of negotiation in an attempt to demarcate their lines of interest and avoid conflict. It was the breakdown of these negotiations, chiefly owing to Russian unwillingness to give any ground in relation to Manchuria, which ultimately led to the outbreak of war in early 1904.⁵ Though the Japanese did have the backing of Britain and the United States in pressing for the preservation of the Open Door in Manchuria, when it came to actively contesting Russian abuses they were left somewhat isolated. Neither Britain nor the United States was willing to go out on a limb over the controversy in spite of the shared desire of policymakers to limit Russian expansionism and keep the region open for trade. London and Washington did protest violations of Open Door principles and the prolongation of the Russian occupation but without the slightest implication that they would back up their position with force.⁶

⁴ Lord Lansdowne Memorandum, March 1st 1901, CAB 37/56/28, The National Archives, Kew [hereafter TNA]; W. Rockhill Memo, February 1st 1902, MS AM 2121/3101, William W. Rockhill Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA [hereafter Rockhill MS]; A. Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism: US Foreign Policy to 1914* (London, 1977), p.195; P. Lowe, *Britain in the Far East: A Survey from 1819 to the Present* (London, 1981), p.75; G. Monger, *The End of Isolation: British Foreign Policy, 1900-1907* (London, 1963), p.71; I.H. Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires, 1894-1907* (London, 1985), pp.111, 153, 262.

⁵ Lord Lansdowne to A. Raikes, July 16th 1903, FO 405/135, TNA; E. Satow to Lord Lansdowne, August 27th 1903, FO 800/120, TNA; L.C. Griscom, *Diplomatically Speaking* (Boston, MA, 1940), pp.237-238.

⁶ Lord Lansdowne to M. Herbert, April 25th 1903, FO 405/134, TNA; J. Hay to H. White, May 22nd 1903 in H. Adams and C.L.S. Hay (eds.), *Letters of John Hay and Extracts from his Diary*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C., 1908), pp.271-272; H.K. Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of American to World Power* (Baltimore, MD, 1956), pp.193-194; W.I. Cohen, *America's Response to China: An Interpretive History of Sino-American Relations* (New York, 1980), p.61; T. Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War* (Garden City, NY, 1925), pp.135-136; R.A. Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan* (Seattle, WA, 1966), p.11; M.H. Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door: Manchuria in Chinese-American Relations, 1895-1911* (New Haven, CT, 1973), pp.60-61, 64; Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, pp.76-77; Nish, *Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, pp.122, 262.

From the British point of view, this policy of reserve over Manchuria was largely determined by the broader imperative of avoiding conflict with Russia due to the danger a breakdown in relations could pose to vital British interests elsewhere in the world. The disastrous conflict in South Africa, though by this point successfully concluded, had stretched British resources and revealed the limitations of the nation's power. Policymakers were therefore in no mood to put other more vital areas of the Empire, such as India, in jeopardy by antagonising their primary rival over issues of peripheral concern.⁷ In April 1903, the Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne, explained to Michael Herbert, the British Ambassador in Washington, the Government's 'inner mind' on the Manchuria question:

The Cabinet while objecting most strongly to the action of Russia would probably refuse to go to war either alone or with Japan only as an ally to prevent the absorption of Manchuria and Mongolia.⁸

The phrase 'with Japan only' is key, as Lansdowne and his colleagues retained the hope that they could be saved from their East Asian dilemma by the *deus ex machina* of joint action with the United States, which would either serve to frighten the Russians into retreat or, if it came to it, make war a more feasible prospect. British policymakers consequently encouraged Washington to take the lead in defending the Open Door in Manchuria so that they might follow, effectively taking the line that the attitude of the United States would determine the British position on Manchuria. If the Americans took a strong stance they could count on British support, but if they allowed their claim to equal commercial treatment to be trampled on, Britain would almost certainly follow suit.⁹

The admittedly fairly faint British hope that the United States would take the initiative and opt for a more assertive role in East Asia did have some basis, as

⁷ Nish, *Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, pp.117, 270; T.G. Otte, *The China Question: Great Power Rivalry and British Isolation, 1894-1905* (Oxford, 2007), pp.226, 291-292; Z.S. Steiner, 'Great Britain and the Creation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance', *Journal of Modern History* 31 (1959), pp.27, 29, 31.

⁸ Lord Lansdowne to M. Herbert, April 28th 1903, FO 800/144, TNA.

⁹ Lord Lansdowne to M. Herbert, April 28th 1903, FO 405/134, TNA; J. Choate to J. Hay, July 18th 1903, Reel 7, John Hay Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Hay MS]; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.11; Monger, *The End of Isolation*, pp.125-127; Nish, *Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, p.271; B. Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement: England and the United States, 1895-1914* (London, 1969), p.220.

American policymakers recognised the potential commercial value of Manchuria and the desirability of upholding the Open Door and China's integrity as fully as possible.¹⁰ The region was not, however, a vital national interest by any means and public opinion was broadly apathetic towards the Far East at this point. There was no popular appetite for any further adventures on the other side of the Pacific, and so Secretary of State John Hay and President Theodore Roosevelt, despite fantasising about 'going to "extremes" with Russia', resigned themselves to the role of spectators in the Manchurian controversy.¹¹ The problem of domestic politics thus remained a crucial one in determining American policy in East Asia; widespread hostility to even the merest whiff of 'foreign entanglement' persisted and was a crucial limiting factor on American action. In order to stave off domestic criticism, Hay had to ensure that the very modest action which the United States did take, in the form of protests over Russian conduct, could not be construed as anything other than wholly independent, a limitation which applied particularly strongly with regard to coordinated action with Britain.¹²

The passive stance which Britain and the United States observed in relation to the Manchuria question was called into question in late 1903 as the negotiations between Russia and Japan stalled and overt hostilities became an increasingly likely prospect. Faced with the immediate possibility of war in East Asia, policymakers in London and Washington were forced to consider whether they should seek to avert a conflict and, if war did break out, whether they should intervene to ensure that the Russo-Japanese clash would not endanger their interests in the region. For the

¹⁰ Cohen, *America's Response to China*, p.60; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, pp.53, 64, 77, 81-82.

¹¹ T. Roosevelt to J. Hay, July 18th 1903 in E.E. Morison (ed.), *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, MA, 1951-1954) [hereafter *Roosevelt Letters*], vol. 3, p.520; J. Hay to T. Roosevelt, July 22nd 1903, Box 4, Hay MS; T. Roosevelt to J. Hay, July 29th 1903, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 3, pp.532-533; Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, pp.137-138; F.R. Dulles, *China and America: The Story of their Relations since 1784* (Princeton, NJ, 1946), p.124; R.W. Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy: A History* (New York, 1962), pp.218-219; C.E. Neu, 'Theodore Roosevelt and American Involvement in the Far East, 1901-1909', *Pacific Historical Review* 35 (1966), p.436.

¹² J. Hay to T. Roosevelt, April 25th 1903, Box 4, Hay MS; J. Hay to T. Roosevelt, April 28th 1903, Reel 2, Hay MS; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, pp.194-195; A.W. Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New York, 1938), p.88; P.A. Varg, 'The United States as a World Power, 1900-1917: Reality or Myth?' in J. Braeman, R.H. Bremner and D. Brody (eds.), *Twentieth Century American Foreign Policy* (Columbus, OH, 1971), p.218.

British, these decisions were complicated by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, signed in 1902, which to some extent tied their fortunes to those of the Japanese but did not require them to come to Japan's aid unless a third power were to intervene on the side of Russia.¹³

American policymakers, who had considerably less at stake in the conflict, had more or less established their position prior to the breakdown in negotiations between Japan and Russia. As early as the beginning of September 1903, Hay had informed the Japanese that he did not consider the Russian failure to evacuate Manchuria sufficient cause for American action and, furthermore, that if war did come the United States would look purely to its own interests.¹⁴ Though the Roosevelt administration did, in early 1904, give some thought to the possibility of mediation, this idea appears to have fallen by the wayside fairly quickly in light of Japanese objections.¹⁵ American willingness to allow the conflict to play out was probably influenced by a feeling in Washington that it would be no bad thing for the Japanese to call the Russian bluff by taking up arms over Manchuria; Hay had spoken almost wistfully on a number of occasions of the prospect that Japan might 'fly at the throat' of Russia.¹⁶ Moreover, American policymakers took the view that the Japanese were effectively fighting on the side of the Open Door and the integrity of China, and that any success they had would also redound to the benefit of the United States. Roosevelt confided to his son Ted in February 1904, 'Japan is playing our game', and there was a great deal of optimism in the U.S. that the Asian nation would prove themselves superior in this particular contest.¹⁷

With one vital exception, British policymakers were unable to share American hopes that a war might prove a mixed blessing rather than simply a curse.

¹³ Lord Lansdowne to J. Pauncefote, February 10th 1902, FO 5/2489, TNA; T.G. Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge, 2011), p.291.

¹⁴ J. Hay to T. Roosevelt, September 3rd 1903, Box 4, Hay MS.

¹⁵ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, February 6th 1904, FO 5/2551, TNA; T. Roosevelt to O. Straus, February 9th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, p.721.

¹⁶ J. Hay to T. Roosevelt, May 12th 1903, Reel 2, Hay MS; J. Hay to A. Adee, September 18th 1903, Box 4, Hay MS.

¹⁷ T. Roosevelt to T. Roosevelt, Jr., February 10th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.723-724; Cohen, *America's Response to China*, p.66.

There was an ingrained pessimism in the British Government as to the capacity of the Japanese to wage war against the Russians, and the Cabinet discussion of the looming war in December 1903 was grounded in the assumption that Japan would be 'crushed'.¹⁸ The only dissenter to this gloomy view was the Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour. Admittedly, Balfour did not have particularly high hopes for the Japanese either, but he argued that there was no chance that the nation could be wiped out as a force in East Asia without Russia being exhausted as well.¹⁹ Rather less sanguine, Lansdowne and the rest of the Cabinet fretted over the possible consequences of a Japanese defeat for Britain's interests in East Asia and her prestige more generally. They were also alive to the danger that they might be dragged into the conflict, either through the mechanism of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance or because British public opinion would force the Government to intervene to rescue their allies from destruction.²⁰ Balfour, however, chose to dwell on the potential bright side of the Russo-Japanese conflict, and his line of thinking exemplifies the global perspective with which British policymakers approached the war. The Prime Minister was preoccupied with the Russian threat to British interests elsewhere in the world, particularly in India and Persia, and believed that if Russia's energies could be diverted to East Asia by constant danger from Japan – who even in defeat would be her 'unsleeping and implacable enemy' – then Britain would be able to rest easier in those more significant arenas.²¹

¹⁸ E. Satow to Lord Lansdowne, August 27th 1903, FO 800/120, TNA; Lord Selborne to Lord Lansdowne, December 21st 1903, Add MS 88906/17/1, Henry Charles Keith Petty-Fitzmaurice (5th Marquis of Lansdowne) Papers, Bowood Papers, British Library Manuscript Collections, London [hereafter Lansdowne MS]; Lord Lansdowne to A. Balfour, December 24th 1903, Add MS 49728, Arthur Balfour Papers, British Library Manuscript Collections, London [hereafter Balfour MS]; Lord Lansdowne Memorandum, December 27th 1903, Add MS 88906/22/15, Lansdowne MS; Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p.126.

¹⁹ A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, December 22nd 1903, Add MS 88906/17/5, Lansdowne MS; A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, December 26th 1903, Add MS 49728, Balfour MS; A. Balfour Memorandum, December 29th 1903, CAB 37/67/97, TNA.

²⁰ Lord Lansdowne to A. Balfour, December 24th 1903, Add MS 49728, Balfour MS; Lord Selborne Memorandum, December 24th 1903, Add MS 88906/22/15, Lansdowne MS; Lord Lansdowne Memorandum, December 27th 1903, Add MS 88906/22/15, Lansdowne MS; Lord Lansdowne to A. Balfour, December 29th 1903, Add MS 49728, Balfour MS.

²¹ A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, December 22nd 1903, Add MS 88906/17/5, Lansdowne MS; A. Balfour Memorandum, December 29th 1903, CAB 37/67/97, TNA; Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p.148; K. Neilson, 'The Anglo-Japanese Alliance and British Strategic Foreign Policy, 1902-1914' in

Thus, although British pessimism initially inclined some key figures to back intervention of one kind or another, Britain ultimately followed the example of the United States in adopting a passive policy of simply watching the conflict unfold. What difference there was between the two powers was largely a matter of expectations, the British assuming that Japan would be defeated and the Americans projecting a more positive outcome. A further aspect of the difference between Britain and the U.S. was that, because of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the British were much more invested in the outcome of the conflict than the Americans. It was somewhat inevitable that the United States would take a hands-off approach to conflict in East Asia, whereas for Britain the decision to do so was a considerably weightier one. British passivity during the build-up and at the outbreak of war was thus a very deliberate choice to leave Japan to, in Balfour's words, 'work out her own salvation in her own way'.²² In addition to the potential benefits which were foreseen from Russia being drawn into conflict with Japan, this decision was motivated by the belief that it would be unwise to try to influence Japanese policy in one direction or another. Balfour and Lansdowne established a clear line which would shape British policy for the entire course of the war: given the potential for unwelcome suggestions to sour relations between the allies, no pressure was to be put on Japan to compromise in the hope of peace and no 'unpalatable advice' of any kind was to be proffered.²³

With the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War in February 1904, Britain and the United States began to consider not only what attitude they would take to the developing conflict but also what they hoped to gain, and what they wished to avoid, in its outcome. American policymakers identified early on that the most

P.P. O'Brien (ed.), *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1902-1922* (London, 2004), p.56; J. Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy: The International Thought of a Conservative Statesman* (Cambridge, 1997), pp.122-123.

²² A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, December 22nd 1903, Add MS 88906/17/5, Lansdowne MS.

²³ A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, December 22nd 1903, Add MS, 49728, Balfour MS; A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, December 22nd 1903, Add MS88906/17/5, Lansdowne MS; Lord Selborne to Lord Lansdowne, December 29th 1903, Add MS88906/17/1, Lansdowne MS; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, February 5th 1904, FO 5/2551, TNA; B.E.C. Dugdale, *Arthur James Balfour: First Earl of Balfour*, vol. 1 (London 1936), p.377; Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, p.77.

desirable result from the point of view of maintaining the regional status quo and the Open Door in China would be a rough balance of power between Russia and Japan. They reasoned that if the two powers fought it out to a point where both remained intact but unable to wage further war they would effectively cancel one another other out, leaving the disputed region of Manchuria open for the commerce of all.²⁴ The British, with those same ultimate goals of the Open Door and the preservation of the territorial status quo in mind, took a fairly similar view – indeed, the concept of a balance of power had been floated in the Foreign Office as a promising solution to the Manchuria question as early as 1901 – but with a couple of significant caveats.²⁵ In the first place, as indicated above, British policymakers were considerably more pessimistic about Japan’s prospects, and so although they recognised the desirability of a balance of power they were more concerned with ensuring that in the event of a Russian victory there were contingencies in place to preserve the Open Door and some semblance of Chinese sovereignty in Manchuria.²⁶ More fundamentally, the British Government had a much more global perspective on the consequences of the conflict in contrast to the narrower outlook of the Americans, who were chiefly preoccupied with the war’s regional impact. Policymakers in London therefore worried about not only a Russian threat to Manchuria and the Open Door but also the potential for Russia to strike at British interests in other parts of the world, either off the back of success against the Japanese or by way of compensation for a set-back in East Asia. A comprehensive Japanese victory, though in their view highly unlikely, thus had definite appeal from

²⁴ H.C. Allen, *Great Britain and the United States: A History of Anglo-American Relations, 1783-1952* (London, 1954), p.616; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, pp.269-272; H.W. Brands, *T.R.: The Last Romantic* (New York, 1997), pp.529-530; Cohen, *America’s Response to China*, p.66; L.M. Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship: A Study in World Politics, 1898-1906* (London, 1938), pp.173, 178; E.H. Zabriskie, *American-Russian Rivalry in the Far East: A Study in Diplomacy and Power Politics, 1895-1914* (Philadelphia, PA, 1946), pp.107-108.

²⁵ F. Bertie Memorandum, March 11th 1901, FO 405/104, TNA; W.J. Pomeroy, *American Neo-Colonialism: Its Emergence in the Philippines and Asia* (New York, 1970), p.157; P. Towle, *From Ally to Enemy: Anglo-Japanese Military Relations, 1900-45* (Folkestone, 2006), p.x.

²⁶ A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, February 11th 1904, Add MS 49728, Balfour MS; D.H. Burton, ‘Theodore Roosevelt and the ‘Special Relationship’ with Britain’, *History Today* 23 (1973), p.533; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, pp.221-222.

the point of view of British policymakers, as it would render the Russians unable to menace their interests either in China or globally.²⁷

The broad goals of Britain and the United States during the Russo-Japanese War were very similar, if not identical, as they retained their shared solicitude for the East Asian status quo and the Open Door for trade throughout the Chinese Empire. Where they differed was in their perspectives on the war, and although they assumed to all intents and purposes the same basic position during the conflict – tacit support for Japan with a view to an ultimate balance of power in East Asia – this difference played a significant role in the development of friction between London and Washington as the Russo-Japanese War unfolded. Policymakers, in Washington especially, expected that the two nations would be found together in light of their common interests and were thus apt to be frustrated when their respective approaches to the various issues thrown up by the war did not consistently match up. Further fuel for mutual irritation arose from the mismatch in British and Americans views as to what sort of cooperation was desirable; both powers emphasised closeness, harmony and their hopes for working together but each meant something different by this, inevitably generating a degree of tension. This dynamic became evident in the initial stages of the war, as the two powers attempted to navigate the tricky issue of Chinese neutrality.

In early February 1904, the U.S. Government proposed to Britain, along with the other European powers, that their combined good offices should be used to try to ensure that Russia and Japan respected the neutrality of China. American policymakers hoped to contain the conflict in the smallest area possible and confine it to the two original combatants, thus minimising the threat to Chinese integrity and the danger of escalation into a global clash. In order to gain the assent of the various powers, Hay deliberately kept the suggestion vague and refrained from addressing the vexed question of how Manchuria, where much of the fighting

²⁷ D.H. Burton, *British-American Diplomacy, 1895-1917: Early Years of the Special Relationship* (Malabar, FL, 1999), p.48; A.E. Campbell, *Great Britain and the United States, 1895-1903* (London, 1960), p.158; Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p.167.

would inevitably take place, fitted in to the picture.²⁸ British policymakers, though thoroughly in agreement with the objective of securing Chinese neutrality and limiting the scope of the conflict, had their doubts about the American suggestion, questioning the practical utility of such an ambiguous proposal. They were keen, however, to show willingness to cooperate, and so the Foreign Office acted upon the American request, but at the same time attempted to formulate a more watertight and efficacious solution to the problem the U.S. initiative had highlighted.²⁹

Balfour in particular was adamant that a half-baked guarantee of Chinese neutrality which did not include Manchuria and which lacked any real force behind it would be unfit for purpose, leaving far too much leeway for the Russians to use the war as a springboard for aggressive expansion. What the Prime Minister really wanted was a much more sweeping joint British-American guarantee of the 'administrative entity' of China, or, as he put it in a private letter to Lansdowne:

If the Americans would so far violate their traditions as to make any suggestion of an alliance for the purpose of preserving by arms, if necessary, the integrity of China, it would open a new era in the history of the world.³⁰

British policymakers did not attempt to sell this grandiose vision to the Americans at this point, presumably recognising that those 'traditions' still held an awful lot of weight, but they did look to lay the groundwork for future regional cooperation

²⁸ J. Hay to J. Choate, February 8th 1904 in U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter *FRUS*] 1904, [University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries Digital Collections](http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS) <<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS>> (accessed 09/08/13), p.327; J. Hay to J. Choate, February 10th 1904, *FRUS* 1904, p.328; J. Hay to J. Choate, February 13th 1904, M77/93, RG-59, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD [hereafter NARA]; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, February 13th 1904, FO 405/146, TNA.

²⁹ Lord Lansdowne Memorandum, February 9th 1904, Add MS 88906/22/15 Lansdowne MS; A. Chamberlain Memorandum, February 9th 1904, Add MS 88906/22/15, Lansdowne MS; A. Balfour Memorandum, Undated February 1904, Add MS 88906/22/15, Lansdowne MS; G. Wyndham Memorandum, Undated February 1904, Add MS 88906/22/15, Lansdowne MS; Lord Lansdowne to C. MacDonald, February 11th 1904, FO 405/146, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, February 13th 1904, FO 405/146, TNA.

³⁰ A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, February 11th 1904, Add MS 49728, Balfour MS; E.W. Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China, 1895-1914* (Oxford, 1987), p.62; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.30; Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, pp.294-295.

between the two powers.³¹ Unfortunately, they did so in the context of discussing Hay's more limited proposal, giving American policymakers the erroneous impression that the British Government somehow objected to the neutrality scheme. Thus mistaking an admittedly fairly subtle British overture for a refusal to support the American position, Roosevelt and Hay privately vented their irritation at the 'dull' and 'thick-headed' response of British policymakers and their apparent readiness to undermine a project which was so clearly in line with their ostensible policy and interests.³² American frustration over the neutrality issue died away almost as soon as it became clear that the British had in fact already acted positively on Hay's suggestion, but this incident is indicative of the facility with which American policymakers reverted to images of the British as stolid and vacillating. Furthermore, the misunderstanding over the question of Chinese neutrality highlights the potential for friction created by the disjuncture in the two powers' hopes and expectations for joint action, as the British desire for a more sweeping understanding came up against an American proposal which was much more limited and specific.

More significant tension and differences of opinion would not really surface until the closing stages of the war, however, and the keynote of the latter part of 1904 and early 1905 was rather the growing closeness and intimacy of the two powers. This increasing cordiality was facilitated in large part by the blossoming of informal relationships, and in particular by the friendship between British diplomat Cecil Spring Rice and President Roosevelt. Spring Rice, who was Secretary of the British Embassy at St Petersburg during the war, wrote frequently and at length to Roosevelt and other significant actors such as Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and John Hay. Though he wrote primarily as a private individual, his close friendships and regular correspondence with key figures in the Foreign Office and the Conservative

³¹ Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, February 12th 1904, FO 405/146, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, February 13th 1904, FO 405/146, TNA; J. Choate to J. Hay, February 13th 1904, M30/195, RG-59, NARA; Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p.155.

³² J. Hay Diary, February 11th 1904, Box 1, Hay MS; J. Hay Diary, February 13th 1904, Box 1, Hay MS; J. Hay Diary, February 14th 1904, Box 1, Hay MS; T. Roosevelt to E. Root, February 16th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.730-732.

leadership afforded him something of a unique position. In spite of his somewhat idiosyncratic outlook, Spring Rice's American correspondents took his views seriously, both in terms of his insight into the British official mind and his analysis of the situation in Russia and throughout the world.³³

The correspondence between Spring Rice and his American friends during 1904 offers a unique and very candid glimpse into the thinking of the two powers regarding the Russo-Japanese War, particularly in terms of the role played by ideology in shaping their attitudes towards the conflict. For example, in a letter of March 1904, Roosevelt offered an insight into his preference for a balance of power steeped in a racialised understanding of the war:

It may be that the two powers will fight until both are fairly well exhausted, and that then peace will come on terms which will not mean the creation of either a yellow peril or a Slav peril.³⁴

The representation of the conflict as a sort of preliminary bout in the coming clash of civilisations and the treatment of its consequences in terms of racial threat were both common features of this correspondence, distinguishing it significantly from the official British-American dialogue, which was devoid of such ideological content. Spring Rice and Roosevelt in particular appear to have shared this basic ideological grounding, and were in broad agreement that the Japanese fought on the side of civilisation and the interests of the English-speaking powers while Russia, an enemy of the Open Door and Chinese territorial integrity, represented a 'menace to the higher life of the world'.³⁵ There are crucial differences, however, in the manner in

³³ J. Hay to T. Roosevelt, March 21st 1904 in S. Gwynn (ed.), *The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring Rice* [hereafter *Spring Rice Letters*], vol. 1 (London, 1929), p.407; J. Hay Diary, June 22nd 1904, Box 1, Hay MS; T. Roosevelt to J. Hay, July 26th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, p.865; J. Hay to T. Roosevelt, September 17th 1904, Box 5, Hay MS; T. Roosevelt to G. Meyer, December 26th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1078-1080; D.H. Burton, *Cecil Spring-Rice: A Diplomat's Life* (London, 1990), pp.55, 90, 124; L. Einstein, *Roosevelt: His Mind in Action* (Boston, MA, 1930), p.139.

³⁴ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, March 19th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.759-761.

³⁵ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, February 2nd 1904, Reel 415, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Roosevelt MS]; C. Spring Rice to A.C.M. Lodge, February 19th 1904, Reel 93, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA [hereafter Lodge MS]; C. Spring Rice to T. Roosevelt, Undated (probably February 1904), *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.394-397; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, March 19th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.759-761; C. Spring Rice to H.C. Lodge, March 25th 1904, Reel 93, Lodge MS; C. Spring Rice to T. Roosevelt, Undated June 1904, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.419-423; C. Spring Rice

which the two men employed the same ideological framework, reflecting the differing British and American perspectives and agendas with regard to the war.

Though he not infrequently denied harbouring any concerns regarding future danger from Japan, there is no question that Roosevelt was preoccupied principally with the first half of his 'yellow peril' or 'Slav peril' formulation.³⁶ In part, this was simply a reflection of his greater confidence in the ability of the Japanese to successfully prosecute the war, but his letters to Spring Rice also dwelt at length on the problem of racial difference in relation to Japan's success. Roosevelt mused early on in the war that a Japanese victory would mean the rise of 'a great new force in eastern Asia' and, in consequence, 'a real shifting of the center of equilibrium as far as the white races are concerned'.³⁷ The President's words of caution to Spring Rice about Japan became increasingly pointed as the conflict progressed, and in a letter of December 1904 – in the wake of unprecedented Japanese military success and some disturbing reports from American observers – he offered his direst prediction yet. Roosevelt lamented that he could not be confident that the Japanese did not see all Westerners 'simply as white devils inferior to themselves', who were to be 'treated politely only so long as would enable the Japanese to take advantage of our various national jealousies, and beat us in turn'.³⁸ Roosevelt's warnings about the possibility that a victorious Japan would become a 'yellow peril' and threaten the English-speaking peoples, though undoubtedly an indication of his own personal anxieties to some extent, had a clear purpose in the interchange with Spring Rice. Future danger from Japan was the crux of the argument for promoting a balance of power in East Asia, and Roosevelt

to J. Hay, August 31st 1904, Reel 9, Hay MS; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, December 27th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1082-1088.

³⁶ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, June 13th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.829-833; T. Roosevelt to J. Hay, July 26th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, p.865; Brands, *T.R.*, p.530; A. Iriye, *Across the Pacific: An Inner History of American-East Asian Relations* (New York, 1967), p.106.

³⁷ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, March 19th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.759-761; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, June 13th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.829-833; A. Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement: Japanese and American Expansion, 1897-1911* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), pp.111-112; G. Sinkler, *The Racial Attitudes of American Presidents: From Abraham Lincoln to Theodore Roosevelt* (Garden City, NY, 1971), pp.396-397.

³⁸ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, December 27th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1082-1088.

was tapping into the rich ideological vein of civilisational conflict to add weight to his position.

Spring Rice's take on the unfolding conflict was somewhat different to his American friend's, primarily because he subscribed to the more pessimistic British view that Russian victory was the most likely outcome and therefore the chief danger to be contended with.³⁹ Just as Roosevelt raised the spectre of a racial or civilisational threat from Japan, Spring Rice postulated Slavic hegemony over China and 'a life and death struggle in Asia' for the English-speaking peoples should Russia prove to be the stronger of the two powers.⁴⁰ Spring Rice shared Balfour's hope that the U.S. would commit to working with Britain to oppose Russian schemes for dominance in China, and his portrayal of future danger from Russia in terms of an ultimate conflict between Slav and Anglo-Saxon was designed to bolster his arguments regarding the need for a united front in East Asia.⁴¹ The British diplomat evidently deemed it necessary, with this purpose in mind, to counter Roosevelt's predictions of danger from Japan and emphasise instead the Russian threat. To do this he also drew on Yellow Peril ideology, but a particular strand of it which located the real 'yellow danger' in Slavic supremacy over the innumerable masses of the Chinese.⁴² Spring Rice employed this idea in several letters to Roosevelt, but his most emphatic use of it was in a letter to Hay of August 1904: 'The Russian and the Chinaman together are the two most malleable instruments of despotism which it is possible to find on this degenerate earth. I think *this* is the real yellow peril.'⁴³

³⁹ C. Spring Rice to A.C.M. Lodge, February 19th 1904, Reel 93, Lodge MS; C. Spring Rice to H.C. Lodge, March 25th 1904, Lodge MS, Reel 93; C. Spring Rice to J. Hay, Undated June 1904, Reel 9, Hay MS; Burton, *Cecil Spring-Rice*, pp.123-124.

⁴⁰ C. Spring Rice to T. Roosevelt, Undated June 1904, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.419-423; C. Spring Rice to T. Roosevelt, December 7th 1904, Reel 50, Roosevelt MS.

⁴¹ C. Spring Rice to H.C. Lodge, March 25th 1904, Lodge MS, Reel 93; C. Spring Rice to R.M. Ferguson, November 10th 1904, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.432-433.

⁴² A. Colquhoun, *China in Transformation* (New York, 1904 [1898]), pp.357-358, 379, 381-382; G.N. Curzon, *Problems of the Far East* (London, 1894), pp.361-362; G. Prince, 'The Yellow Peril in Britain, 1890-1920' (MA Thesis, McGill University, 1987), pp.25-26; R.A. Thompson, *The Yellow Peril, 1890-1924* (New York, 1978), pp.36, 282-283.

⁴³ C. Spring Rice to T. Roosevelt, Undated June 1904, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.419-423; C. Spring Rice to J. Hay, August 31st 1904, Reel 9, Hay MS.

The fairly liberal employment by Spring Rice and Roosevelt of ideas of race and civilisation to further their respective agendas offers a striking demonstration of the potential utility of such ideas in promoting British-American cooperation. This kind of interaction is only found, however, in the entirely informal and largely speculative correspondence of 1904. By early 1905, the communication between Roosevelt and Spring Rice had begun a transition into the mainstream of British-American interaction, during which it would lose much of its ideological character.

The major reason behind this shift was Roosevelt's dissatisfaction with the British Ambassador at Washington, Mortimer Durand, through whom the President did not feel he could communicate as openly and effectively as he wished, especially with regard to the East Asian situation.⁴⁴ Roosevelt put the problem to Spring Rice in a letter of late December 1904, along with a suggestion as to how the two governments might overcome this difficulty in communication:

Unfortunately there is no one in your embassy here to whom I can speak with even reasonable fullness. I wish to Heaven you could come over, if only for a week or two; and I think it would be very important for your Government that you should come over.⁴⁵

Roosevelt's concerns were not merely the product of a breakdown in communication, although this does appear to have been the catalyst for his action, but also a reflection of the continued influence of a negative image of the British which had been prevalent among American policymakers during the Boxer Rising. The President expressed doubts in particular about Britain's 'tenacity of purpose', essentially accusing British policymakers of being irresolute or, as he put it to American Ambassador to Russia George Meyer, 'flabby'.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ C. Spring Rice to R.M. Ferguson, November 10th 1904, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.432-433; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, November 11th 1904, Reel 415, Roosevelt MS ; T. Roosevelt to H. White, December 27th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, p.1082; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.177; P. Larsen, 'Sir Mortimer Durand in Washington: A Study in Anglo-American Relations in the Era of Theodore Roosevelt', *Mid-America* 66 (1984), pp.67, 70-71.

⁴⁵ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, December 27th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1082-1088.

⁴⁶ T. Roosevelt to G. Meyer, December 26th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1078-1080; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, December 27th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1082-1088; T. Roosevelt to H. White, December 27th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, p.1082; E. Morris, *Theodore Rex* (London, 2001), p.396.

At the same time as he wrote to Spring Rice, Roosevelt also primed the American Secretary of the Embassy in London, Henry White, to suggest that the Foreign Office might arrange for Spring Rice to go to Washington so that together they could 'try to get a clear idea of the respective mental attitudes of the two governments.'⁴⁷ Though not entirely comfortable with the unconventional approach to communication Roosevelt was proposing, British policymakers were eager to grasp the opportunity presented by Spring Rice's friendship with the President to advance the cause of closer British-American relations.⁴⁸ Their enthusiasm was based in part, however, on a misreading of Roosevelt's intentions. Projecting onto the President their own hopes for British-American partnership in East Asia, they detected in his suggestion, 'a proposal for joint action at the end of the war, in connection with possible terms of peace'.⁴⁹ With this understanding of the enterprise in mind, Balfour sought to send Spring Rice off on his visit to the White House armed with a strong case for a collaborative British-American solution to the problems of East Asia. Initially he had hoped that the delicate matter of communicating the official mind to his unofficial envoy could be dealt with by means of a private letter, but in the end a more discreet approach was adopted and the relevant information conveyed indirectly. Nevertheless, Balfour's draft letter offers a fascinating insight into British hopes for the Spring Rice mission and approach to promoting their agenda.⁵⁰

Balfour's instructions to Spring Rice raised the possibility, hinted at but not followed up during the discussions over Chinese neutrality, of a treaty between Britain and the United States to counteract any steps towards the dismemberment of China. Though acknowledging the political obstacles to such an undertaking, the

⁴⁷ T. Roosevelt to H. White, December 27th 1904, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, p.1082.

⁴⁸ H. White to T. Roosevelt, January 7th 1905, Reel 52, Roosevelt MS; A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, January 17th 1905, Add MS 88906/17/5, Lansdowne MS; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.179.

⁴⁹ G. Balfour to C. Spring Rice, January 17th 1905, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, p.449.

⁵⁰ A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, January 17th 1905, Add MS 49729, Balfour MS; Lord Lansdowne to A. Balfour, January 18th 1905, Balfour MS, Add MS 49729; Dugdale, *Arthur James Balfour*, vol. 1, pp.386-389; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.179; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.113; Nish, *Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, p.295; Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy*, p.125.

Prime Minister took the line that if Britain and the United States were to stand together against any violations of China's integrity, the other powers would be compelled to fall in line. Specifically, Balfour urged:

It might be well worth while for the United States and Britain to consider what terms of peace they would regard as inimical to their interests, and how they can best prevent Russia indemnifying herself for the moral and material cost of the war by appropriating a large slice of Chinese territory.⁵¹

British concerns, and by extension their proposals for joint action with the United States, were thus focused not on the immediate questions of the war but on the broader issue of the future of China, with Russia still very much singled out as the likely villain of the piece.⁵²

In order to press this latter point home, Balfour evidently felt that it was also necessary to counteract the anxiety Roosevelt had expressed in his earlier correspondence regarding a future threat from Japan. His letter to Spring Rice thus began with this striking declaration: 'I am completely sceptical about the 'Yellow Peril'. The idea of Japan leading an Eastern crusade on Western civilisation seems to me altogether chimerical.'⁵³ Balfour's use of the specific terminology of 'Yellow Peril' is interesting, as it suggests a deliberate attempt to tar the notion of potential danger from Japan with the brush of racist scare-mongering. The impression that the Prime Minister's engagement, albeit in a negative sense, with racial ideology in this instance was a deliberate tactic designed to discredit anxiety over a future Japanese threat is reinforced by a further comment in Spring Rice's draft instructions:

The real danger is not the remote and fantastic dream of a victory of East over West, but the very near and imminent peril of important fragments of China being dominated by more warlike and aggressive Powers.⁵⁴

This dichotomy implied that fear of danger from Japan was unfounded and irrational anxiety while, on the contrary, danger from Russia was a very real and practical concern. Balfour thus overtly rejected an ideological interpretation of the

⁵¹ A. Balfour to C. Spring Rice (draft), January 17th 1905, Add MS 49729, Balfour MS.

⁵² Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, pp.72, 74; Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.292.

⁵³ A. Balfour to C. Spring Rice (draft), January 17th 1905, Add MS 49729, Balfour MS.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Russo-Japanese conflict as a means to bolster his argument for British-American cooperation to preserve Chinese territorial integrity in the aftermath of the war.

Equipped with his instructions, Spring Rice arrived in Washington in late January 1905 and stayed until early February. In addition to meeting directly with Roosevelt and Hay, Spring Rice also facilitated much more candid conversations between the President and the British Ambassador, the lack of which had initially prompted his mission.⁵⁵ This breakthrough in communication at Washington was a source of great satisfaction for British policymakers, especially as Durand repeatedly emphasised in his reports the growing intimacy in British-American relations and the strong sense of goodwill that the Spring Rice mission had brought to the surface. For example, he dwelt on comments Roosevelt had made as to the community of interest of the two powers in East Asia and, more promising still, his assertion that 'England and the United States must stand together' in that region.⁵⁶ Encouraged by Durand's glowing assessments of the prospects for British-American collaboration, Lansdowne and Balfour stressed the desirability of the two powers staying in line and even engaging in 'concerted action' where appropriate, evidently hoping for some sort of commitment from Roosevelt with regard to securing China against Russian aggression at the end of the war.⁵⁷ Though acknowledging the continued limitations on U.S. action imposed by popular suspicion of 'entangling alliances', Durand was hopeful as to the potential for a cooperative venture in East

⁵⁵ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 23rd 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 26th 1905, PP MS 55/42, Box 6, H. Mortimer Durand Papers, SOAS Special Collections, London [hereafter Durand MS]; C. Spring Rice to Lord Lansdowne, Undated February 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; H.M. Durand to R.M. Ferguson, April 7th 1905, PP MS 55/46, Box 7, Durand MS; Burton, *Cecil Spring-Rice*, p.127; L.A. McGeoch, 'Lord Lansdowne and the American Impact on British Diplomacy, 1900-1905', *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 7 (1981), p.15.

⁵⁶ Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, January 23rd 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to A. Balfour, January 23rd 1905, Add MS 49729, Balfour MS; Lord Lansdowne to King Edward VII, January 25th 1905, Add MS 88906/18/12, Lansdowne MS; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 26th 1905, PP MS 55/42, Box 6, Durand MS; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 30th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA.

⁵⁷ Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, January 25th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA.

Asia, and appears to have believed that joint action short of a formal understanding was eminently achievable.⁵⁸

This conclusion was, as the somewhat more realistic Spring Rice was only too aware, distinctly optimistic, as it significantly underestimated the continued influence of popular prejudice against working with Britain on Washington's calculations. As Spring Rice explained in his report to Lansdowne, though American policymakers most certainly recognised the identity of interests in East Asia, what they desired was not concerted but, at best, 'parallel' action. It had become clear in his discussions with Roosevelt and Hay that even the merest hint of an actual agreement would need to be avoided for the sake of the Roosevelt administration's domestic political needs.⁵⁹ Roosevelt's comments on the subject in a letter to Meyer are particularly telling, as the President explained that with nothing to separate the interests of Britain and the U.S. in the Far East there should be a 'thorough understanding' between them, but also, crucially, emphasised that this could only be achieved, 'without any talk whatever being made of it'.⁶⁰

Though Roosevelt had no interest in grand schemes for future joint action with Britain in East Asia, he did want to ensure that the two nations remained on the same page with regard to the developing situation in the Russo-Japanese War. In particular, he was beginning to look towards the possibility of a peace settlement and wished to establish that the British attitude towards such a venture was consonant with his own.⁶¹ In the course of the discussions between Roosevelt and Durand it became apparent that Britain and the United States were in broad agreement on the major points of possible contention in the settlement, in particular the question of Manchuria. Both governments, in line with their shared commitment to Chinese territorial integrity and preference for preserving the

⁵⁸ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 23rd 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, February 6th 1905, PP MS 55/46, Box 7, Durand MS.

⁵⁹ J. Hay Diary, January 30th 1905, Box 1, Hay MS; J. Hay Diary, February 2nd 1905, Box 1, Hay MS; C. Spring Rice to Lord Lansdowne, Undated February 1905, FO 800/116, TNA.

⁶⁰ T. Roosevelt to G. Meyer, February 6th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1115-1116.

⁶¹ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 23rd 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 26th 1905, PP MS 55/42, Box 6, Durand MS.

regional status quo, wished to see Manchuria fully returned to Chinese rule at the end of the war.⁶² These conversations also indicate, however, the beginnings of a divergence in the views of the two powers on the question of peace, though again this difference was not so much a matter of ultimate goals as of methods and, to a large extent, timing.

There was in Washington, in the early months of 1905, a considerably greater sense of urgency about bringing the war to a relatively swift conclusion. Roosevelt, though aware that it was not an immediate possibility, was in favour of initiating mediation between Russia and Japan at the earliest realistic opportunity.⁶³ This was by no means solely driven by concerns about Japan, but as that power's victories stacked up it appeared increasingly important to the President and his advisors that peace should not be delayed for too much longer. Roosevelt explicitly set out his preferred outcome for the conflict to Durand in January 1905:

He said he wanted Japan to win in the war, but not too decisively. "It is better that after the war they should remain face to face", otherwise he feared Japan might get too strong and perhaps become dangerous.⁶⁴

This is essentially the position Roosevelt had been espousing for almost a year, but where his earlier correspondence with Spring Rice had referred overtly to the possibility of Japan becoming a 'yellow peril', the President's statement to Durand was a considerably more ideologically-neutral exposition of the balance of power principle.

British policymakers still did not share Roosevelt's anxiety on this point, however, and in consequence had nothing like the same enthusiasm for the prospect of mediation, or even really for a peace settlement in the immediate future. Though they worked hard to conceal their dissent from the President's position, presumably on the basis that it had the potential to undermine their

⁶² H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 23rd 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, January 25th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 26th 1905, PP MS 55/42, Box 6, Durand MS; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.180.

⁶³ Griscom, *Diplomatically Speaking*, p.253; Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, p.293.

⁶⁴ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 26th 1905, PP MS 55/42, Box 6, Durand MS; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.54.

project for British-American collaboration, policymakers in London were sceptical of the value of an attempt to bring the contending parties to terms. One reason for this was that, with Britain's global policy needs in mind, an immediate end to the war was not entirely attractive; Britain would reap far greater benefits from a more drawn-out affair which would leave Russia too weak to cause significant problems elsewhere in the world. Balfour noted during the process of drafting instructions to Durand:

I am, on broad moral grounds, very anxious that we should do everything we can to put an end to the war. But I have to admit that, from a narrowly national point of view, the balance of advantage, I suspect, is on the side of continued hostilities.⁶⁵

The other side of British diffidence regarding moves towards peace was the largely practical point that an offer of mediation seemed unlikely to be acceptable to both powers. During Spring Rice's visit to Washington it was the Russians who appeared implacably opposed to talk of peace, while when the question of mediation arose again in March 1905, British policymakers learned confidentially that the Japanese were determined to prosecute the war until they were in a position to dictate the terms of the peace, and therefore wanted no interference. In these circumstances, the Foreign Office was particularly keen to avoid being in a position of taking an offer of mediation to their allies, believing as they had from the beginning of the conflict that unwanted advice had the potential to damage the British relationship with Japan.⁶⁶

In spite of these reservations as to the desirability and feasibility of mediation, Lansdowne did his best to meet in a cooperative spirit suggestions Roosevelt made in late January 1905 regarding testing the waters for peace negotiations. The Foreign Secretary raised, albeit somewhat obliquely, the question of likely peace terms with the Japanese and communicated their response to the

⁶⁵ A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, January 24th 1905, Add MS 49729, Balfour MS; Burton, *British-American Diplomacy*, p.48; Tomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy*, p.124.

⁶⁶ Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, January 25th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, March 16th 1905, FO 418/28, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, March 18th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; C. MacDonald to Lord Lansdowne, March 24th 1905, FO 405/159, TNA; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p.275.

U.S., leaving Roosevelt none the wiser that policymakers in London considered his plans for mediation something of a fool's errand.⁶⁷ Lansdowne even instructed Durand to say that if an opportunity for peace talks were to arise, the British Government, 'should do our best to secure from Japan a favourable reception of President's proposals'.⁶⁸ Meanwhile, however, he also wrote to Claude MacDonald, the British Minister at Tokyo, reassuring him that, 'Nothing is, of course, further from our thoughts than to put pressure on the Japanese Government.'⁶⁹ Though perhaps not wholly insincere, the British response to Roosevelt's suggestions regarding a peace settlement was at least in part an exercise in telling the President what he wanted to hear, and certainly exaggerated the extent to which the two governments shared the same view of the situation.

The main impact of the Spring Rice mission was thus very much at the surface level of British-American relations; the diplomat's visit had cemented a sense of shared interests and harmony without actually addressing the underlying differences in the two powers' views on the ongoing conflict. The significance of the mission from the point of view of communication between the powers should not be underrated, however, and Spring Rice himself identified the marked improvement in the relationship between the President and the British Ambassador as the most important effect of his visit. This development laid a vital foundation for 'a close and frank interchange of views' between Britain and the United States, but Spring Rice urged his superiors not to let matters rest where they were and to further enhance communication by making use of other unofficial or semi-official channels.⁷⁰ British policymakers, who had tended in the past to shy away from informal diplomacy for reasons of propriety, took up this suggestion, and over the following months figures such as Senator Lodge and William Rockhill, now American Minister to China, came to play an important role in British-American interaction. Thus, as Howard Beale has argued, the need to supplement official channels due to

⁶⁷ Lord Lansdowne to C. MacDonald, January 24th 1905, FO 800/134, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, January 28th 1905, FO 418/28, TNA.

⁶⁸ Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, January 25th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA.

⁶⁹ Lord Lansdowne to C. MacDonald, January 23rd 1905, FO 418/28, TNA.

⁷⁰ C. Spring Rice to Lord Lansdowne, Undated February 1905, FO 800/116, TNA.

failures in communication, while not actually securing a cooperative approach, did ultimately lead to a significant deepening of the interaction between the two powers.⁷¹

By far the most interesting of the extra-official interactions which arose from Spring Rice's visit to Washington was the correspondence between King Edward VII and President Roosevelt. The King wrote to Roosevelt in February 1905, ostensibly to offer his congratulations on Roosevelt's inauguration but, as Spring Rice later explained to Hay, also with the intention of bringing about closer relations between the two powers and building upon the Spring Rice mission.⁷² The letter represents perhaps one of the most overt examples of the employment of Anglo-Saxonist rhetoric in British-American interaction during these years, as the King declared:

You, Mr President, and I have been called upon to superintend the destinies of the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race, and this fact should, in my opinion, alone suffice to bring us together.⁷³

It should be noted, however, that this bold expression did not refer specifically to the situation in East Asia, but rather to British-American unity in an abstract sense. There is evidence to suggest that the King had intended to go even further, perhaps by making the direct link between racial affinity and practical cooperation, but had been discouraged from doing so by his ministers. Spring Rice's admission in letters to Hay and to Roosevelt's wife, Edith, that British policymakers had felt the need to curb the enthusiasm of the King, who had 'wanted to say much more than he did', indicates that even with the signal improvement in communication a degree of caution persisted regarding the free expression of such ideas.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Lord Lansdowne to E. Satow, February 21st 1905, FO 800/121, TNA; A. Balfour to H.C. Lodge, April 11th 1905, Add MS 49742, Balfour MS; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, pp.134-136.

⁷² King Edward VII to T. Roosevelt (draft), Add MS 88906/18/12, Lansdowne MS; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, February 22nd 1905, FO 800/144, TNA; C. Spring Rice to J. Hay, March 15th 1905, Reel 9, Hay MS.

⁷³ King Edward VII to T. Roosevelt, February 20th 1905, Add MS 88906/18/12, Lansdowne MS.

⁷⁴ C. Spring Rice to E.C. Roosevelt, March 13th 1905, Reel 53, Roosevelt MS; C. Spring Rice to J. Hay, March 15th 1905, Reel 9, Hay MS.

The King's letter prompted an equally effusive response from the American side, in which Roosevelt firmly assented to the King's call for unity between the nations:

I absolutely agree with you as to the importance, not merely to ourselves but to all the free peoples of the civilized world, of a constantly growing friendship and understanding between the English-speaking peoples.⁷⁵

Though Roosevelt, as was his habit, shied away from the term 'Anglo-Saxon' itself, this statement is very much reflective of the ideology of Anglo-Saxonism, particularly in the allusion to British-American closeness representing a bulwark of civilisation and liberty.⁷⁶ Indeed, Roosevelt explicitly affirmed later in the same letter that intimacy between the two powers had a sentimental as well as a pragmatic basis: 'The larger interests of the two nations are the same; and the fundamental, underlying traits of their characters are also the same.'⁷⁷ As with the King's letter, however, these robust expressions of ideological commitment to British-American closeness were reserved to abstract discussion of the relationship between the powers and not applied specifically to East Asian affairs.

Interestingly, while Spring Rice's visit to Washington had paved the way for more open employment of ideology in certain aspects of British-American interaction, his own correspondence with Roosevelt conversely became increasingly less steeped in ideological rhetoric. Roosevelt seems to have become more circumspect about the language he used in letters to his British friend, refraining from talking in terms of a Yellow Peril in particular. Likewise, though Spring Rice still discoursed on the possible threat from Russia at the end of the war, by the summer of 1905 he no longer did so with even the slightest undertone of racial or civilisational conflict. This shift appears to be largely down to the development of the correspondence from a private dialogue between friends into an indispensable element of the interaction between London and Washington, in which the Foreign

⁷⁵ T. Roosevelt to King Edward VII, March 9th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1135-1136.

⁷⁶ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, March 10th 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; T.G. Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1980), pp.26, 67-68.

⁷⁷ T. Roosevelt to King Edward VII, March 9th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1135-1136; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.184.

Office and State Department took a very close and direct interest.⁷⁸ Indeed, this particular back channel became increasingly significant as 1905 progressed, in part because Durand again fell short of Roosevelt's expectations as a medium for the frank exchange of views, but also because of the President's growing preoccupation with the possibility of bringing about peace between Russia and Japan with British aid.⁷⁹

As the conflict progressed, Japanese triumphs continued to mount while the Russian cause appeared ever more bankrupt; Port Arthur had been taken in early January 1905, and at the beginning of March Russian forces were forced to retreat from their erstwhile base in the Manchurian city of Mukden. The American goal of an eventual balance of power appeared to be distinctly at risk by this point, in light of the extent of Japanese success and the internal strife which threatened to bring the Russian Empire to its knees.⁸⁰ Roosevelt consequently sought to expedite the peace settlement so as to bring the conflict to a close before it brought about a Russian collapse or, even worse from the American point of view, the intervention of other powers seeking to dictate the terms of the peace.⁸¹ There was also in Roosevelt's project for peace an element of the pursuit of personal glory, but it would seem that the President embarked on the course of arranging a peace

⁷⁸ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, June 16th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1233-1234; C. Spring Rice to Lord Lansdowne, July 9th 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; C. Spring Rice to F. Loomis/T. Roosevelt, July 10th 1905, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.474-478; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, July 24th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1283-1287; C. Spring Rice to E. Root/T. Roosevelt, August 7th 1905, Reel 57, Roosevelt MS; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, pp.110-111.

⁷⁹ T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, June 5th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, p.1206; T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, June 30th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1257-1258; Burton, *Cecil Spring-Rice*, pp.129-130; Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, pp.37-38, 210; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, pp.206, 209-210.

⁸⁰ F.R. Dulles, *Forty Years of American-Japanese Relations* (New York, 1937), p.62; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.105; C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. 2 (London, 1972), p.278; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, p.368; Zabriskie, *American-Russian Rivalry in the Far East*, pp.114, 121.

⁸¹ T. Roosevelt to H.C. Lodge, June 5th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1202-1206; State Department Memo, June 5th 1905 (enclosed in H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, June 8th 1905), FO 5/2579, TNA; H. O'Beirne Memorandum, June 6th 1905 (enclosed in H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, June 8th 1905), FO 5/2579, TNA; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, pp.276-277; D.H. Burton, *Theodore Roosevelt: Confident Imperialist* (Philadelphia, PA, 1968), p.173.

settlement at least as much out of national policy considerations as a desire to make his own individual mark on world history.⁸²

Up until the end of May 1905, negotiations for peace remained, as the British had earlier suspected, a remote prospect, with neither Russia nor Japan showing any inclination towards coming to terms. With the decisive Japanese victory in the naval battle of Tsushima Strait, however, the situation was dramatically altered and peace talks became, rather suddenly, a realistic possibility.⁸³ It was at this point, too, that the slight divergence between Britain and the United States began to come to light, as Roosevelt looked to secure British backing for his efforts to bring about a peace conference. The President formally proposed talks to the two combatants in early June 1905, and within days Durand was reporting Roosevelt's desire for the Japanese to understand the vital importance of moderate peace terms, and his apparent belief that the British were in a position to use their influence with Japan to ensure that this message got across as clearly as possible.⁸⁴ Durand's response to this suggestion – which no doubt contributed to Roosevelt's exasperation with the Ambassador – was to studiously avoid making any comment on the matter, in which course of action he was strongly backed up by the Foreign Secretary.⁸⁵ Not only did British policymakers still hold very firmly to the principle of refraining from offering potentially unwelcome advice to the Japanese, they were also somewhat appalled at the idea of urging

⁸² Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, pp.241-242; Dulles, *Forty Years of American-Japanese Relations*, p.67; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, pp.40, 76; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, p.378.

⁸³ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, May 31st 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; T. Roosevelt to H.C. Lodge, June 5th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1202-1206; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, June 8th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; Brands, *T.R.*, p.533; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, p.389; Otte, *The China Question*, pp.322-323.

⁸⁴ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, June 13th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, p.210; Nish, *Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, p.293.

⁸⁵ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, June 13th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, June 13th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA.

moderation on their allies, as this appeared to imply an expectation that the as yet unknown Japanese peace terms would be somehow harsh or extreme.⁸⁶

British reticence in response to the suggestion that they might use their influence with Japan did little to deter Roosevelt, and he launched something of a campaign through the summer of 1905 to secure British backing for his peace schemes in the form of intervention with the Japanese. The President was intent on convincing British policymakers of the merits of his balance of power solution to the questions raised by the Russo-Japanese War, stressing in particular the dangers inherent in an outcome whereby Russia was 'driven out of East Asia' or 'completely crushed' in the region.⁸⁷ Evidently suspecting that there remained a degree of anxiety in Britain regarding Russian intentions, Roosevelt emphasised that Russia was no longer in any position to 'conquer the world' but that her continued regional presence would be a force for stability and peace in East Asia. In letters to Spring Rice and to Lodge, who met with British policymakers in July 1905 as a sort of informal envoy from the White House, Roosevelt repeated his prediction that if Russia and Japan were left 'face to face' in East Asia it would have a 'moderative' effect on the behaviour of both powers, who would each act as 'the guarantor of the other's good conduct'.⁸⁸

Roosevelt used a number of ploys in an attempt to get across his message of the desirability of peace and the need for British pressure on Japan in the name of moderation, not least a studied emphasis on the intimate nature of the friendship between Britain and the United States. Roosevelt appealed to the frequently-expressed desire of British policymakers for close consultation between the two governments by keeping Durand minutely informed of the confidential details of

⁸⁶ F. Campbell Minute on H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, June 13th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, June 16th 1905, FO 405/159, TNA; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, June 17th 1905, Reel 95, Whitelaw Reid Papers, Reid Family Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Reid MS]; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, p.396.

⁸⁷ T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, June 5th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, p.1206; E. Satow to Lord Lansdowne, June 15th 1905, FO 800/121, TNA; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, June 23rd 1905, Reel 95, Reid MS.

⁸⁸ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, June 16th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1233-1234; T. Roosevelt to H.C. Lodge, June 16th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1221-1233.

the peace process.⁸⁹ Moreover, in the instructions he drew up prior to Lodge's visit to Britain, Roosevelt proposed that the Senator should stress the good working relationship of Britain and the United States in the Far East and make it clear that this should continue in future.⁹⁰ The new American Ambassador to Britain, Whitelaw Reid, was probably under similar instructions, and he too worked hard to give the impression that the President placed great value on the new intimacy in British-American relations. He also emphasised Roosevelt's personal friendship with Durand, which was somewhat disingenuous given Roosevelt's ever-growing dissatisfaction with the Ambassador as a medium of communication and desire to have him replaced.⁹¹ Such assurances of American goodwill and desire for cooperation were no doubt intended to encourage the British to support Roosevelt's peace initiative and overcome their reservations about putting pressure on the Japanese. It is worth noting that, overblown as they occasionally were, these expressions of amity at no point strayed into Anglo-Saxonist territory in the way that the correspondence between Roosevelt and the King earlier in the year had. Roosevelt could very easily, and perhaps even quite effectively, have made an ideological case for British assistance, but it would appear that he eschewed this approach, perhaps judging it to be imprudent given the continued limitations on British-American intimacy imposed by the U.S. political scene.

Though Roosevelt consciously utilised the notion of British-American closeness in an attempt to further his peace project, it would not be fair to assume that he did not mean what he said, or encouraged others to say, regarding the nature of the relationship between the powers. Roosevelt was confident that Britain and the United States would be found in harmony in East Asia, and this belief naturally heightened his expectations that British policymakers would fall in

⁸⁹ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, June 16th 1905, PP MS 55/46, Box 7, Durand MS; H.M. Durand Diary, June 18th 1905, PP MS 55/30, Box 5, Durand MS.

⁹⁰ T. Roosevelt to H.C. Lodge, May 24th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1191-1193; T. Roosevelt to H.C. Lodge, June 16th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1221-1233.

⁹¹ T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, June 5th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, p.1206; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, June 17th 1905, Reel 95, Reid MS; T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, June 30th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1257-1258.

line with his suggestions. Consequently, when British cooperation was not forthcoming he was more than a little put out and began to question whether there was not some ulterior purpose behind the reluctance of British policymakers to act on his request that they make use of their influence with the Japanese.⁹² He expressed these suspicions to Reid in early July 1905: ‘the English, as I think rather short-sightedly, are entirely willing, and perhaps a trifle more than willing, to have the war go on.’⁹³

The President aired his concerns on this point to Spring Rice fairly early on in the process of soliciting British assistance, offering this admonition in mid-June 1905:

I earnestly hope that your people take the same view, and that they will not permit any feeling that they would like to see both combatants exhausted to prevent them doing all they can to bring about peace.⁹⁴

At around the same time, Acting Secretary of State Francis B. Loomis instructed Reid to ascertain ‘whether the English Government really does wish peace or not’, explaining that there was potential for the British to be of great assistance to the American peace initiative, assuming of course that they actually wanted to.⁹⁵ As time went on, Roosevelt’s doubts crystallised into distinct irritation at what he saw as the failure of the British to live up to their professed desire to work with the United States, or even to act in accordance with their own real interests. By early August, the President was therefore somewhat blunter in approach, telling Durand that if the British genuinely wanted peace then they would not scruple about telling the Japanese to come to reasonable terms.⁹⁶

Roosevelt’s frustration at British inaction probably influenced one of the other strategies he employed in his campaign to win their cooperation: making

⁹² Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p.305; Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, pp.45, 210; Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, p.203; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, p.396; R.B. Mowat, *The Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States* (London, 1925), p.296; Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance*, p.296; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.223.

⁹³ T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, July 7th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1265-1266.

⁹⁴ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, June 16th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1233-1234.

⁹⁵ F. Loomis to W. Reid, June 15th 1905, M77/94, RG-59, NARA.

⁹⁶ T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, August 1st 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1297-1298.

capital out of German contributions to his peace efforts. British policymakers and officials were, Roosevelt discovered, anxious about the relationship between the President and Kaiser Wilhelm II, and the detrimental impact this might have on British-American relations.⁹⁷ Roosevelt's initial response to this concern was to distance himself from the German Emperor, but in light of British intransigence in the matter of pressing Japan to make peace he began to exploit the anxiety for all it was worth, rarely missing an opportunity to mention just how helpful the Kaiser had been in his endeavours towards peace.⁹⁸ Roosevelt judged Spring Rice to be particularly guilty of fretting over the influence of the Kaiser, and it was in correspondence with him that this ploy came most strikingly into play. In one letter, Roosevelt made an apparently casual reference to the German contribution to his efforts for peace, before proceeding to hammer his point home in the very next breath:

I am bound to say that the Kaiser has behaved admirably and has really helped me. I hope that your people are sincerely desirous of peace and will use their influence at the proper time to prevent their asking impossible terms.⁹⁹

The implicit, and occasionally explicit, comparison between German eagerness and British reluctance to offer assistance in the cause of peace would remain a favourite theme of Roosevelt's communications throughout the remainder of the war.

The downside of this gambit of attempting to encourage British compliance by hinting at the blossoming of German-American friendship was that it firmly reinforced the British belief that Roosevelt was acting 'with the advice and encouragement of the Kaiser'.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, in addition to fearing that Roosevelt might be coming under the Kaiser's political influence, British policymakers and

⁹⁷ C. Spring Rice to Lord Lansdowne, Undated February 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, March 10th 1905, FO800/116, TNA; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, May 13th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1177-1179.

⁹⁸ H. O'Beirne to L. Mallet, June 2nd 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, June 16th 1905, PP MS 55/46, Box 7, Durand MS; T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, July 7th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1265-1266.

⁹⁹ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, June 16th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1233-1234; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, July 24th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1283-1287; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, August 10th 1905, FO 800/144, TNA.

¹⁰⁰ C. Spring Rice to Lord Lansdowne, July 9th 1905, FO 800/116, TNA.

officials were also beginning to doubt the President's judgement more generally and to suspect that he had fallen victim to the German Emperor's well-known hysteria about the Yellow Peril. This possibility had been discussed as early as February 1905, when Lansdowne had confessed his misgivings about Roosevelt to Durand: 'He seems to be, like the German Emperor, with whom he has something in common, impressed with the possibility of a Yellow Peril. I cannot myself see the danger.'¹⁰¹ Roosevelt's consistent praise for the Kaiser can only have contributed to British concerns about both the motives behind the President's desire to mediate and his potential to sabotage his own peace schemes by 'exuberant diplomacy', if anything increasing the reluctance of British policymakers to involve themselves in the enterprise.¹⁰²

Roosevelt does appear to have recognised the danger that being associated with irrational Yellow Peril fears might somewhat discredit his case for a balance of power in East Asia, and he did make some effort to distance himself from such ideas. For example, in a letter to Spring Rice he dismissed Kaiser Wilhelm's views on the Yellow Peril as 'worthy of any fool congressman' – a fairly damning indictment given the President's severe disdain for Capitol Hill demagoguery – and he pointedly ridiculed the Russian claim to be 'fighting the battles of the white race' in his instructions to Lodge.¹⁰³ Moreover, in his attempts to convince the British of the need for a peace which left both powers intact, Roosevelt avoided language which might have been taken to indicate Yellow Peril fears, even downplaying the very notion, so prominent in his earlier communications, that Japan might in future pose a threat.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, February 4th 1905, FO 800/144, TNA; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, April 7th 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to A. Balfour, April 17th 1905, Add MS 49729, Balfour MS.

¹⁰² C. MacDonald to Lord Lansdowne, June 8th 1905, FO 800/134, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to E. Satow, August 3rd 1905, FO 800/121, TNA; Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, pp.212, 214.

¹⁰³ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, May 13th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1177-1179; T. Roosevelt to H.C. Lodge, June 16th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1221-1233.

¹⁰⁴ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, June 16th 1905, PP MS 55/46, Box 7, Durand MS; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, June 16th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1233-1234; T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, July 7th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1265-1266.

Despite Roosevelt's best efforts, British policymakers would not assent to the proposition that they should put pressure on the Japanese with a view to facilitating a peace settlement. This stance was not a reflection of a desire for the war to continue until Russia was destroyed – though, as suggested above, British policymakers did not exactly share the American sense of urgency about bringing hostilities to a close – but rather stemmed from the determination to avoid jeopardising relations with Japan.¹⁰⁵ By mid-July 1905 Spring Rice had become increasingly concerned that the Americans had failed to grasp this basic principle behind British inaction, and he urged policymakers in London to do something to counter the impression that they were comfortable with the prolongation of the war and perhaps even encouraging the Japanese to fight on.¹⁰⁶ In response, Lansdowne attempted to clarify the British position, explaining to both Reid and Durand that although the British Government desired peace for 'reasons of humanity', it would have been inappropriate to have 'lectured the Japanese or preached to them the virtues of moderation'.¹⁰⁷ Spring Rice supplemented these efforts with a letter of his own arguing that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, far from placing the British in an ideal position to press the Japanese to make peace, all but prohibited them from offering unsolicited advice to Japan. Seeking to couch his contention in terms which he felt would best appeal to Roosevelt's sense of honour and duty, he claimed that Britain must adhere to the spirit as well of the letter of the Alliance; if they were to be 'absolutely and resolutely true to our plighted word', British policymakers could not attempt to exert any influence over the Japanese.¹⁰⁸ These efforts to justify British reluctance to cooperate do not appear to have been especially successful. Roosevelt, unimpressed with Spring Rice's appeal to moral principles, jovially chided 'Springy' for going 'a little needlessly into heroics', and his image of the British as 'flabby' and lacking in resolve can only have been reinforced

¹⁰⁵ Dugdale, *Arthur James Balfour*, vol. 1, pp.388-389; Monger, *The End of Isolation*, p.215.

¹⁰⁶ C. Spring Rice to Lord Lansdowne, July 9th 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to A. Balfour, July 16th 1905, FO 800/116, TNA.

¹⁰⁷ Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, July 10th 1905, FO 800/144, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, July 12th 1905, FO 405/160, TNA; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, July 14th 1905, Reel 56, Roosevelt MS; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.77.

¹⁰⁸ C. Spring Rice to F. Loomis/T. Roosevelt, July 10th 1905, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.474-478.

by Lansdowne's insistence that it was 'in better taste' for the British Government to refrain from advising the Japanese in the direction of peace.¹⁰⁹

In spite of the lack of British assistance, Roosevelt managed to convince the two combatants to come to the negotiating table, and on August 6th 1905 the peace negotiations at Portsmouth, New Hampshire began. The successful arrangement of the peace conference did nothing to dampen the President's desire to secure British cooperation, however, and in late July and early August he redoubled his efforts to solicit British assistance in convincing the Japanese to make peace on reasonable terms. Roosevelt's major line of argument shifted at this point from the desirability of a balance of power to the necessity of a quick settlement from Japan's point of view. The burden of Roosevelt's argument was that the Japanese were at a point of exhaustion financially, and although they could carry on the conflict in the hope of coercing an indemnity from the Russians, the costs of such an endeavour would almost certainly outweigh any gain. He emphasised repeatedly that it had been the Japanese who had requested peace talks in the first instance and that they would therefore have no objection to friendly advice from Britain.¹¹⁰ Moreover, he admonished Durand in early August:

The greatest act of friendship which the friends of Japan can at this time show her is to do as I have already done, and urge her in her own interest not to follow a course which might do her real damage, and can do her no real benefit.¹¹¹

In placing emphasis on this side of the question, Roosevelt was not only seeking to undercut British claims to be doing the right thing by their allies by withholding advice, but was also continuing the trend of shying away from any suggestion that he was anxious about the future conduct of the Japanese.

¹⁰⁹ Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, July 10th 1905, FO 800/144, TNA; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, July 24th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1283-1287.

¹¹⁰ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, July 24th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1283-1287; T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, July 29th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1292-1293; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, August 10th 1905, FO 800/144, TNA; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, p.396.

¹¹¹ T. Roosevelt to H.M. Durand, August 23rd 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1310-1311.

It was on the point of Japan's demand for an indemnity in particular that Roosevelt hoped for British help, as this was the key stumbling block to the negotiations at Portsmouth. British policymakers continued to hesitate, however, maintaining that it had not yet reached the point that Japan's demands were actually obstructing peace and that they were still not in a position to offer advice.¹¹² Lansdowne had become even more unyielding on this point following an incident in which an apparently casual conversation on the peace negotiations with the Japanese Minister in London had been met with an official communication from the Japanese Government reminding the Foreign Secretary of Tokyo's desire to avoid foreign interference. The Japanese were, Lansdowne assured Durand, 'extraordinarily sensitive' on this point and would no doubt resent even the most well-intentioned British attempt to offer guidance.¹¹³

London and Washington thus found themselves somewhat at loggerheads during the Portsmouth peace conference, with the British adamant that their intercession with Japan was out of the question and the Americans insistent that such action was both entirely justified and potentially decisive. Roosevelt's frustration with British inaction appears to have mounted in tandem with his anxiety over the possible failure of the peace conference, which would have been a personal defeat as much as a blow to American policy, and in late August he grumbled to Henry White that the British Government had been 'foolishly reluctant to advise Japan to be reasonable'.¹¹⁴ Spring Rice, always more attuned to the President's thinking than Durand, picked up on this growing sense of exasperation and again warned policymakers in London that the British refusal to put pressure on Japan risked not only alienating Roosevelt but perhaps even pushing him into the

¹¹² Lord Lansdowne to C. Spring Rice, August 7th 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, August 10th 1905, FO 800/144, TNA; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, August 15th 1905, Reel 95, Reid MS; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, August 24th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p.283; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, pp.65-66.

¹¹³ T. Hayashi to Lord Lansdowne, August 18th 1905, FO 800/134, TNA; C. MacDonald to Lord Lansdowne, August 19th 1905, FO 800/134, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to C. Hardinge, August 21st 1905, FO 800/141, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, August 22nd 1905, FO 800/144, TNA.

¹¹⁴ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, August 10th 1905, FO 800/144, TNA; T. Roosevelt to H.M. Durand, August 23rd 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1310-1311; T. Roosevelt to H. White, August 23rd 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, p.1313.

arms of the Kaiser. He was somewhat pessimistic about the outcome of the peace negotiations and fretted that the Americans, influenced by German intrigues, would attribute their ultimate collapse to British equivocation.¹¹⁵

As a complete impasse in the negotiations loomed in late August 1905, British policymakers finally conceded that it might be necessary to make some sort of gesture in the direction of appeasing Roosevelt. Rather than themselves offering advice to the Japanese, however, they opted to pass on without comment a letter from Roosevelt to Durand laying out the case for Japan to give up the claim to an indemnity. They held back from making this move until they had confirmed that the Japanese had already received an almost identical letter which Roosevelt had sent to Japan's special envoy, Baron Kaneko Kentaro, presumably hoping to minimise any impression that they were applying pressure on their allies on behalf of the United States.¹¹⁶ It is doubtful that this gesture had any impact in the way of facilitating peace, but within a few days it would cease to matter; with the negotiations about to collapse, the Japanese unexpectedly conceded their deal-breaking claim to an indemnity and forced the Russians into the position of having to accept the settlement.¹¹⁷

The British reaction to the peace, though certainly tempered by feelings of relief, was largely one of surprise. Most British policymakers had not expected the Japanese to back down, and there was a distinct feeling that they had given up more than they really needed to.¹¹⁸ The Foreign Office was quick, however, to try to demonstrate British gratification and to emphasise to the Americans that they had been fully behind Roosevelt in his endeavours for peace. Lansdowne wrote to Durand asking him to express to the President how much the British Government

¹¹⁵ C. Spring Rice to G. Balfour, July 29th 1905, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.481-483; C. Spring Rice to Lord Lansdowne, August 6th 1905, FO 800/116, TNA.

¹¹⁶ C. MacDonald to Lord Lansdowne, August 27th 1905, FO 405/160, TNA; C. MacDonald to Lord Lansdowne, August 27th 1905, FO 405/161, TNA; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.227.

¹¹⁷ J.C. O'Laughlin to T. Roosevelt, August 29th 1905, Reel 58, Roosevelt MS; H.M. Durand Diary, September 3rd 1905, PP MS 55/30, Box 5, Durand MS; Brands, *T.R.*, p.540.

¹¹⁸ W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, August 31st 1905, Reel 95, Reid MS; A. Balfour to Lord Lansdowne, September 1st 1905, Add MS 49729, Balfour MS; Lord Lansdowne to A. Balfour, September 3rd 1905, Add MS 49729, Balfour MS; Larsen, 'Sir Mortimer Durand in Washington', p.72.

had appreciated the work he had done for peace and to attempt to relieve any 'disappointment' he might feel, indicating some lingering anxiety amongst policymakers that American goodwill had been strained by the British refusal to cooperate.¹¹⁹ British policymakers were not, however, contrite or particularly apologetic, and Lansdowne still maintained that advice to Japan would have been poorly received and thus unwise from the British point of view. Instead, he argued, the British Government had contributed to the peace process in its own way by simultaneously negotiating for the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The Foreign Secretary made the case that the knowledge that this arrangement would continue for another ten years had, 'rendered it much easier for Japan to moderate her demands'.¹²⁰

There is certainly some truth in British claims as to the impact of the renewal of the Alliance, as even Roosevelt somewhat grudgingly conceded. It would thus be fair to conclude that Britain and the United States, though failing to work directly in tandem, had ultimately followed broadly parallel lines in pursuit of peace.¹²¹ Even so, there was a degree of uncertainty as to the state of British-American relations in the immediate aftermath of the war, which was not helped by Roosevelt's continued emphasis on the help he had received from Kaiser Wilhelm in bringing about the peace. Almost as soon as the Portsmouth treaty had been signed, the President had written to Spring Rice detailing the process by which this had come about and, as in earlier letters, expressing his appreciation for the efforts of the Kaiser: 'he has acted like a trump. He has done everything that he could to make the Czar yield and has backed me up in every way'.¹²² Although the failure of the

¹¹⁹ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, September 2nd 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, September 4th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA.

¹²⁰ Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, September 4th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to E. Satow, September 4th 1905, FO 800/121, TNA; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, September 6th 1905, FO 800/144, TNA.

¹²¹ T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, September 11th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.18-20; Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, p.618; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p.305; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.227.

¹²² T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, September 1st 1905, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.486-489; Lord Lansdowne to C. Spring Rice, September 30th 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; C. Spring Rice to L. Mallet,

British, in Roosevelt's eyes, to live up to this standard was left unsaid, the implication was clear.

The apparent persistence of the American sense of pique over British conduct led British policymakers to give greater credence than they might otherwise have done to rumours that Roosevelt was suspicious of and ill-disposed towards the renewed Anglo-Japanese Alliance.¹²³ Though there was no basis to such claims – Roosevelt had been consistently supportive of the arrangement prior to its publication and did not hesitate to express his approval when asked – there was evidently a feeling in London that some further effort was required to get British-American relations back on an even keel.¹²⁴ Spring Rice took it upon himself to counteract any residual irritation, principally by massaging the President's ego. In a series of letters to Edith Roosevelt, Spring Rice lauded without restraint Roosevelt's personal role in bringing an end to the hostilities, concluding: 'So you see that it is a fact beyond any question that the President single-handed effected the peace'.¹²⁵ Whether this exercise in flattery had the desired impact is not entirely clear, but, in any case, Roosevelt did not dwell for long on the unwillingness of the British Government to work with him in securing peace. In November 1905, the President assured Spring Rice that no hard feelings remained: 'As to your own country I have never wavered. I feel that England and the United States, beyond any other two powers, should be friendly with one another'.¹²⁶

October 8th 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, October 22nd 1905, FO 800/116, TNA; G. Balfour to C. Spring Rice, October 25th 1905, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.503-504.

¹²³ C. Hardinge to Lord Lansdowne, October 14th 1905, FO 410/46, TNA; C. Spring Rice to H.C. Lodge, October 15th 1905, Reel 93, Lodge MS; C. Spring Rice to E.C. Roosevelt, October 15th 1905, Reel 60, Roosevelt MS; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, October 19th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA; G. Balfour to C. Spring Rice, October 25th 1905, *Spring Rice Letters*, vol. 1, pp.503-504; C. Spring Rice to E.C. Roosevelt, November 1st 1905, Reel 60, Roosevelt MS.

¹²⁴ H.M. Durand to R.M. Ferguson, April 7th 1905, PP MS 55/46, Box 7, Durand MS; Lord Lansdowne to H.M. Durand, July 31st 1905, FO 410/45, TNA; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, August 10th 1905, FO 800/144, TNA; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, November 1st 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.61-64; S. Low to H.M. Durand, November 4th 1905, PP MS 55/47, Box 7, Durand MS; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, November 6th 1905, FO 5/2581, TNA.

¹²⁵ C. Spring Rice to E.C. Roosevelt, September 26th 1905, Reel 60, Roosevelt MS; C. Spring Rice to E.C. Roosevelt, October 5th 1905, Reel 60, Roosevelt MS; C. Spring Rice to E.C. Roosevelt, October 10th 1905, Reel 60, Roosevelt MS.

¹²⁶ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, November 1st 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.61-64.

It would thus seem that in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War relations between London and Washington were in a markedly good way. As Lionel Gelber has argued, in spite of friction in the build-up to the peace settlement, the British-American relationship emerged from the conflict stronger and more cordial than ever before.¹²⁷ This was in large part because the war had facilitated a breakthrough, epitomised and furthered by the Spring Rice mission, in communication between the two powers. Where previously the potential for frank exchanges of views had been somewhat circumscribed by the limitations of the official channels, now not only was communication through the embassies in London and Washington more candid but there was a range of informal outlets open to the two governments.

On one level, this opening up of communication between the two powers allowed for greater freedom in the expression of ideological arguments, for example the references to Anglo-Saxon unity in correspondence between Roosevelt and King Edward VII. Such ideas remained, however, limited to abstract discussion of the relationship between the powers, and did not creep into the dialogue over cooperation in East Asia. Even more strikingly, the correspondence between Spring Rice and Roosevelt lost the ideological content which had previously characterised it as it made the transition from an informal exchange between friends to a supplementary, though essential, part of the official interaction between the two powers. Overall, then, despite the significant increase in personal diplomacy and candid communication, ideas regarding race and civilisation remained markedly uncommon in British-American interaction over the Russo-Japanese War. As this chapter has demonstrated, this can be partially accounted for by policymakers' tactical engagement with ideology. British policymakers explicitly dismissed interpretations of the war grounded in Yellow Peril thought, not least because such ideas conflicted with their agenda of highlighting Russia as the real danger. The overt British scepticism regarding the Yellow Peril and ideological readings of the conflict in turn encouraged American policymakers to downplay this side of the

¹²⁷ Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship*, pp.216, 238-239, 245-246.

picture and distance their case for a swift end to the war and a balance of power from racial ideas.

While the most significant development in British-American relations may have been an increase in intimacy due to improved communication, it is important to note that this change was not accompanied by practical cooperation with regard to East Asian affairs. In the years prior to the Russo-Japanese War, Britain and the United States had refrained from working together, or indeed from intervening at all, in the Manchuria controversy, continuing the pre-established pattern of shared passivity in deference to global overstretch and domestic political needs respectively. With the outbreak of hostilities in early 1904, the two powers assumed very similar positions, reflecting their shared interests, but did differ with regard to their perspectives on the unfolding conflict. Both powers were broadly supportive of the Japanese, hoping that their victory might curtail Russian expansion and facilitate the return of Manchuria to Chinese sovereignty, but whereas the Americans expected Japan to triumph and feared the possible consequences of too comprehensive a victory, the British assumed that the Japanese would be defeated and thus worried chiefly about Russia's future policy.

This divergence did not disappear even once it became clear that Japan was the dominant power, and in fact it was compounded by the different visions which the two powers had for what cooperation between them should look like. The British, desiring a more long-term and comprehensive approach to the problems of East Asia, sought a commitment from the United States to work together to defend Chinese integrity from the Russian threat at the end of the war. Their efforts were unavailing, not because American policymakers were averse to cooperation *per se*, but because such an overt understanding would not have been acceptable from a domestic political point of view. Instead, American policymakers looked for more limited and specific assistance from the British Government, requesting their intercession with Japan to facilitate peace talks and ensure the success of the resulting conference. The British spurned American advances because to have

intervened in the manner suggested by Roosevelt might have jeopardised their relationship with the Japanese, thus undermining a global policy which was increasingly dependent on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

As suggested above, in spite of this failure to cooperate, relations between Britain and the United States were decidedly healthy at the close of 1905, and the two powers were in a position to communicate with ease and frankness. This strong foundation would be important in the years that followed, as East Asian affairs became a much more immediate concern in the United States with the advent of a string of immigration crises and Japanese-American war scares. The various informal channels which were now available to policymakers and the experience of failed attempts to arrange cooperation would prove invaluable in navigating these delicate problems with the minimum possible disruption to cordial British-American relations.

Chapter 3

'White Men's Countries': Japanese Immigration to the Pacific Coast, 1906-1909

The conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War went some way towards stabilising the situation in East Asia, but for the United States and Britain the respite was short-lived. The two powers were almost immediately confronted with a new problem with serious implications much closer to home in the form of a backlash against Japanese immigration to the Pacific Coast of North America. This chapter charts the course of the Japanese immigration question from its beginnings as a local controversy over school segregation in San Francisco, through its evolution into an international crisis and spread to British Columbia, to the efforts to find a resolution through so-called 'gentlemen's agreements'. It demonstrates that in spite of similar interests and attitudes towards the issue, Britain and the United States did not coordinate their responses to any significant degree.

This lack of a unified strategy was not for want of trying, as American policymakers were persistent in their efforts to arrange for a united front on the issue of immigration. As had been the case during the Russo-Japanese War, however, British concern for the preservation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance represented a significant obstacle to British-American collaboration. Another aspect of British global policy was also significant in the immigration crisis, however, as the opposition to Japanese immigration was located not in Britain itself but in the Dominions, and specifically Canada. The British Government was intent on maintaining strong ties within the Empire, a concern which American policymakers hoped to exploit in order to win British support. Ultimately, however, the Canadian connection would prove equally as ineffectual as direct American pressure in bringing about cooperation between Britain and the United States.

A major part of the reason that Japanese immigration was such an emotive and difficult problem for policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic to deal with was its inextricable connection to the issue of race. Not only was the immigration issue bound up with notions of Yellow Peril and stereotyped images of East Asians, but Anglo-Saxonism also fed in to the debate, with a transnational campaign for the preservation of 'white men's countries' emerging throughout the English-speaking world. This chapter makes the case that such ideas played a considerably less significant role in British-American interaction than might be expected, due in part to the pronounced reluctance of policymakers to engage overtly with the ideology of exclusionism. As a number of historians have suggested, awareness of Japanese power and military clout encouraged statesmen to employ more moderate language than they might otherwise have done in discussing the immigration issue, and the tendency to avoid or minimise the racial aspect of the question is certainly in evidence in American attempts to secure British backing for a common approach to Japanese immigration.¹ This chapter will also highlight, however, the important role played by context and audience in policymakers' tactical calculations, as American interactions with Canadian figures differed markedly from those with the British in terms of engagement with racial ideology.

In addition to being racially-charged, the Japanese immigration question was an especially explosive one on account of its potentially serious implications on the international stage. The possibility of conflict arising from the immigration crisis, which fuelled the perennial 'war scares' of the years between 1905 and 1914, will be dealt with in a separate chapter, however, the focus here being purely on the question of immigration itself. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind throughout that this was a controversy fraught with the direst of repercussions,

¹ R. Daniels, *Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850* (Seattle WA, 1988), pp.120-121; R. Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Berkeley, CA, 1962), pp.35-36; J.M. Henning, 'White Mongols? The War and American Discourses on Race and Religion' in R. Kowner (ed.), *The Impact of the Russo-Japanese War* (London, 2007), pp.154, 160; P.G. Lauren, *Power and Prejudice: The Politics and Diplomacy of Racial Discrimination* (Boulder, CO, 1988), p.57; R. Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (New York, 1988), p.202.

which had to be handled with great urgency but also with the utmost care; there was no room for mistakes.

Pacific Coast opposition to Japanese immigration was not simply a by-product of the Russo-Japanese War, though Japan's victories in the conflict undoubtedly served to intensify and awaken latent popular anxieties. The movement for the exclusion of the Japanese had deep roots in the tradition of agitation against the Chinese, and its central pillar was the oft-heard cry of 'unfair competition'. Since Oriental labourers were supposed, on account of their inherent inferiority, to subsist at a level which was intolerable to white men, exclusionists claimed that their presence would inevitably drive down wages and diminish the standard of living.² Alongside this objection on grounds of inferiority, the Japanese were also contradictorily singled out as a menace to white workers on the basis that they were in certain respects superior, or at least better equipped for economic competition, on account of racial characteristics such as industry, thrift and discipline.³ This latter aspect of exclusionist rhetoric posited Japanese immigrants as a threat not only to the labouring classes with whom they were in direct competition but to the entire structure of white social and economic dominance. The ambitious and capable Japanese, in contrast to the docile 'Chinaman', would not long be content to remain a subject population and would ultimately mount a challenge for control of the land itself.⁴

² K. Chang, 'Enforcing Transnational White Solidarity: Asian Migration and the Formation of the U.S.-Canadian Boundary', *American Quarterly* 60 (2008), p.679; T.J. Davis, *Race Relations in America: A Reference Guide with Primary Documents* (Westport, CT, 2006), pp.142-143; S. Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem: A Study of the Racial Relations of the East and West* (New York, 1914), p.11; L.E. Neame, *The Asiatic Danger in the Colonies* (London, 1907), pp.3, 45, 83, 107; R.A. Thompson, *The Yellow Peril, 1890-1924* (New York, 1978), pp.92, 115, 122.

³ E. Boime, "'Beating Plowshares into Swords": The Colorado River Delta, the Yellow Peril, and the Movement for Federal Reclamation, 1901-1928', *Pacific Historical Review* 78 (2009), p.39; Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, pp.5-6; P. Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914* (Vancouver, 1989), pp.viii, xii, xiv; Thompson, *The Yellow Peril*, pp.34, 47, 88.

⁴ A. Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement: Japanese and American Expansion, 1897-1911* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), p.110; Neame, *The Asiatic Danger in the Colonies*, p.24; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, pp.x, 186, 199, 247; Thompson, *The Yellow Peril*, p.187; W.P. Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes Toward Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal, 1990), pp.103-104.

Anxiety over the 'colonisation' of territory in the United States and the British Dominions by Asian immigrants came together with Anglo-Saxonist notions of unity and superiority in the rhetoric of 'white men's countries'. Proponents of this ideology throughout the English-speaking world were driven by the conviction that the exclusion of all non-white peoples was essential to the preservation not only of white dominance in the particular areas at risk, but ultimately of Anglo-Saxon or Western civilisation throughout the globe.⁵ They drew on the principles of Social Darwinism, which posited a basic struggle for existence between diverse peoples, and the theory that racial homogeneity was a prerequisite for democratic institutions, an important tenet of Progressive social thought.⁶ The most basic premise of the ideology, however, was a fundamental piece of racial common sense shared throughout the English-speaking world: the assumption that it was impossible for Asians to assimilate and become part of a majority white society.⁷ It was this widely-held conviction that Japanese immigrants were fundamentally unassimilable which prompted the incident which would propel anti-Japanese exclusionism from a regional phenomenon to a problem of international significance: the San Francisco school segregation crisis.

San Francisco was the initial epicentre of Pacific Coast anti-Japanese feeling, owing in large part to a sustained newspaper campaign for exclusion, beginning in early 1905, and the tensions unleashed by an earthquake which swept through the

⁵ K. Chang, 'Circulating Race and Empire: Transnational Labor Activism and the Politics of Anti-Asian Agitation in the Anglo-American Pacific World', *Journal of American History* 96 (2009), pp.685-686; T.F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (Dallas, TX, 1963), p.291; Neame, *The Asiatic Danger in the Colonies*, pp.81-82, 90-91, 106.

⁶ P.F. Hall, *Immigration and Its Effects upon the United States* (New York, 1906), pp.173-174, 176, 321, 323; R. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914: A Study of Empire and Expansion* (Basingstoke, 2002), p.165; M. Lake and H. Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge, 2008), pp.6-7, 54, 80; F.H. Matthews, 'White Community and "Yellow Peril"', *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 50 (1964), pp.618, 620; Thompson, *The Yellow Peril*, pp.34, 47, 88; Ward, *White Canada Forever*, pp.54, 169.

⁷ Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem*, pp.16-18; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, pp.265, 268; Neame, *The Asiatic Danger in the Colonies*, p.3; R.W. Paul, *The Abrogation of the Gentlemen's Agreement* (Cambridge, MA, 1936), pp.5-6; A. Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* (Boulder, CO, 1993), p.269; Ward, *White Canada Forever*, pp.106, 117.

city in April 1906.⁸ In October of the same year, the San Francisco School Board passed a ruling that Japanese children were to be taught separately from white children, in line with the regulations already in place for the Chinese and other theoretically unassimilable 'Mongolian' peoples. This move provoked an outcry in Japan and prompted the Japanese Government to raise an official protest against the segregation order on the basis that it violated the treaty rights of their citizens, singling them out for unequal treatment on the basis of race.⁹ President Theodore Roosevelt's initial response was to attempt to mollify the Japanese, meanwhile sending his Secretary of Commerce and Labour, Victor Metcalf, to California to ascertain the facts and communicate directly Roosevelt's deep disapproval of the discrimination and 'discourtesy'.¹⁰ Roosevelt also combined appeasement of the Japanese with chastisement of the Californians in his December 1906 Message to Congress, in which he sang the praises of the Japanese people, referred to the school segregation order as a 'wicked absurdity' and even went so far as to recommend legislation allowing for the naturalisation of Japanese residents of the United States.¹¹

Roosevelt's efforts to conciliate the Japanese do appear to have paid dividends on a diplomatic level, but the more marked effect of his intervention was

⁸ R.H. Clive Report, August 15th 1908 (enclosed in C. MacDonald to E. Grey, August 23rd 1908), FO 410/52, The National Archives, Kew [hereafter TNA]; D. Brudnoy, 'Race and the San Francisco School Board Incident: Contemporary Evaluations', *California Historical Quarterly* 50 (1971), p.296; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.172; J. Price, "'Orienting" the Empire: Mackenzie King and the Aftermath of the 1907 Race Riots', *BC Studies* 156 (2007/2008), p.57.

⁹ F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, October 22nd 1906, 1797/2, M862/189, RG-59, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD [hereafter NARA]; L. Wright to E. Root, October 22nd 1906, 1797/40, M862/189, RG-59, NARA; T.A. Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises* (London, 1934), p.43; Brudnoy, 'Race and the San Francisco School Board Incident', p.297; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.173; E. Morris, *Theodore Rex* (London, 2001), p.483.

¹⁰ T. Roosevelt to K. Kaneko, October 26th 1906, E.E. Morison (ed.), *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, MA, 1951-1954) [hereafter *Roosevelt Letters*], vol. 5, p.473; E. Root to V. Metcalf, October 27th 1906, 1797/13, M862/189, RG-59, NARA; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, pp.60-61, 85-86; F.R. Dulles, *Forty Years of American-Japanese Relations* (New York, 1937), p.77.

¹¹ T. Roosevelt to V. Metcalf, November 27th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.510-511; T. Roosevelt, 'Sixth Annual Message', December 3rd 1906, [The American Presidency Project](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/) <<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/>> (accessed 08/11/13); T. Roosevelt to J.S. Strachey, December 21st 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.531-533; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises* pp.89-92; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, p.39.

to deeply antagonise the Californians, which was unfortunate given that their cooperation would be essential to the resolution of the crisis.¹² American officials were forced to admit that school segregation was not a black-and-white violation of treaty rights and that a legal case was therefore likely to rest on rather shaky ground.¹³ Thus unable to simply force a reversal of the segregation order, Roosevelt was compelled to come up with an alternative plan of action which would put an end to the overt discrimination whilst at the same time satisfying the Californians. The President's answer to this conundrum was to attempt to tackle the problem at its root by addressing the high level of Japanese labour immigration, the hope being that if this were significantly reduced it would spell an end to the mistreatment of those Japanese already living on the West Coast. The U.S. Government thus began to pursue a treaty for the reciprocal exclusion of labourers, the rationale being that such an arrangement would be unobjectionable to Japan as it was not overtly discriminatory.¹⁴

Roosevelt wasted little time in setting out his take on the immigration question and his plan for reciprocal exclusion to the British, writing candidly about the issue to Foreign Secretary Edward Grey in December 1906.¹⁵ Late 1906 was something of a high-point for communication between the British and American Governments, as Roosevelt had at long last achieved his goal of displacing the unsatisfactory Ambassador Durand, largely through the efforts of a number of

¹² W.C. Bennett to H.M. Durand, December 6th 1906 (enclosed in H.M. Durand to E. Grey, December 13th 1906), FO 410/47, TNA; H. Lowther to E. Grey, December 24th 1906, FO 410/50, TNA; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, pp.96, 100, 110-111.

¹³ F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, October 22nd 1906, 1797/2, M862/189, RG-59, NARA; V. Metcalf to T. Roosevelt, November 2nd 1906 (enclosed in E. Root to W. Loeb, November 13th 1906), 1797/37, M862/189, RG-59, NARA; T. Roosevelt to V. Metcalf, November 27th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.510-511; J.B. Scott Memo, November 27th 1906, 1797/61, M862/189, RG-59, NARA; E. Root to L. Wright, February 5th 1907, 2542/25A, M862/253, RG-59, NARA.

¹⁴ T. Roosevelt to B.I. Wheeler, December 20th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, p.530; E. Root to S. Aoki, December 28th 1906, 2542/13A, M862/253, RG-59, NARA; T. Roosevelt to L. Abbot, January 3rd 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.536-538; T. Roosevelt to H.G. Otis, January 8th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.541-542; Brudnoy, 'Race and the San Francisco School Board Incident', p.306; M.P. Cullinane, 'The 'Gentlemen's' Agreement: Exclusion by Class', *Immigrants and Minorities: Historical Studies in Ethnicity, Migration and Diaspora* 32 (2014), p.148; R.A. Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan* (Seattle, WA, 1966), p.144; C.E. Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship: Theodore Roosevelt and Japan, 1906-1909* (Cambridge MA, 1967), pp.43, 51, 53.

¹⁵ T. Roosevelt to E. Grey, December 18th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.527-529.

influential British friends, including Conservative politician Arthur Lee. It was in part by Lee's orchestration also that Roosevelt was able to communicate directly with Grey, a vast improvement from the President's point of view after his struggle to get his views across to Lord Lansdowne during the Russo-Japanese War.¹⁶ Though Roosevelt did observe, somewhat ambiguously, that the immigration issue was 'only one phase of the race question', the burden of his letter to Grey was that reciprocal exclusion of labourers was necessary because although Japanese and American 'gentlemen' were able to meet on terms of equality it would be unreasonable to expect white workingmen to tolerate an influx of Japanese competitors, or vice versa.¹⁷

Roosevelt would make similar arguments throughout the controversy, leading historian Michael Cullinane to conclude that Roosevelt was not himself swayed by the racial aspect of the immigration question but believed that the labouring classes of the two nations were yet to reach a stage of cultivation where they were able to overcome their colour prejudice and harmoniously co-exist, necessitating the exclusion of Japanese labourers essentially for reasons of 'class'.¹⁸ It is worth noting, however, that a number of the key examples of Roosevelt making this 'class'-focused case are found in communications with Japanese statesmen, in which he obviously had a vested interest in taking a race-neutral line in order to minimise offence.¹⁹ Rather than simply offering an insight into Roosevelt's personal

¹⁶ T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, September 16th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.29-30; A. Lee to T. Roosevelt, October 14th 1906, Reel 69, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Roosevelt MS]; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, October 15th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, p.458; T. Roosevelt to E. Grey, October 22nd 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.462-464; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, November 5th 1906 in A. Clark (ed.), *'A Good Innings': Private Papers of Viscount Lee of Fareham* (London, 1974), pp.92-93; E. Grey to T. Roosevelt, December 4th 1906, Reel 70, Roosevelt MS; P. Larsen, 'Sir Mortimer Durand in Washington: A Study in Anglo-American Relations in the Era of Theodore Roosevelt', *Mid-America* 66 (1984), pp.75,78; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, pp.458, 463-464; W.L. Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire: A Study in Presidential Statecraft* (Basingstoke, 1997), pp.110, 114.

¹⁷ T. Roosevelt to E. Grey, December 18th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.527-529.

¹⁸ Cullinane, 'The 'Gentlemen's' Agreement', pp.141, 144-148, 154-157.

¹⁹ T. Roosevelt to V. Metcalf, November 27th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.510-511; T. Roosevelt to K. Takahira, April 28th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.656-657; T. Roosevelt to K. Kaneko, May 23rd 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.671-672; T. Roosevelt to K. Kaneko, May 8th 1913, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 7, pp.727-729.

views, then, the 'class' argument appears to have been a deliberate tactic to understate the racial aspect of the question so as to present exclusion as a practical rather than a discriminatory measure. A similar, though slightly less nuanced, argument was regularly employed by a variety of key figures in the U.S. and Canada, who would claim that the immigration crisis was a matter of simple economics rather than race; labourers on the Pacific Coast resented the influx of competition rather than the presence of Japanese immigrants *per se*.²⁰

By utilising this argument of 'class' in his letter to Grey, Roosevelt appears to have been trying to downplay the racial side of his proposed reciprocal exclusion policy. Though his immediate purpose for doing so is not entirely clear, further comments – both in this letter to Grey and in another to *Spectator* editor John St Loe Strachey – regarding the similarity of his Californian predicament with the British position in Canada and Australia suggest that Roosevelt hoped to win British sympathy for his approach to the immigration problem, perhaps foreseeing that their influence with Tokyo might prove useful in future.²¹

It soon became apparent that American hopes for a treaty of reciprocal exclusion were decidedly optimistic. The Japanese had serious objections to such a proposal, including the rather obvious point that with no corresponding influx of American labour to Japan the proposal was hardly reciprocal in practice. The State Department grasped for additional quid pro quos to offer, such as the allowance for naturalisation already mooted by the President, but Japanese leaders were simply not prepared to countenance a formal agreement of the kind the Americans

²⁰ F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, October 22nd 1906, 1797/2, M862/189, RG-59, NARA; F.M. Huntington Wilson Memo, July 6th 1907 (enclosed in F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, July 6th 1907), Reel 75, Roosevelt MS; T. Roosevelt to E. Root, July 13th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.717-719; T. Roosevelt to E. Root, November 19th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.851-852; E. Root to T. O'Brien, November 22nd 1907, 2542/176, M862/254, RG-59, NARA; W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 25th 1908, Nos. 4472-4480, MG26-J13, Library and Archives Canada <<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/politics-government/prime-ministers/william-lyon-mackenzie-king/Pages/diaries-william-lyon-mackenzie-king.aspx>> (accessed 04/06/15) [hereafter LAC]; H.W. Brands, *T.R.: The Last Romantic* (New York, 1997), p.607.

²¹ T. Roosevelt to E. Grey, December 18th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.527-529; T. Roosevelt to J.S. Strachey, December 21st 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.531-533; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.219; Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire*, pp.85, 173.

wanted.²² Instead, Japanese and American statesmen came to a tentative understanding in February 1907 which became known as the Gentlemen's Agreement. This arrangement would evolve somewhat over the course of the following year, but it initially entailed three major elements: an end to discriminatory treatment of the Japanese on the Pacific Coast, American legislation to restrict onward immigration from Hawaii and the voluntary limitation of emigration by the Japanese Government. This solution, which was instigated by the Japanese themselves, required minimal action from Tokyo beyond denying passport requests to labourers wishing to travel to the United States. The onus was rather on the American Government to ensure the reversal of the San Francisco school segregation order, a feat Roosevelt achieved largely by appealing to the egos of local politicians, and to reorder its relations with Hawaii in such a way as to close the loophole responsible for a significant proportion of the overall immigration.²³

Though not especially gratifying, the Gentlemen's Agreement was, from the point of view of the Japanese Government, a reasonable resolution of the situation. The arrangement dealt with the overt discrimination without publicly committing Tokyo to anything embarrassing or incompatible with the nation's interests, especially considering that Japanese policymakers preferred for labourers to emigrate to mainland Asia rather than the U.S. anyway.²⁴ American policymakers, on the other hand, though relieved that a workable solution had been found, saw the understanding merely as a temporary expedient and continued to hope that an agreement for reciprocal exclusion might be possible once the San Francisco furore

²² F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, January 3rd 1907, 2542/83, M862/253, RG-59, NARA; L. Wright to E. Root, February 8th 1907, 1797/152-167, M862/190, RG-59, NARA; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, p.163; Cullinane, 'The 'Gentlemen's' Agreement', pp.150-151; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.56.

²³ E. Howard to E. Grey, February 19th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; E. Howard to E. Grey, March 26th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; E. Root to L. Wright, April 17th 1907, 2542/76A, M862/253, RG-59, NARA; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, pp.140, 143, 164-165; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, p.44; C.E. Neu, *The Troubled Encounter: The United States and Japan* (New York, 1975), p.52; Paul, *The Abrogation of the Gentlemen's Agreement*, p.8; J. Sand, 'Gentlemen's Agreement, 1908: Fragments for a Pacific History', *Representations* 107 (2009), p.120.

²⁴ H. Lowther to E. Grey, March 20th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; E. Howard to E. Grey, March 26th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA.

died down.²⁵ The unrest on the Pacific Coast did not dissipate, however, and the Roosevelt administration found itself having to stave off offensive Californian legislation as well as violent anti-Asian outbursts and discrimination against Japanese business owners in San Francisco.²⁶ These troubles dramatically illustrated that the immigration settlement was not only unfit for purpose, in that it quite evidently had not satisfied the residents of the Pacific Coast, but also inherently fragile. The arrangement was entirely contingent on the good behaviour of the Californians and the patience of Japanese leaders, neither of which could be relied on with any great certainty given the strained circumstances.

It was against this backdrop that interaction between the American and British Governments in the first half of 1907 took place. Though Roosevelt indicated to Grey that the February 1907 negotiations had addressed the 'acute phase' of the problem, he also somewhat ominously commented that they were 'not quite out of the woods yet'.²⁷ The President's communications with the British increasingly pressed the point of the similarity between the situation in California and that facing Canada and the other British Dominions on the Pacific.²⁸ Opinion in Britain was, broadly speaking, not particularly sympathetic to the claims of the Californians or the desire of the United States Government to exclude Japanese labour, and Roosevelt's repeated assertions that the British Empire was effectively in the same boat were evidently intended to counter these negative assessments of

²⁵ E. Howard to E. Grey, February 20th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; E. Root to L. Wright, April 17th 1907, 2542/76A, M862/253, RG-59, NARA; F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, June 6th 1907, 2542/105-108, M862/254, RG-59, NARA; Cullinane, 'The 'Gentlemen's' Agreement', p.151; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.70.

²⁶ T. Roosevelt to J.N. Gillett, March 9th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.608-610; T. Roosevelt to J.N. Gillett, March 11th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.610-614; E. Root to J.N. Gillett, May 25th 1907, 1797/206-207, M862/190, RG-59, NARA; E. Howard to E. Grey, June 30th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, pp.169-171, 194, 205; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.76.

²⁷ T. Roosevelt to E. Grey, February 28th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.600-602.

²⁸ T. Roosevelt to J.S. Strachey, February 22nd 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.596-598; J. Bryce to E. Grey, June 8th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, July 1st 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.698-699.

the American position.²⁹ Elihu Root, the U.S. Secretary of State, took a rather different approach to the same basic objective, seeking to justify to Esme Howard, the British Chargé d’Affaires in Washington, the extent of the anxiety and emotion which the issue of Japanese immigration aroused: ‘To the Californian workman the exclusion of Japanese labour was really a question of life or death. An increase of Japanese immigration into that State would end in pacific conquest’.³⁰ This was not the only occasion on which Root expressed this fear – drawn from writers such as Charles Pearson and Gustave Le Bon, and a mainstay of ‘white men’s country’ rhetoric – that immigrants from Asia would prove an irresistible force, swamping the coast, creating ‘colonies’ of their own and pushing out the white man before them.³¹ It is very unusual, however, to find such an example of an overtly ideological, and essentially racial, argument in official interaction between Britain and the United States. One possible explanation, which is supported by references elsewhere in Howard’s report to the possibility of war, is that in warning of a ‘peaceful invasion’, Root was attempting to communicate the extent of American apprehension without resorting to the alarmist rumours of actual conflict between Japan and the U.S. which, as the next chapter will explore, American policymakers were intent on playing down at this point in time.

It is clear that American policymakers wished to keep the problem of Japanese immigration at the forefront of British thinking, perhaps in the hope that this might facilitate some form of intervention should the situation deteriorate. The extent to which these efforts succeeded in increasing British concern over the California situation is not clear, but there was certainly no decline in British attention to the issue. Throughout 1907, British representatives in the U.S. and Japan provided detailed updates of events and discussed the possibilities for further

²⁹ D.H. Burton, *British-American Diplomacy, 1895-1917: Early Years of the Special Relationship* (Malabar, FL, 1999), p.50; B. Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement: England and the United States, 1895-1914* (London, 1969), p.232.

³⁰ E. Howard to E. Grey, February 4th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA.

³¹ E. Root to O.W. Holmes, March 6th 1907, 2542/55A, M862/253, RG-59, NARA; W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 25th 1908, Nos. 4472-4480, MG26-J13, LAC; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, p.31; G. Le Bon, *The Psychology of Peoples* (New York, 1898), pp.155, 159, 164; C.H. Pearson, *National Life and Character: A Forecast* (London, 1913 [1893]), p.17, 53-54.

tension arising, and during the summer the question began to take on even greater significance as a result of rising anti-Japanese sentiment in British Columbia.³² Ironically, this development may have been an indirect result of the Gentlemen's Agreement, as the outcry was chiefly a response to a sudden influx of Japanese labourers from Hawaii which had occurred in the wake of the new American legislation.³³ Mounting tensions came to a head in early September 1907, when an anti-Asian riot broke out in Vancouver.

The Vancouver riot, in which a mob marched on the Chinese and Japanese areas of the city, was an offshoot of an ostensibly peaceful parade held to promote the cause of Asian exclusion. This event is often cited as typical of the transnational nature of the exclusionist movement, with participants coming from Asiatic exclusion organisations across the Pacific Coast of the U.S., as well as from Australia and New Zealand.³⁴ Canadian and British officials were quick to latch on to the international aspect of the proceedings, claiming that the violence had been inspired and organised by American agitators and was thus not at all reflective of Canadian sentiments.³⁵ This was, as Patricia Roy has suggested, probably little more than a convenient fiction, but the American response to the Vancouver riot can only have served to cement the impression. The British Ambassador at Washington, James Bryce, reported back to the Foreign Office that he could not absolutely confirm the rumours of American inspiration, but that there was certainly a degree of satisfaction in the U.S. that the British, having taken something of a condescending tone over the California situation, were now similarly

³² J. Bryce to E. Grey, May 31st 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; E. Howard Memo, June 12th 1907 (enclosed in J. Bryce to E. Grey, June 13th 1907), FO 410/50, TNA; H. Lowther to E. Grey, June 29th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, July 10th 1907 (in Foreign Office to Colonial Office, August 19th 1907), CO 42/916/29763, TNA; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, p.186.

³³ E. Lee, 'The "Yellow Peril" and Asian Exclusion in the Americas', *Pacific Historical Review* 76 (2007), p.543; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', p.58.

³⁴ Chang, 'Circulating Race and Empire', pp.679, 681-682, 691-693; Chang, 'Enforcing Transnational White Solidarity', pp.682-683, Lee, 'The "Yellow Peril" and Asian Exclusion', p.550; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', p.59; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, pp.191-193; Ward, *White Canada Forever*, p.69.

³⁵ A. Grey to Lord Elgin, September 24th 1907, CO 42/913/35389, TNA; A. Grey to J. Bryce, November 20th 1907, FO 800/331, TNA; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, p.253; R.A. Huttenback, *Racism and Empire: White Settlers and Colored Immigrants in British Self-Governing Colonies, 1830-1910* (Ithaca, NY, 1976), p.184.

embarrassed.³⁶ This sense of schadenfreude was very much shared by the American Ambassador in London, Whitelaw Reid, who wrote gleefully of the ‘most amusing revolution in the English point of view’ to Roosevelt’s wife, Edith: ‘This morning they are rubbing their eyes in a dazed sort of way, and discovering that they are themselves a good deal deeper in the mire than we are.’³⁷

Roosevelt did not need the encouragement of Andrew Carnegie – who urged the President to let the British take the initiative and ‘draw the enemy’s fire’ – to see the value of the British being sucked into the Japanese immigration problem. He wrote frankly to Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of the good effect the outbreak would have in demonstrating to both the British and the Japanese that the rejection of Oriental labour immigration was unanimous between the West Coast of the United States and the British Pacific Dominions.³⁸ As already noted, Roosevelt had been preparing the ground on this point for nearly a year, and indeed he heard of the Vancouver riot midway through writing yet another letter to Strachey discoursing on the similarity of the British and American situations. Armed with knowledge of the new development, he ended his missive:

It is idle to blind ourselves to the fact that the English-speaking commonwealths of the seacoasts on the Pacific will not submit to the unchecked immigration of Asiatics, that they ought not to be asked to submit to it, and that if asked they will refuse.³⁹

Though this comment does imply a degree of sympathy with the opposition of Pacific Coast residents to Japanese immigration, the thrust of Roosevelt’s comments was not so much that their opposition was justified but that it would be unreasonable and unproductive for the American and British Governments to attempt to force the issue. This again is a largely race-neutral argument, centred on

³⁶ J. Bryce to E. Grey, September 14th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; Roy, *A White Man’s Province*, pp.195-196.

³⁷ W. Reid to E.C. Roosevelt, September 10th 1907, Reel 103, Whitelaw Reid Papers, Reid Family Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Reid MS]; W. Reid to E. Root, September 10th 1907, Reel 103, Reid MS.

³⁸ A. Carnegie to T. Roosevelt, September 11th 1907, Reel 77, Roosevelt MS; T. Roosevelt to H.C. Lodge, September 11th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, p.790; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, p.254; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.147; Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire*, pp.173-174.

³⁹ T. Roosevelt to J.S. Strachey, September 8th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.786-788.

practical politics rather than the ideological side of the question, which Roosevelt presumably favoured on the assumption that this angle would appeal more to the British mind than an overtly racial line of reasoning.⁴⁰

If the British were, as Reid attested, waking up to the fact that they were now in the same boat as the United States, there is no evidence to suggest that they were at all gratified by American eagerness to face the problem of Japanese immigration in concert. British policymakers approached the issue of immigration, much as they had the Russo-Japanese War, with the maintenance of Japanese goodwill and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance as a very clear priority.⁴¹ Though they therefore preferred to maintain as much distance between themselves and this delicate question as possible, the need to cultivate close links with the various parts of the Empire was also a pertinent consideration. Prior to the violence in Vancouver, London had taken the characteristically passive approach of leaving Dominion Governments to handle the matter independently but encouraging them to opt for legislation which was not overtly discriminatory, such as the literary test which became known as the 'Natal Act'. They hoped in this way to be able to reconcile the somewhat conflicting goals of ensuring that the minimum of offence was caused to their allies and of appearing supportive of the needs and concerns of the Dominions. The escalation of the situation in British Columbia exposed the inadequacy of this approach, but, initially at least, British policy retained a strong emphasis on staying aloof.⁴²

The Canadian Government was thus left mostly to its own devices to craft a response to the violence at Vancouver. Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier and his

⁴⁰ T. Roosevelt to W.H. Taft, August 21st 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.761-762; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, pp.123-125, 327.

⁴¹ D.H. Burton, 'Theodore Roosevelt and His English Correspondents: A Special Relationship of Friends', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 63 (1973), pp.33, 47; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.220; Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, p.165; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.200-201.

⁴² Lord Elgin Memo, November 14th 1907, CAB 37/90/94, TNA; M. Beloff, *Britain's Liberal Empire, 1897-1921* (Basingstoke, 1987), p.104; Huttenback, *Racism and Empire*, pp.162, 168-169, 317-318; R. Hyam, *Elgin and Churchill at the Colonial Office, 1905-1908: The Watershed of the Empire-Commonwealth* (London, 1968), pp.312-313, 315-316; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.145.

colleagues opted for an approach similar to that which the Roosevelt administration had adopted when faced with the San Francisco school crisis; rather than heeding the angry cries from British Columbia, Laurier instead prioritised placating Japan. To this end, he sent a representative, Deputy Minister for Labour William L. Mackenzie King, to British Columbia, ostensibly to assess compensation for Japanese losses but also to inquire into the broader problem of Asian immigration.⁴³ The next phase of the Canadian response to Vancouver also echoed the American approach, as they attempted to cut off the agitation at its source by stemming the flow of Japanese immigrants. The Canadian Government was bound by the 1894 Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, which did not allow for the restriction of immigration, and Laurier had no intention of losing the commercial advantages which this agreement afforded, meaning that formal exclusion was never really an option. It was decided instead that the Minister for Labour, Rodolphe Lemieux, should travel to Japan to negotiate a settlement along similar lines to the Gentlemen's Agreement, whereby Japan would voluntarily restrict labour emigration to Canada.⁴⁴

Around the same time that Lemieux's visit to Japan was being planned, the U.S. Government was engaging in some informal diplomacy of its own. In September and October 1907, William Howard Taft, the Secretary of War and Roosevelt's expected successor, went on a tour of East Asia and the Philippines, including a brief visit to Japan. Though the visit had no official purpose, Taft was of one mind with the President that a treaty of reciprocal exclusion remained the most desirable solution to the immigration problem, and he therefore tested the water informally with the Japanese as to whether the moment had come to pursue

⁴³ W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, October 11th 1907, No. 4394, MG26-J13, LAC; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, October 23rd 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; A. Grey to Lord Elgin, November 15th 1907 (enclosed in Colonial Office to Foreign Office, November 28th 1907), FO 410/50, TNA; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, p.197.

⁴⁴ W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, September 19th 1907, Nos. 4373-4374, MG26-J13, LAC; W. Laurier to A. Verville, September 21st 1907 (enclosed in A. Grey to Lord Elgin, September 26th 1907), CO 42/913/36223, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, November 27th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, pp.207-208.

further negotiations to this end.⁴⁵ The feeling had been growing within the State Department that the existing system was wholly inadequate, not least because the immigration of Japanese labourers had actually increased in the preceding months, and that some alternative arrangement would soon become essential.⁴⁶ Taft's various conversations with key figures in the Japanese Government served chiefly to confirm, however, that the Japanese remained entirely unwilling to consider a treaty of reciprocal exclusion. The Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hayashi Tadasu, assured Taft and the new American Ambassador, Thomas O'Brien, that every effort was being made to reduce immigration to both the Pacific Coast and Hawaii, and Taft reasoned that the U.S. must take them at their word. During these conversations, Taft did suggest, however, that it might be necessary to do more than simply 'tide over matters and maintain the status quo'. This warning of the need for a more effective solution was the prelude to the next phase of the Gentlemen's Agreement, which would take the form of a more rigorous delineation of the administrative measures Japan would adopt to prevent emigration of labourers to the Pacific Coast.⁴⁷

It was with this objective of tightening up the Gentlemen's Agreement in mind that American policymakers began to think more seriously about the possibility of obtaining British support. Third Assistant Secretary of State Francis M. Huntington Wilson, whose experience as a diplomat in Japan meant that he took a fairly prominent role in the State Department's response to the immigration crisis, noted that, 'this occasion, when the immigration question has become acute between Japan and Great Britain, is a most happy one for us to accomplish

⁴⁵ W.H. Taft to E.A. Hays, September 11th 1907, Reel 70, William Howard Taft Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division [hereafter Taft MS]; Cullinane, 'The 'Gentlemen's' Agreement', p.153; R.E. Minger, *William Howard Taft and United States Foreign Policy: The Apprenticeship Years, 1900-1908* (Urbana, IL, 1975), pp.151, 155; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.137, 145.

⁴⁶ A. Adee to E. Root, September 11th 1907, 2542/142, M862/254, RG-59, NARA; P. Heintzleman Memo, September 19th 1907, 2542/344, M862/255, RG-59, NARA.

⁴⁷ T. O'Brien to E. Root, October 3rd 1907, 2542/147, M862/254, RG-59, NARA; W.H. Taft to T. Roosevelt, October 5th 1907, 1797/380-383, M862/191, RG-59, NARA; W.H. Taft to T. O'Brien, October 7th 1907, Reel 70, Taft MS; W.H. Taft to T. Roosevelt, October 18th 1907, Reel 78, Roosevelt MS; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.210; Minger, *William Howard Taft and United States Foreign Policy*, pp.159-160; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.167.

something.⁴⁸ Huntington Wilson advised keeping in close touch with the British over immigration matters, and Lemieux's mission specifically, in order to 'gain their influence upon their ally and so their help to us in dealing with our own immigration question with Japan.'⁴⁹ The Roosevelt administration was evidently determined to take advantage of the Canadian mission to this end, to the point that the State Department rushed through the compilation of suggestions for administrative changes in order that their receipt by Ambassador O'Brien would coincide with the arrival of Lemieux in Japan in mid-November 1907.⁵⁰ Roosevelt and Root also encouraged O'Brien to make use in his discussions with the Japanese of the fact that, 'their staunchest ally, England, is in precisely the same position; that her colonies British Columbia, New Zealand, and the Australian commonwealths take precisely the same position as our own Pacific Coast States take'.⁵¹

It is worth noting that despite these efforts to make capital out of British involvement in the immigration question, American statesmen did not follow Huntington Wilson's advice to its logical conclusion and communicate directly with the British. Roosevelt did keep up his regular stream of letters casually highlighting the similarity of the British and American positions on the matter of Japanese immigration, but Ambassador Bryce noted that neither the President nor his Secretary of State raised the matter with him directly.⁵² The thinking behind this surprising omission is not entirely clear, but later interactions do suggest a degree of reluctance on the part of American policymakers to address the possibility of British-American cooperation over immigration head-on for fear of putting the British in a difficult position vis-à-vis their allies. In this instance, it would also appear that despite American policymakers' unabashed desire to reap the benefits

⁴⁸ F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, October 12th 1907, 2542/170-174, M862/254, RG-59, NARA.

⁴⁹ Ibid.; F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, November 6th 1907, 2452/160-161, M862/254, RG-59, NARA.

⁵⁰ E. Root to T. O'Brien, November 18th 1907, 2542/164A, M862/254, RG-59, NARA; E. Root to T. Roosevelt, November 19th 1907, Reel 78, Roosevelt MS; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.167-168.

⁵¹ T. Roosevelt to E. Root, November 19th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.851-852; E. Root to T. O'Brien, November 22nd 1907, 2542/176, M862/254, RG-59, NARA.

⁵² T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, December 21st 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.869-871; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, December 26th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.874-875; J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 10th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 13th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA.

of British and Canadian involvement, the Roosevelt administration actually had certain reservations about a genuinely cooperative approach to negotiations with Japan. For example, Roosevelt and Root were at pains to make sure Ambassador O'Brien understood that they would not be satisfied with a carbon copy of the Canadian agreement if such an arrangement did not entail the stringent restriction they required.⁵³ In other words, American policymakers wanted the impression of a united front to make the Japanese more tractable, but were not prepared for the outcome of the negotiations to be determined or limited by Canadian needs.

The questionable American commitment to cooperation in the cause of limiting immigration did not, however, detract from the expectations of policymakers in Washington that they would receive assistance from the Canadians on a practical level. They were therefore nonplussed when O'Brien's efforts to ingratiate himself with Lemieux and his party were rebuffed and the Canadian delegation refused even to share information with the U.S. Embassy. When Roosevelt later discussed this matter with Mackenzie King, the Canadian politician attempted to explain away the lack of cooperation as a matter of miscommunication, Lemieux having had no instructions authorising him to work with the American Ambassador, rather than an intentional snub.⁵⁴ The reality, however, is that Lemieux acted very deliberately in denying the Americans even the notional cooperation for which they were hoping. The Canadian view appears to have been that being yoked to the United States would hinder rather than help their cause, and that even the impression of coordinated action might work to their disadvantage with the Japanese.⁵⁵

This attitude probably stemmed in part from the Canadian belief that their negotiating position was stronger than that of the United States as a result of earlier informal assurances regarding the restriction of labour emigration to British

⁵³ T. Roosevelt to E. Root, November 27th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, p.858; E. Root to T. O'Brien, December 21st 1907, 2542/239, M862/254, RG-59, NARA.

⁵⁴ W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 25th 1908, Nos. 4472-4480, MG26-J13, LAC; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, March 17th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', p.62.

⁵⁵ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, March 6th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, March 17th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.183.

Columbia. Lemieux's central objective was to convince the Japanese Government to openly endorse these assurances in the hope that this show of good faith would convince the Canadian Parliament and the people of British Columbia that the immigration issue could be satisfactorily dealt with by diplomatic means, without the need for further legislation.⁵⁶ The Japanese, however, denied that the assurances cited by the Canadian mission were in any way binding, and although they were entirely content to maintain the policy of strictly limiting labour emigration to Canada they refused to risk a popular backlash by offering anything more than confidential guarantees. This basic disconnect in the positions of the two sides, which effectively came down to their conflicting political needs, caused a certain amount of delay in the negotiations. Though the basis of an arrangement was worked out in early December 1907, it was not until January 1908, after Lemieux had returned to Canada for consultation, that the matter was actually settled.⁵⁷ The Lemieux Agreement was, in practical terms, very similar to the Gentlemen's Agreement, the one main difference being that the Japanese Government, in deference to Canadian pressure for a specific quota, offered a secret and informal assurance that it did not expect the annual immigration figure to rise above 400.⁵⁸

Though the Lemieux mission was very much a Canadian initiative, the British Government was keen for it to succeed, and supported Canadian efforts to broker a solution. The British Ambassador at Tokyo, Claude MacDonald, had instructions to work with Lemieux in putting Canadian proposals before the Japanese Government,

⁵⁶ W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, September 24th 1907, Nos. 4379-4380, MG26-J13, LAC; W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, October 9th 1907, No. 4393, MG26-J13, LAC; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, November 15th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, November 27th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; A. Grey to Lord Elgin, December 10th 1907 (enclosed in Colonial Office to Foreign Office, December 11th 1907), FO 410/50, TNA; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', p.63; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, p.208.

⁵⁷ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, November 27th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, December 5th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; J. Pope to W. Laurier, December 9th 1907 (enclosed in Colonial Office to Foreign Office, January 17th 1908), FO 410/51, TNA; A. Grey to Lord Elgin, December 21st 1907 (enclosed in Colonial Office to Foreign Office, December 31st 1907), FO 410/51, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, December 24th 1907, FO 410/51, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, January 20th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, pp.209, 211.

⁵⁸ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, December 25th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.183; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', p.63.

and his efforts appear to have played an important part in the success of the undertaking.⁵⁹ The desire to avoid offending the Japanese remained a major priority for the British, however, and MacDonald raised concerns that in working with the Canadians to secure the effective exclusion of Japanese labourers they were on somewhat dangerous ground. The British Ambassador's issue was less with the actual goal of the negotiations – indeed he had been the one to suggest that the British Government should support Lemieux's efforts – than with the kind of language and ideas which the Canadians used in relation to the immigration question. Specifically, he fretted that the Canadians were overly influenced by racist notions of a 'peaceful invasion', after this possibility was raised by Laurier and echoed by the British representative in Canada, Governor General Albert Grey.⁶⁰ MacDonald was frankly shocked at these expressions, warning the Foreign Secretary:

Were the Japanese Government to know the expressed opinions of the Governor-General and Premier of Canada as to the conversion of British Columbia into a "yellow province" by quiet and systematic "invasion" by Japanese the relations between Canada and Japan would be the reverse of happy.⁶¹

The British Ambassador's almost panicked reaction to the Canadians' use of racial ideology is telling, suggesting that the emotive language of 'white men's country' rhetoric was both unexpected and unwelcome in the context of diplomatic interchange.

Whereas MacDonald had reservations about risking Japanese goodwill by involving the British Government too heavily in the immigration controversy, in Washington, Bryce was actively seeking to insert himself into the question in some way. In January 1908 he wrote both to Ottawa and to London implying that there might be potential for him to act as an intermediary between Canada and the

⁵⁹ Colonial Office to Foreign Office, November 20th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; E. Grey to C. MacDonald, November 21st 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, February 21st 1908, FO 800/68, TNA; E. Grey to C. MacDonald, November 14th 1908, FO 800/68, TNA; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', p.62.

⁶⁰ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, November 15th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; A. Grey to Lord Elgin, December 10th 1907 (enclosed in Colonial Office to Foreign Office, December 11th 1907), FO 410/50, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, December 25th 1907, FO 800/68, TNA.

⁶¹ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, December 24th 1907, FO 410/51, TNA.

United States as each country sought to settle the matter with the Japanese.⁶² Though Edward Grey did, in response to Bryce's suggestion of facilitating cooperation, express the hope that the settlement between Canada and Japan would smooth the way for the United States, he was not amenable to any intervention on Bryce's part, and it is evident that British policymakers retained a distinct aversion to becoming embroiled in the Japanese-American immigration dispute.⁶³ Even Bryce's alternative proposal that the Canadians might assist the Americans by sharing the confidential details of the Lemieux Agreement did not come to fruition, though in this case the issue was Canadian rather than British objections. Policymakers in Ottawa remained dubious about any level of coordination with the United States, apparently fearing that this might sour relations with Japan and thus put the immigration settlement at risk.⁶⁴

Ambassador O'Brien was consequently left without external support in his attempt to negotiate a more rigorous system of emigration restriction with the Japanese Government. The Roosevelt administration hoped that new administrative measures on the part of Japan would address the perceived deficiencies of the initial Gentlemen's Agreement and quiet the calls on the Pacific Coast for unilateral exclusion legislation.⁶⁵ Japanese policymakers were disinclined to acquiesce completely to American demands, however, fearing a popular backlash against concessions on the immigration issue. Though O'Brien and the Japanese negotiators did arrive at a workable compromise in February 1908, policymakers in Washington were far from entirely convinced by the outcome.⁶⁶ Root instructed

⁶² J. Bryce to A. Grey, January 11th 1908, FO 800/331, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 13th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA.

⁶³ W. Tyrrell Minute on J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 13th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; E. Grey to J. Bryce, January 24th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA.

⁶⁴ J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 28th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 25th 1908, Nos. 4472-4480, MG26-J13, LAC; J. Bryce to A. Grey, February 1st 1908, FO 800/331, TNA; I.H. Nish, *Alliance in Decline: A Study in Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1908-23* (London, 1972), p.23.

⁶⁵ F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, November 6th 1907, 2542/160-161, M862/254, RG-59, NARA; E. Root to T. O'Brien, November 9th 1907 (enclosed in E. Root to T. Roosevelt, November 19th 1907), Reel 78, Roosevelt MS; E. Root to T. O'Brien, November 18th 1907, 2542/164A, M863/254, RG-59, NARA; T. O'Brien to W. Reid, December 31st 1907, Reel 162, Reid MS.

⁶⁶ F.M. Huntington Wilson Memo, January 3rd 1908, 2542/258, M862/254, RG-59, NARA; T. O'Brien to E. Root, February 25th 1908 (in Department of State, *Japanese Emigration and Immigration to*

the Ambassador to thank the Japanese for their efforts in finding a solution, but cautioned that the proof of the pudding would be in the immigration statistics and, moreover, that the effectiveness of the arrangement was dependent, 'solely upon a continued and sincere determination and constant circumspection by the Japanese Government'.⁶⁷

Root's comments on the updated Gentlemen's Agreement are indicative of the suspicion of the Japanese Government which characterised official American discussions of the immigration question throughout 1908. Policymakers in Washington exhibited significant anxiety that the Japanese might fail to live up to their pledges and decline to enforce the regulations limiting emigration to the Pacific Coast. There was a general lack of faith within the Roosevelt administration regarding the sincerity of the Japanese, perhaps influenced to some degree by the common stereotype of Orientals as inherently dishonest and untrustworthy, and the received wisdom was that Tokyo would need to be constantly badgered into following through on promises.⁶⁸ American suspicion was fuelled by the slow decline of the immigration figures, and Roosevelt himself was assiduous in tracking the monthly statistics and appraising the State Department of his concerns as to the sluggishness with which the newly finalised Gentlemen's Agreement was taking effect.⁶⁹

American Territory, pt. 2, June 3rd 1909), Box 27, Philander C. Knox Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Knox MS]; T. O'Brien to E. Root, February 26th 1908 (in Department of State, *Japanese Emigration and Immigration to American Territory*, pt. 2, June 3rd 1909), Box 27, Knox MS.

⁶⁷ E. Root to T. O'Brien, March 10th 1908, 2542/456, M862/255, RG-59, NARA.

⁶⁸ F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, February 27th 1908, 2542/456, M862/255, RG-59, NARA; E. Root to T. O'Brien, March 30th 1908 (in Department of State, *Japanese Emigration and Immigration to American Territory*, pt. 2, June 3rd 1909), Box 27, Knox MS; R. Bacon to T. O'Brien, May 13th 1908, 2542/557, M862/256, RG-59, NARA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, June 4th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; D.C. Gordon, 'Roosevelt's "Smart Yankee Trick"', *Pacific Historical Review* 30 (1961), p.351; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.59.

⁶⁹ E. Root to T. O'Brien, February 25th 1908 (in Department of State, *Japanese Emigration and Immigration to American Territory*, pt. 2, June 3rd 1909), Box 27, Knox MS; T. Roosevelt to E. Root, March 28th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, p.984; T. Roosevelt to E. Root, May 4th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, p.1022; T. Roosevelt to E. Root, June 18th 1908, 2542/634-636, M862/256, RG-59, NARA; T. Roosevelt to R. Bacon, July 6th 1908, 2452/663½, M862/256, RG-59, NARA.

Apprehension lest the Japanese might be, as Bryce put it, 'playing fast and loose', was not shared by British policymakers, who were confident that the Japanese Government could be relied upon to honour its pledges.⁷⁰ Officials in Ottawa were considerably less optimistic, however, and Canadian policymakers fell victim to many of the same doubts and suspicions as the Americans. Specifically, as immigration figures remained high in early 1908, the Canadian authorities felt that their hard-won 'quota' of 400 immigrants per-annum was being disregarded by the Japanese Government. As the Japanese and Ambassador MacDonald laboured to explain, these immigrants fell outside the terms of the Lemieux Agreement, having obtained passports prior to its negotiation. Nevertheless, Laurier and his colleagues took this oversight as a sign of bad faith.⁷¹

The anxiety of Canadian and American policymakers over indications of apparent Japanese dilatoriness in holding up their end of the bargain was particularly acute because they feared being forced to take more drastic action in the direction of exclusion. Popular feeling on the West Coast was still decidedly unsatisfied; in February 1908 the Canadian Government had to disallow discriminatory British Columbian immigration legislation, while the following month a bill was introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives calling for the extension of the Chinese Exclusion laws to the Japanese.⁷² The shared apprehension in Washington and Ottawa that the Japanese Government would fail to deliver a significant reduction in immigration prompted a venture in informal diplomacy centred on Mackenzie King, the young and ambitious Canadian politician

⁷⁰ C. MacDonald to A. Grey, January 20th 1908 (enclosed in C. MacDonald to E. Grey, January 20th 1908), FO 410/51, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 2nd 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, February 18th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; C. Hardinge to J. Bryce, February 21st 1908, MSS Bryce USA 27, James Bryce Papers, Bodleian Library Special Collections, Oxford University, Oxford [hereafter Bryce MS]; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, p.23.

⁷¹ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, March 17th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; R. Lemieux Memo, May 5th 1908 (enclosed in A. Grey to Lord Crewe, May 6th 1908), CO 42/919/17790, TNA; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.192; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, pp.212-213.

⁷² A. Grey to Lord Elgin, February 17th 1908, CO 42/918/7435, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, February 18th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; U.S. House, 60th Congress, 'H.R. 18790', March 6th 1908, [ProQuest Congressional](http://congressional.proquest.com/congressional) <<http://congressional.proquest.com/congressional>> (accessed 22/05/14); F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Root, May 5th 1908, 2542/558-559, M862/256, RG-59, NARA; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.183; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.169-171, 180-181; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, p.221.

who had cut his teeth dealing with the situation on the ground in Vancouver. At the instigation of a mutual friend, businessman John James McCook, Mackenzie King travelled to Washington to meet with Roosevelt in late January 1908. The Canadian would then return for further talks on two occasions, before crossing the Atlantic to consult with key figures in the British Government on the immigration question.⁷³ While McCook's involvement as an intermediary is well established, it is considerably less clear where the initial suggestion for a meeting between Mackenzie King and Roosevelt came from, chiefly because the recollections of the two protagonists are markedly conflicting.

From the point of view of American policymakers, Mackenzie King's visit to Washington represented a deliberate Canadian initiative for joint action on Japanese immigration. Roosevelt gathered that the Canadians were dissatisfied with the laxity of the Japanese Government in knowingly issuing too many passports and hoped to secure American aid in convincing the British Government of the continuing seriousness of the situation on the Pacific Coast.⁷⁴ Mackenzie King, on the other hand, claimed that he believed the immigration question to have been effectively settled by the Lemieux Agreement and that he had gone to Washington with no particular agenda in mind.⁷⁵ He was adamant that Roosevelt had been the one to instigate the meeting, later telling Edward Grey that it had been, 'due entirely to the President's initiative, which had been so pressing as to be a little embarrassing.'⁷⁶

⁷³ W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 12th 1908, No.4468, MG26-J13, LAC; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 5th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; A. Grey to Lord Elgin, February 5th 1908, CO 42/918/5844, TNA; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, p.271; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.233.

⁷⁴ T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, February 2nd 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.918-921; E. Root to J.R. Carter, February 6th 1908, Box 188, Elihu Root Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.; E. Grey to J. Bryce, February 25th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, March 30th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, p.985.

⁷⁵ W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 25th 1908, Nos. 4472-4480, MG26-J13, LAC; A. Grey to J. Bryce, January 30th 1908, FO 800/331, TNA; E. Grey Memo, March 1908 (enclosed in E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 30th 1908), MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS.

⁷⁶ E. Grey Memo, March 1908 (enclosed in E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 30th 1908), MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS.

Neither version of events is entirely trustworthy. For example, Mackenzie King's assertion that the Canadians were completely satisfied with the immigration settlement was distinctly disingenuous; if nothing else, his own experiences in Vancouver had convinced him that more would need to be done to address the issue.⁷⁷ Roosevelt's claim that the Canadian had come to Washington solely at Laurier's behest and not in response to an American invitation is even more suspect, however, and it would seem that the President was at the very least the more active party in arranging the rendezvous.⁷⁸ Roosevelt's reasons for wishing to discuss the immigration question with Mackenzie King are fairly apparent in the latter's account of the initial meeting. Mackenzie King noted in his diary that Roosevelt had mooted the possibility of a Canadian mission to London with a view to convincing the British Government to intervene with the Japanese and encourage them to ensure that every effort was made to keep Pacific Coast immigration to a minimum. He highlighted Roosevelt's eagerness to communicate his views to Edward Grey and his proposition that Mackenzie King could pass on 'some strong messages' as to what was required from Japan if he were to visit England: 'Britain is her ally, a word thro' her ambassador, spoken in a friendly way to an ally, assuring her of the feeling might go far.'⁷⁹

Roosevelt's suggestion that the British Government might intervene with Japan on behalf of both Canada and the United States was the logical culmination of his long-running campaign to convince policymakers in London that Japanese immigration was a shared problem. What is interesting is that he chose to pursue this project indirectly through an informal channel rather than being upfront with the British about his wishes. Roosevelt was insistent that Mackenzie King's visit to

⁷⁷ T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, February 2nd 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.918-921; E. Grey Memo, March 1908 (enclosed in E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 30th 1908), MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; P. Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan, 1911-1915: A Study of British Far Eastern Policy* (London, 1969), pp.278-279; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.192; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', pp.53, 67; Roy, *A White Man's Province*, p.205.

⁷⁸ Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.184-187; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', pp.60, 68-69; Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire*, p.174.

⁷⁹ W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 25th 1908, Nos. 4472-4480, MG26-J13, LAC; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 5th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; A. Grey to Lord Elgin, February 5th 1908, CO 42/918/5844, TNA; Burton, 'Theodore Roosevelt and His English Correspondents', p.33.

Britain had not been an American initiative, but had actually been suggested by the Canadians. Though he freely admitted in a letter to Arthur Lee that he had spoken of the desirability of cooperation between Washington and London to hold the Japanese to their pledges, Roosevelt plainly implied that the initial idea for the mission had been Laurier's.⁸⁰ Indeed, this would become a point of some sensitivity for the Americans, who vehemently denied that Mackenzie King went anywhere at the behest of the White House. In London, Whitelaw Reid was particularly zealous in correcting anyone, most notably Edward Grey, who thought of the Canadian politician as 'another American Ambassador'.⁸¹

There are two sides to Roosevelt's preference for working through Mackenzie King and attempting to downplay his own involvement in the Canadian's mission to Britain. In the first place, it suited the President's consistent narrative – that the British Dominions felt at least as strongly about Japanese immigration as Americans on the West Coast did – to give the impression that the whole enterprise was driven by Canadian anxieties. He evidently believed that British policymakers would be more receptive to apprehensions of the Japanese renegeing on their engagements if such concerns were raised by the Canadians rather than by himself.⁸² There is also, however, evidence that Roosevelt had some reservations about directly broaching the possibility of intervention at Tokyo with the British. On more than one occasion, Ambassador Bryce noted that the President was very careful, even though what he hoped for was quite evident, to avoid explicitly asking for British assistance.⁸³ Roosevelt also mentioned his hesitance about addressing

⁸⁰ T. Roosevelt to W. Laurier, February 1st 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.917-918; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, February 2nd 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.918-921.

⁸¹ W. Reid to R. Bacon, March 9th 1908, Reel 105, Reid MS; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, March 12th 1908, Reel 105, Reid MS; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, March 18th 1908, Reel 105, Reid MS; T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, March 30th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, p.985; E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 30th 1908, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, April 14th 1908, Reel 106, Reid MS.

⁸² J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 2nd 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 5th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, March 20th 1908, Reel 105, Reid MS; Gordon, 'Roosevelt's "Smart Yankee Trick"', p.356; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.60; W.C. Nicholson, 'Anglo-Saxonism at the Crossroads: U.S.-Canadian Responses to Japanese Immigration to North America, 1905-1914' (PhD Thesis, Georgia State University, 2004), p.223; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, p.22.

⁸³ J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 2nd 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 5th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.194-195.

the subject openly with the British to Mackenzie King: 'I cannot write, he added, for that would be misunderstood. You know why we cannot write on these things.'⁸⁴

In seeking to explain why Roosevelt was so reluctant to approach the British directly on matters of immigration, historians Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds have suggested that the President did not have a particularly good relationship with Bryce and did not believe that he could accomplish anything by working through him.⁸⁵ This seems unlikely given the long-standing and close personal friendship between the two men, but Bryce's correspondence does indicate that he found the whole Mackenzie King episode rather difficult to navigate because of the great irregularity of the proceedings, and Roosevelt may have steered clear of the subject of immigration as requiring a much more off-the-record approach than Bryce was comfortable with.⁸⁶ Probably more significant than Bryce's character, however, was the President's experience of seeking British assistance during the Russo-Japanese War. Roosevelt's forthright requests for the British to urge moderation on Japan had been consistently rebuffed, injecting an element of tension into otherwise friendly relations, and it is likely that he was keen to avoid a repeat of this. Working informally through the Canadians allowed Roosevelt to avoid openly putting pressure on the British, thereby circumventing the risk of leaving them in a position where they would be forced to come down on the side either of American friendship or the Japanese Alliance.

Even with Roosevelt's reluctance to make a direct appeal, British policymakers were fully aware well before Mackenzie King set foot in London that the President desired them to use their influence with the Japanese Government to ensure the effective execution of the immigration settlement. They were not prepared, however, to plead the American case to the Japanese, for fear of causing offence and risking damage to the relationship with their ally. As Grey explained to

⁸⁴ W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 25th 1908, Nos. 4472-4480, MG26-J13, LAC.

⁸⁵ Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.192.

⁸⁶ J. Bryce to A. Grey, February 1st 1908, FO 800/331, TNA; J. Bryce to A. Grey, February 4th 1908, FO 800/331, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 6th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; N.M. Blake, 'Ambassadors at the Court of Theodore Roosevelt', *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 42 (1955), pp.203-204.

Bryce, the Japanese Government had not themselves raised the issue of immigration to the United States, and if the British Government were to do so it might be a cause for suspicion in Tokyo. Moreover, calling on the Japanese to keep to their agreement would imply that British policymakers doubted the sincerity of Japan's promises, an impression which Grey was determined to avoid conveying.⁸⁷ When Bryce explained British reluctance to get involved in the situation to Root, the Secretary of State, far from exhibiting disappointment, strongly concurred that the time was not right for Britain to intercede with Japan. Bryce reflected that Root's response gave the impression that he very much regretted that the question of British intervention with the Japanese had been raised at all.⁸⁸ This response would tend to lend credence to the theory that American policymakers, chastened by their experience during the late war, preferred to avoid a direct exchange on the subject so as to minimise any possible friction if the British declined to offer their assistance.

Roosevelt's apparent confidence that conveying his message to the British through Mackenzie King would be more effective than utilising direct channels was, as it turned out, somewhat misplaced. The Canadians had an agenda of their own in the mission to London and were suspicious of Roosevelt's intrigues, which Laurier derided as a 'smart Yankee trick'.⁸⁹ Mackenzie King's main purpose in his conversations with British policymakers was to get across how vital it was from the point of view of the Canadian Government that the Japanese keep to their assurances over the restriction of emigration and that, should they fail to do so, the British Government did not stand in the way of Canadian legislation to stop the influx of labourers. The Canadian sought to emphasise the strength of feeling on

⁸⁷ E. Grey to J. Bryce, February 5th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; W. Langley to Lord Elgin, February 24th 1908, CO 42/922/7108, TNA; E. Grey to J. Bryce, February 25th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.197; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.232; Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire*, p.176.

⁸⁸ J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 6th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 7th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA.

⁸⁹ Gordon, 'Roosevelt's "Smart Yankee Trick"', p.357; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', p.69.

the immigration question in British Columbia, which was, he warned Grey, 'impossible to exaggerate'.⁹⁰

Though Mackenzie King did not make any effort to promote Roosevelt's project for British intervention with Japan, he did not neglect to make capital out of his meetings at the White House in order to bolster his own position. Just as Roosevelt had sought to downplay his own concerns and exaggerate those of the Canadians, so Mackenzie King portrayed his American host as far more anxious and outspoken on the immigration question than the President's own recollections would attest. An interesting example of this is the Canadian's treatment of the possibility, which he and Roosevelt had discussed in Washington, of the secession of British Columbia and the West Coast states to form 'a new republic between the mountains and the Pacific' in defence of their common interests should Japanese immigration be allowed to continue.⁹¹ In Roosevelt's account, this notion was a Canadian invention, and in fact he claimed to have found it such a laughable idea that he had needed Mackenzie King to explain it multiple times before he was able to grasp it.⁹² There is definitely some substance to Roosevelt's claim of Canadian origin, as the idea of Pacific Coast separatism had originally been mooted amongst officials at Ottawa some months earlier and even proposed as a means by which Lemieux might convince the Japanese of the delicacy of Canada's position while he was in Tokyo.⁹³ Mackenzie King, however, portrayed the notion as the President's own, very genuine, apprehension, thus cloaking Canadian concerns in the guise of American anxiety. The other purpose of this sleight of hand was to imply that the United States might be looking on the immigration issue as an opportunity to

⁹⁰ E. Grey Memo, March 1908 (enclosed in E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 30th 1908), MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS.

⁹¹ W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 25th 1908, Nos. 4472-4480, MG26-J13, LAC.

⁹² T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, February 2nd 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.918-921.

⁹³ W.E. McInnes to F. Oliver, October 2nd 1907 (enclosed in Colonial Office to Foreign Office, November 28th 1907), FO 410/50, TNA; Lemieux Memo, November 15th 1907 (enclosed in C. MacDonald to E. Grey, November 27th 1907), FO 410/50, TNA.

emphasise the common interests and perspective of the U.S. and Canada in an attempt to draw the Dominion away from Britain.⁹⁴

In his meeting with Grey, Mackenzie King was quite open about this latter possibility, playing on British policymakers' anxieties by insinuating that those Americans who were in favour of the annexation of Canada might wish to utilise the immigration crisis to advance their aims, 'by teaching the West to look to the United States for protection in the matter'.⁹⁵ This message apparently hit home with the British, as Edward Grey explained to Mackenzie King that the British Government had absolutely no desire 'to defeat the wishes of the West with regard to Japanese immigration'. Moreover, Grey assured the Canadian emissary that if the Japanese Government did not prove true to its word he would immediately raise the matter with Tokyo, even to the point of threatening exclusion legislation if the Japanese did not rectify matters.⁹⁶ Grey explained the reason for this uncharacteristically strong stance to Bryce in these terms:

What I fear is that a suspicion may arise among the people there that, when the pinch comes, we shall not support them in resisting Japanese immigration. Should such a suspicion get hold of them, there would be no limit to the untoward political consequences which might ensue.⁹⁷

The concerns of British policymakers on this point did not relate simply to the risk of alienating the Canadians through lack of sympathy but, as Grey revealed in a later letter to Ambassador MacDonald, were also influenced by the fear of British Columbia making 'common cause' with the exclusionists of the West Coast states.⁹⁸

Grey was true to his word, and in July 1908 he approached Ambassador Komura Jutarō, who was about to leave the London Embassy to take up the role of Foreign Minister, highlighting some unsatisfactory aspects of the immigration

⁹⁴ J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 5th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; Gordon, 'Roosevelt's "Smart Yankee Trick"', pp.352-353.

⁹⁵ E. Grey Memo, March 1908 (enclosed in E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 30th 1908), MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 30th 1908, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS.

⁹⁸ E. Grey to C. MacDonald, November 14th 1908, FO 800/68, TNA; Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, p.165; A. Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism: US Foreign Policy to 1914* (London, 1977), pp.207-208; K. Robbins, *Sir Edward Grey: A Biography of Lord Grey of Fallodon* (London, 1971), p.170.

statistics and pressing the point that a breach of the agreement with Canada would have very undesirable consequences.⁹⁹ From a Canadian point of view, then, the Mackenzie King mission had been a resounding success, eliciting substantive assurances of British backing over the immigration issue.¹⁰⁰ For the Americans, the outcome of the mission was a little less clear cut. There was certainly no concrete gain, but Roosevelt appears to have taken British guarantees to Mackenzie King as tacit backing for the American position, telling Arthur Lee, 'the visit has achieved just what I hoped'.¹⁰¹

The President's optimistic interpretation of the denouement of the Mackenzie King mission probably owes a lot to the gushing, and somewhat misleading, account of the affair which he received from Lee, who assured him that British policymakers were thoroughly in agreement with his policy and anxious to cooperate.¹⁰² Roosevelt's willingness to settle for assurances at one remove is perhaps also indicative of his desire to avoid risking friction with London by confronting the immigration issue head-on. As soon as British reservations about approaching Japan over the immigration question became apparent, Roosevelt altered the terms in which he expressed his hopes for cooperation. Backpedalling on the suggestion of immediate intervention at Tokyo to ensure that the Japanese honoured their agreements, he shifted the emphasis to the desirability of a 'complete understanding' between Britain and the United States on the issue of Japanese immigration. Roosevelt's revised approach was premised on harmonising the two governments' attitudes towards the whole question of immigration, so as

⁹⁹ E. Grey to C. MacDonald, July 29th 1908, FO 410/52, TNA.

¹⁰⁰ W.L. Mackenzie King, 'Report by W. L. Mackenzie King, C.M.G., Deputy Minister of Labour on Mission to England to Confer with the British Authorities on the Subject of Immigration to Canada from the Orient and Immigration from India in Particular', May 4th 1908, [Komagata Maru: Continuing the Journey](http://komagatamarujourney.ca/node/3373) <<http://komagatamarujourney.ca/node/3373>> (accessed 11/06/15); Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.226; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.233.

¹⁰¹ T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, April 8th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.995-996; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, pp.226-227; Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire*, pp.177-179.

¹⁰² A. Lee to T. Roosevelt, March 31st 1908, Reel 82, Roosevelt MS.

to ensure that when and if the time came that the Japanese Government had to be approached their positions would be identical.¹⁰³

British policymakers, in spite of their general preference for this kind of comprehensive cooperation, do not seem to have been any more enamoured with Roosevelt's scheme for a broad understanding on immigration than they had been with the idea of specifically pressing Japan to tighten their restrictions. Their confidence that Japan would be faithful to her pledges had not been in any way shaken, and MacDonald's advice from Tokyo was that the appearance of a common front with the United States would be badly received in Japan.¹⁰⁴ The advantage of Roosevelt's new tack, however, was that it did not require the British to take action or offer any definite answer. The President was thus able to conclude that the desired understanding had been achieved through Mackenzie King's endeavours in London, regardless of the fact that the British Government remained decidedly averse to cooperation over the immigration issue.

The Mackenzie King affair, in addition to representing yet another example of British-American interaction falling short of actual cooperation, offers an interesting insight into the role of context in determining the kind of language policymakers employed and the extent to which they were willing to engage with ideology to make their case. There is a marked difference between Roosevelt's interactions with Canadian figures and his discussion of the immigration question with his British correspondents. With the latter, the President tended to stick to the line of reasoning, discussed above, which focused on the economic and 'class' aspects of the problem. In letters to Lee and King Edward VII in early 1908, Roosevelt relied heavily on terms such as 'labourers' and 'wageworkers' in

¹⁰³ J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 14th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; T. Roosevelt to W. Reid, March 30th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, p.985; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.223; Lee, 'The "Yellow Peril" and Asian Exclusion', p.554; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.203; Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire*, p.177.

¹⁰⁴ King Edward VII to T. Roosevelt, March 5th 1908, Reel 309, Roosevelt MS; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, March 6th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, March 17th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA.

explaining his belief in the need for restrictions on immigration.¹⁰⁵ Though the racial aspect of the issue was not entirely absent from these communications, Roosevelt referred to it chiefly by way of illustrating his persistent assertion that Japanese immigration was a matter in which the interests of the United States and the British Empire were one and the same. For example, in his letter to Lee he made use of a note he had received from Wilfrid Laurier, including a quotation to the effect that antagonism was bound to result whenever Asian and Caucasian peoples came into contact and competition, to hammer home his broader point that the English-speaking countries would ultimately have to adopt a common approach to dealing with the problem.¹⁰⁶

In interactions with the Canadians, on the other hand, Roosevelt appears to have significantly relaxed his restraint with regard to the language he used. In particular, he showed a much greater willingness to utilise the rhetoric of ‘white men’s countries’ than he had in any interactions with the British. A striking example of this alternative approach appears in the record of a meeting between Roosevelt and a group of British Columbian politicians who were visiting Washington:

“Gentlemen”, he said, “we have got to protect our working men. We have got to build up a western country with our white civilization, and (very vehemently) we must retain the power to say who shall or shall not come to our country.”¹⁰⁷

Roosevelt appears to have expressed a similar view, in perhaps even stronger terms, to Mackenzie King in one of their conversations, as Governor General Grey related back to the Colonial Office:

Mr King reports that the President took up the position, with characteristic vehemence, that the brown and the white races cannot assimilate; that they must keep to their respective areas; and that this is a question on which all the white races must stand together.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ T. Roosevelt to King Edward VII, February 12th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.940-941; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, March 7th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.965-966.

¹⁰⁶ W. Laurier to T. Roosevelt, February 20th 1908, Reel 81, Roosevelt MS; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, March 7th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.965-966.

¹⁰⁷ R. Smith Memo, February 10th 1908 (enclosed in J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 20th 1908), FO 410/51, TNA.

¹⁰⁸ A. Grey to Lord Elgin, February 5th 1908, CO 42/918/5844, TNA; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.191.

It is likely that Roosevelt, who was hardly a paragon of tact and self-control at the best of times, was somewhat freer in his expression in conversation than in written communication, but the major factor which explains the much more racial character of his language appears to have been his audience. While sticking to the less overtly ideological 'class' argument with the British, Roosevelt evidently felt that much stronger phraseology would find a receptive audience with Canadians, especially those with Pacific Coast sympathies. His willingness to employ the tropes of 'white men's countries' rhetoric in these instances appears, therefore, to have been a conscious, tactical decision.

During the course of 1908 the immigration statistics gradually fell into line with expectations, and both the American and Canadian Governments more or less came to terms with their respective immigration settlements.¹⁰⁹ The diligence of the Japanese Government in preventing further labour emigration notwithstanding, however, the problem was far from over. Anti-Japanese feeling remained prevalent throughout the Pacific Coast and many in the U.S. and Canada maintained the fundamental grievance that the immigration settlements left the power to determine whether or not immigrants would come to their country in the hands of the Japanese Government.¹¹⁰ The first major flare-up to occur after the agreements with Japan had been finalised was in January 1909, when a string of anti-Japanese bills, including a measure resurrecting the school segregation question, appeared in the California State Legislature. Roosevelt weighed in almost immediately, calling on Governor James N. Gillett to veto the offensive legislation on the basis that such discriminatory measures would invalidate the Gentlemen's Agreement, thereby increasing Japanese immigration rather than contributing to its cessation.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ E. Root to T. O'Brien, October 19th 1908, 2542/760, M862/257, RG-59, NARA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, November 13th 1908, FO 410/52, TNA; E. Grey to C. MacDonald, November 14th 1908, FO 800/68, TNA; T. Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (New York, 1985 [1913]), p.395.

¹¹⁰ R.W. Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy: A History* (New York, 1962), p.274; Paul, *The Abrogation of the Gentlemen's Agreement*, pp.8-9; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', p.66.

¹¹¹ T. Roosevelt to J.N. Gillett, January 16th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1477-1478; E. Root Memo, January 25th 1909, Reel 87, Roosevelt MS; T. Roosevelt to J.N. Gillett, January 26th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1483-1486; T. Roosevelt to J.N. Gillett, February 4th 1909, *Roosevelt*

Though this incident died down relatively quickly, it prompted Roosevelt to lay the groundwork for the continuation of his policy towards Japanese immigration following his departure from the White House in March 1909. In early February, he reached out once again to the British through Arthur Lee, reiterating his conviction that a British-American united front was the optimal way to ensure the lasting success of the immigration settlements. Interestingly, Roosevelt appears to have latched on to the strategy, so successfully employed by Mackenzie King, of raising the spectre of a breakdown in imperial unity if Japanese immigration was not held in check. Though a year earlier he had dismissed the notion as absurdly far-fetched, Roosevelt now alluded, apparently in earnest, to the possibility of Pacific Coast separatism:

If London and Washington should tomorrow unite in saying that the Japanese should be admitted wholesale to all countries under the British and American flags, we should the following week see our Pacific States and British Columbia declare their independence as a separate republic, in close alliance with Australia.¹¹²

Though Roosevelt's comments certainly have a distinct tinge of alarmism to them, his letter to Lee did not otherwise stray into ideological territory. The burden of the argument was simply that pressure for immigration restriction on the Pacific Coast was so strong that it would be politically impossible for the United States or Britain to resist it. This line of reasoning is in stark contrast with the justification for immigration restriction which Roosevelt was at this point, and to even greater extent after the close of his presidency, using at home. This alternative case for exclusion was based on the open identification of the immigration issue as a 'race question', on the grounds that the difference between the Japanese and white Americans was so fundamental that racial antagonism would be the inevitable result of continued immigration.¹¹³ Roosevelt thus appears to have preferred to

Letters, vol. 6, p.1502; T. Roosevelt to P.A. Stanton, February 8th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters* vol. 6, pp.1509-1510; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, pp.304-305.

¹¹² T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, February 7th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, p.1507-1509.

¹¹³ T. Roosevelt to W. Kent, February 4th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1503-1504; T. Roosevelt to P. Knox, February 8th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1510-1514; T. Roosevelt to T. Roosevelt, Jr., February 13th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1520-1521; T. Roosevelt, 'The Japanese Question', *The Outlook*, May 8th 1909, [Almanac of Theodore Roosevelt](http://www.theodore-) <<http://www.theodore->

maintain a broadly race-neutral approach in his interactions with the British even after he had ceased to do so more generally, implying a recognition on his part that British policymakers were less likely to be swayed by overtly ideological arguments.

The other side of Roosevelt's endeavour to ensure continuity in the handling of the Japanese immigration issue was with his successor, William Howard Taft, and the incoming Secretary of State, Philander Knox, to whom he also wrote at length in February 1908. He urged Knox to maintain the Gentlemen's Agreement as the best possible vehicle for keeping the immigration question in check, whilst also making quite clear his belief that it would be necessary to hold the Japanese accountable for their side of the bargain. If things were allowed to drift, Roosevelt warned, the Japanese would slacken their enforcement of the regulations with potentially disastrous results.¹¹⁴ The outgoing President's comments indicate that despite the apparent success of the immigration settlement there remained an inherent fragility to it which, as the next chapter will detail, held the potential for the development of further friction between the United States and Japan.

The Japanese immigration question appeared to hold a high degree of potential for joint action between Britain and the United States owing to the strong parallels in the situations in which policymakers in London and Washington found themselves. Their interests were unquestionably very similar – to calm and appease those regions which objected to Japanese immigration and to avoid a rupture in relations with Japan – and the solutions they ultimately adopted, the British admittedly at one remove, were almost identical. Nevertheless, no significant

roosevelt.com/images/research/treditorials/o32.pdf> (accessed 27/11/13); G. Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago, IL, 1995), pp.197, 200; T.G. Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1980), pp.135, 137-139; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, pp.146, 150, 301; Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, pp.151-152; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.208; Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt*, pp.392-396; G. Sinkler, *The Racial Attitudes of American Presidents: From Abraham Lincoln to Theodore Roosevelt* (Garden City, NY, 1971), p.399; Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore*, p.202.

¹¹⁴ T. Roosevelt to P. Knox, February 8th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1510-1514; T. Roosevelt to W.H. Taft, February 13th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1518-1519.

cooperation came about despite the sustained, if somewhat indirect, efforts of President Roosevelt to arrange a united front with Britain and Canada.

The main reason behind the lack of cooperation over the immigration question was the key British priority of maintaining the friendliest possible relations with Japan. Though British policymakers were willing to compromise this goal to a certain extent to ensure that ties with Canada were not weakened, they were not prepared to take the same risk merely to remain in the good graces of the United States, and they therefore rejected the possibility of joint action. Even a broad understanding was declined by the Foreign Office in this instance for fear of appearing to side with the United States against Japan. The involvement of Canada, which American policymakers firmly believed would pave the way for a cooperative approach, actually seems to have complicated rather than facilitated joint action. This was because the Canadians themselves were hesitant about working with the U.S., apparently for fear of compromising their own bargaining position with Japan, and the British deferred to Ottawa's wishes even at points, such as during the Lemieux mission, when they would otherwise have been relatively open to some degree of collaboration. This trend continued even after Roosevelt took leave of the White House, as the Canadians maintained their refusal to work with the U.S. or even to share the full details of the Lemieux Agreement.¹¹⁵

Unlike during the Russo-Japanese War, British reluctance to make common cause with the United States did not cause any significant friction between the two powers. British determination to avoid putting strain on the relationship with Japan does appear to have been better understood in Washington after 1905, and Roosevelt in particular seems to have absorbed the lessons of his earlier unsuccessful quest for British pressure on Japan. He consequently more or less abandoned direct requests for assistance in favour of more unconventional approaches, such as working through Mackenzie King to bring about an

¹¹⁵ Colonial Office to Foreign Office, January 25th 1910, FO 414/55, TNA; E. Grey to W. Phillips, January 31st 1910, FO 410/55, TNA; Colonial Office to Foreign Office, February 22nd 1910, FO 410/55, TNA; A. Grey to Lord Crewe, February 23rd 1910 (enclosed in Colonial Office to Foreign Office, March 12th 1910), FO 410/55, TNA; E. Grey to W. Reid, March 17th 1910, FO 410/55, TNA.

understanding between Britain and the United States, the failure of which was less immediately apparent and therefore less likely to result in mutual irritation.

Roosevelt also appears to have taken considerable care in the way he went about framing his arguments regarding the need for immigration restriction, generally eschewing ideologically-grounded reasoning in favour of the economic and political aspects of the question, at least in interactions with the British. More generally, despite the obvious pertinence of racial ideology to the issue of immigration, and evidence of significant engagement with the racial aspect of the question on a personal level, policymakers and statesmen on both sides of the Atlantic consistently erred on the side of more neutral language which could not be considered offensive to the Japanese. Though there are a few exceptions to this rule, most notably Roosevelt's comments to visiting Canadian politicians on the maintenance of 'white men's countries', these are generally reflective of tactical engagement with ideology. In certain contexts, with audiences likely to be receptive to such ideas, policymakers were willing to employ ideological rhetoric which in other situations they would have deemed unwise and thus avoided.

This chapter has necessarily given only a partial picture of British-American interaction during the years of the immigration crises, as a crucial aspect, the intersection of the immigration debate with fears of a possible Japanese-American war, has been deliberately omitted. The next chapter addresses this facet of the issue, exploring the impact of the hovering spectre of conflict on the interaction between Britain and the United States.

Chapter 4

'The Mastery of the Pacific': Japanese-American War Scares, 1906-1914

Though hindsight understandably draws the focus of historians of the years prior to 1914 to the various omens of conflict in Europe, at the time it was the Pacific which appeared to many observers to be the more likely arena for the next major clash of world powers. Numerous authors from the 1890s onwards proclaimed that the defining struggle of the twentieth century would be fought between East and West for 'the mastery of the Pacific', and as immigration crises rendered relations between Japan and the United States ever more fragile it seemed that such predictions might be realised in the immediate future.¹ This chapter will address the Japanese-American war scares which accompanied flare-ups in the immigration question, principally while Theodore Roosevelt was President but also under William Howard Taft and Woodrow Wilson, as well as some of the major American and British responses to the fraught situation, including the world cruise of the U.S. fleet, the Root-Takahira Agreement and the renegotiation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1911. It will build on the conclusions of the previous chapter to argue that the lack of British-American cooperation over the immigration question extended to the war scares; though both nations were intent on averting a clash between Japan and the United States they did not, for the most part, coordinate their action to this end.

¹ A.R. Colquhoun, *The Mastery of the Pacific* (New York, 1904), pp.vii, 376, 423; M. Lake and H. Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge, 2008), p.93; H. Lea, *Day of the Saxon* (New York, 1912), pp.92, 127, 157; T.F. Millard, *America and the Far Eastern Question* (New York, 1909), pp.1, 59, 523; B.L. Putnam Weale, *The Coming Struggle in Eastern Asia* (London, 1908), pp.519, 613, 639; G.G. Rupert, *The Yellow Peril, or The Orient vs. the Occident as Viewed by Modern Statesmen and Ancient Prophets* (Britton, OK, 1911), pp.9, 25-27; W. Von Schierbrand, *America, Asia and the Pacific: With Special Reference to the Russo-Japanese War and its Results* (New York, 1904), p.200.

As the previous chapter has shown, the British tendency to prioritise global needs, specifically the maintenance of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, meant that American efforts to secure support from London in putting pressure on Japan consistently met with polite refusals. British policymakers proved no more amenable to American suggestions that they might be able to safeguard peace in the Pacific by discouraging the Japanese from a warlike response to the immigration crisis. This chapter will contend that this did not reflect any lack of concern on the part of the British Government, who had a significant vested interest in the prevention of a conflict, but rather a combination of British resolve to avoid alienating the Japanese and concerns that the Americans were actually the party more likely to instigate hostilities. With one significant exception, the modification of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1911, the British were more inclined to work with the Japanese with a view to averting a conflict than they were with the Americans, a tendency suggestive of British policymakers' recognition that the concrete guarantees of the Alliance must take precedence over the vague goodwill of transatlantic friendship.

The depiction of a Japanese-American conflict as the unfolding of the inevitable struggle for 'the mastery of the Pacific' had some potential to act as an ideological motivation for a united British-American response to a possible threat from Japan, not least because this idea had significant currency in the British Dominions. Such notions and the language of Yellow Peril or a civilisational conflict are conspicuously absent from British-American interaction over the war scares, however, and were even overtly dismissed on a number of occasions. The rejection of an ideological interpretation of possible conflict and alarmist racial ideas by the Americans in particular can be attributed to the desire to avoid exacerbating an already volatile situation, but this chapter will make the case that U.S. policymakers were not always so careful in the terms in which they discussed the war scare. Not only did they take a somewhat different tone in conversations with representatives of the British Dominions, they also employed stereotypes of Japanese character in an attempt to encourage the British to take the situation seriously. Another key

theme which will emerge in this chapter, however, is the tendency of British policymakers to lend more credence to negative images of the Americans than to these stereotypes of the Japanese, a significant contributing factor to British fears of the U.S. being responsible for initiating a conflict.

Rumours and predictions of conflict between Japan and the United States began to circulate in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War. The ease of Japanese victory raised concerns throughout the world that the regional, and indeed global, supremacy of the Western powers might soon be threatened by this ambitious and powerful Eastern nation. Stories and forecasts of Japanese schemes for conquest in the Pacific and beyond were increasingly ubiquitous in the years following the Portsmouth peace, and such anxieties were by no means reserved to sensationalist popular culture.² American policymakers had begun to express concerns as early as 1904 regarding the future conduct of the Japanese, and a common fear in the United States and elsewhere in the aftermath of the war was that Japan would suffer from the 'swelled head' of an unexpected victory which would fuel an aggressive foreign policy and bring the nation into conflict with its erstwhile friends.³ President Roosevelt expressed the essence of this concern to the British Ambassador, Mortimer Durand, prior to the beginning of the immigration crisis in

² T.A. Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises* (London, 1934), p.v; F.R. Dulles, *Forty Years of American Japanese Relations* (New York, 1937), pp.71, 73; A. Iikura, 'The Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the Question of Race' in P.P. O'Brien (ed.), *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1902-1922* (London, 2004), pp.222-223, 229; A. Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement: Japanese and American Expansion, 1897-1911* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), pp.108-110; W.L. Neumann, *America Encounters Japan: From Perry to MacArthur* (Baltimore, MD, 1963), p.130; R. O'Connor, *Pacific Destiny: An Informal History of the U.S. in the Far East, 1776-1968* (Boston, MA, 1969), pp.317, 331; W.J. Pomeroy, *American Neo-Colonialism: Its Emergence in the Philippines and Asia* (New York, 1970), pp.158, 160; J. Price, "'Orienting" the Empire: Mackenzie King and the Aftermath of the 1907 Race Riots', *BC Studies* 156 (2007/2008), p.57; R.A. Thompson, *The Yellow Peril, 1890-1924* (New York, 1978), p.306.

³ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, June 13th 1904, E.E. Morison (ed.), *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, MA, 1951-1954) [hereafter *Roosevelt Letters*], vol. 4, pp.829-833; T. Roosevelt to H.C. Lodge, June 5th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 4, pp.1202-1206; H.M. Durand to E. Grey, January 26th 1906, FO 800/81, The National Archives, Kew [hereafter TNA]; E. Morris, *Theodore Rex* (London, 2001), pp.397, 417.

1906: 'They are a wonderful people and have done wonderful things. What one cannot help feeling is at whose expense will they next do wonderful things?'⁴

With this question in mind, the U.S. Government had sought in the closing stages of the Russo-Japanese War to ensure that there would be no clash of interests with Japan which might occasion a breakdown in relations. The vehicle for this endeavour was the Taft-Katsura Agreement, an agreed memorandum of conversations between U.S. Secretary of War William Howard Taft, who was visiting Tokyo in an informal capacity, and Japanese Premier Katsura Taro. The basis of the Taft-Katsura Agreement was a commitment on the part of both powers to the status quo in East Asia and, more specifically, a Japanese disavowal of any aggressive designs on the Philippines and American assurances of support for Japanese predominance in Korea.⁵ Roosevelt was adamant that this exchange was simply a reassertion of the existing policies of the two powers and not, as many historians have since characterised it, a deal whereby the U.S. betrayed the principle of the Open Door in return for a stay on Japanese expansion in the Pacific.⁶ It is clear, however, that the Taft-Katsura Agreement represented, at least on some level, a compromise, with the United States tacitly assenting to the Japanese having an outlet for expansion in mainland East Asia on the basis that this would render a conflict of interests less likely.⁷ This aligned American policy very much with that of the British, who around the same time had similarly affirmed the paramount

⁴ H.M. Durand Diary, May 8th 1906, PP MS 55/30, Box 5, H. Mortimer Durand Papers, SOAS Special Collections, London.

⁵ W.H. Taft to E. Root, July 29th 1905, Reel 52, William Howard Taft Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Taft MS].

⁶ T. Roosevelt to W.H. Taft, October 7th 1905, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, p.49; D.H. Burton, *William Howard Taft: Confident Peacemaker* (Philadelphia, PA, 2004), pp.46-47; R.A. Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan* (Seattle, WA, 1966), pp.104-106; A.W. Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New York, 1938), pp.124-126; R.E. Minger, *William Howard Taft and United States Foreign Policy: The Apprenticeship Years, 1900-1908* (Urbana, IL, 1975), p.148; F. Ninkovich, 'Theodore Roosevelt: Civilization as Ideology', *Diplomatic History* 10 (1986), p.239; Pomeroy, *American Neo-Colonialism*, p.159.

⁷ T. Roosevelt to L. Wood, January 22nd 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.135-136; J. Chay, 'The Taft-Katsura Memorandum Reconsidered', *Pacific Historical Review* 37 (1968), pp.325-326; Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, p.169; W. LaFeber, *The Clash: A History of U.S.-Japan Relations* (New York, 1997), pp.85-86; R.E. Minger, 'Taft's Missions to Japan: A Study in Personal Diplomacy', *Pacific Historical Review* 30 (1961), p.280; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, p.400; C.E. Neu, *The Troubled Encounter: The United States and Japan* (New York, 1975), p.44.

position of Japan in Korea – thereby indicating a preference for Japanese expansion in mainland Asia rather than the Pacific – in the renewed Anglo-Japanese Alliance.⁸ Indeed, the conversation between Taft and Katsura had explicitly, though not in a public or binding manner, associated the United States with the Alliance, highlighting the community of interests and common policy of Japan, the United States and Britain in East Asia.⁹

At the end of 1905, then, there was no reason, scare stories regarding future Japanese aggression notwithstanding, to suspect that relations between the U.S. and Japan would deteriorate to a point at which hostilities were conceivable. Within a year, however, the immigration crisis would dramatically alter the situation, injecting an unprecedented level of tension and mutual suspicion into the Japanese-American relationship. In the early stages of the San Francisco school controversy there was little in the way of war talk, as the American Government made every effort at the diplomatic level to conciliate the Japanese Government. Nevertheless, by the beginning of 1907 the threat of conflict began to loom large, and the notion that Japan might respond with force to the continued outrages on the Pacific Coast came to seem increasingly less far-fetched. Rising tensions were exacerbated by rumours of imminent Japanese-American hostilities which were rife in Europe; both the press and military authorities in Germany in particular predicted that war would break out at the slightest incident and that in ‘the contest for supremacy in the Pacific Ocean’ the United States would prove no match for Japanese naval might.¹⁰ Moreover, the link between the immigration issue and the

⁸ A. Balfour to King Edward VII, July 11th 1905, CAB 41/30/27, TNA; Neumann, *America Encounters Japan*, p.123; I.H. Nish, *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: The Diplomacy of Two Island Empires, 1894-1907* (London, 1985), pp.320-322.

⁹ W.H. Taft to E. Root, July 29th 1905, Reel 52, Taft MS; H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, August 4th 1905, FO 800/134, TNA; H.K. Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power* (Baltimore, MD, 1956), pp.157-158, 171; Burton, *William Howard Taft*, p.47; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, pp.102-103, 107; Minger, ‘Taft’s Missions to Japan’, pp.281-282.

¹⁰ A. White to T. Roosevelt, February 2nd 1907, 1797/116, M862/189, RG-59, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD [hereafter NARA]; F. Lascelles to E. Grey, February 4th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; F. Lascelles to E. Grey, March 21st 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; C. Tower to E. Root, July 10th 1907, 1797/348-349, M862/190, RG-59, NARA; C. Tower to T. Roosevelt, November 2nd 1907, Reel 78, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Roosevelt MS]; D. Brudnoy, ‘Race and the San Francisco School Board Incident:

possibility of Japanese aggression lent credence to Yellow Peril scare stories, which often warned that Japanese immigrants represented a fifth column, primed to rise up with military discipline against their adopted homeland in the event of a war.¹¹

How credible American policymakers judged such predictions of coming conflict to be is not entirely clear, but they consistently asserted that war with Japan was highly improbable because hostilities were not in the interests of either power.¹² Roosevelt in particular appears to have recognised, however, that forces beyond the control of the two governments, principally popular outrage in both nations, had the potential to force the pace and perhaps create a situation where there was no option but to fight.¹³ With this in mind, American policymakers sought as far as possible to minimise talk of war and avoid fuelling rumours which had the potential to further inflame the situation, deliberately distancing themselves from anything that smacked of Yellow Peril hysteria.¹⁴ Roosevelt, for example, became embroiled in a public spat with Yellow Peril propagandist Richmond P. Hobson, after the latter made claims that the President had privately

Contemporary Evaluations', *California Historical Quarterly* 50 (1971), p.306; Neumann, *America Encounters Japan*, p.125.

¹¹ E. Boime: "Beating Plowshares into Swords": The Colorado River Delta, the Yellow Peril, and the Movement for Federal Reclamation, 1901-1928', *Pacific Historical Review* 78 (2009), p.28; R. Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Berkeley, CA, 1962), pp.68, 70; E.H. Fitzpatrick, *The Coming Conflict of Nations, or the Japanese-American War* (Springfield, IL, 1909), pp.26-28, 30, 32; J. Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New York, 1975), p.172; A. Iriye, 'Japan as Competitor, 1895-1917' in A. Iriye (ed.), *Mutual Images: Essays in American-Japanese Relations* (Cambridge, MA, 1975), p.78; Thompson, *The Yellow Peril*, pp.80-81.

¹² T. Roosevelt to E. Root, July 26th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.728-730; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, October 2nd 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; T. Roosevelt to T. Roosevelt, Jr., October 29th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, p.824; E. Root to W. Reid, September 3rd 1908, Reel 176, Whitelaw Reid Papers, Reid Family Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Reid MS]; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, pp.191-192; Minger, 'Taft's Missions to Japan', pp.286, 289; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, p.493.

¹³ L. Wright to E. Root, October 22nd 1906, 1797/40, M862/189, RG-59, NARA; T. Roosevelt to E. Hale, October 27th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.473-475; H.W. Brands, *T.R.: The Last Romantic* (New York, 1997), p.580; A. Iriye, *Across the Pacific: An Inner History of American-East Asian Relations* (New York, 1967), p.107; C.E. Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship: Theodore Roosevelt and Japan, 1906-1909* (Cambridge MA, 1967), pp.132-133, 183.

¹⁴ T. Roosevelt to H.S. von Sternberg, July 16th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.720-722; T. Roosevelt to C. Tower, February 12th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.941-942; W.H. Taft to T. Roosevelt, March 10th 1908, Reel 321, Taft MS; J.M. Blum, *The Republican Roosevelt* (Cambridge, MA, 1954), p.136; T.G. Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1980), p.139.

declared war to be imminent.¹⁵ Though they categorically rejected the more alarmist strain of popular ideas about Japan, American policymakers do appear to have been influenced by a number of key stereotypes of Japanese character, such as oversensitivity, arrogance and unpredictability. Root and Roosevelt both employed the descriptive trio of 'proud, sensitive and warlike' in internal discussions of the tensions with Japan, indicating a belief that the Japanese had to be handled carefully, and the possibility of a breakdown in relations taken very seriously, in light of their particular national characteristics.¹⁶

British policymakers and officials took a similar view of the overall situation to the Americans. They saw no reason why war should break out, given that neither power had anything to gain from such a clash, but they were also conscious of the danger that popular indignation might precipitate a breakdown in relations, regardless of calculations of national interest.¹⁷ British policymakers and officials had greater confidence than their American counterparts in the good intentions and level-headedness of Japanese leaders, however, and were therefore apt to heed reports emphasising the calm response of Japanese leaders and the effectiveness of their efforts to keep a lid on popular unrest.¹⁸ Indeed, what concerned the British Government more than the possibility of the Japanese Government losing control was that the United States might, through recklessness and provocation, turn an

¹⁵ T. Roosevelt to R.P. Hobson, July 9th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, p.1116; T. Roosevelt to R.P. Hobson, July 24th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1142-1143; R.P. Hobson to T. Roosevelt, August 1st 1908, Reel 84, Roosevelt MS.

¹⁶ E. Root to V. Metcalf, October 27th 1906, 1797/13, M862/189, RG-59, NARA; T. Roosevelt to E. Hale, October 27th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.473-475; T. Roosevelt to H.S. von Sternberg, July 16th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.720-722; W. Reid to W.S. Cowles, August 2nd 1907, Reel 103, Reid MS; F.M. Huntington Wilson to W. Loeb, September 1st 1907, 1797/387, M862/191, RG-59, NARA; T. Roosevelt to P. Knox, February 8th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1510-1514; Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, p.157; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, pp.45-47.

¹⁷ E. Howard Memo, June 12th 1907 (enclosed in J. Bryce to E. Grey, June 13th 1907), FO 410/50, TNA; B.R. James Memo, August 24th 1907 (enclosed in J. Bryce to E. Grey, August 26th 1907), FO 410/50, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 22nd 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; E. Grey to J. Bryce, January 24th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; E. Grey to C. MacDonald, November 14th 1908, FO 800/68, TNA; I.H. Nish, 'Great Britain, Japan and North-East Asia, 1905-1911' in F.H. Hinsley (ed.), *British Foreign Policy Under Sir Edward Grey* (Cambridge, 1977), p.363.

¹⁸ H. Lowther to E. Grey, December 24th 1906, FO 410/50, TNA; H. Lowther to E. Grey March 20th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, January 20th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 30th 1908, MSS Bryce USA 27, James Bryce Papers, Bodleian Library Special Collections, Oxford University, Oxford [hereafter Bryce MS].

entirely manageable situation into a powder keg. British officials spoke with some bitterness of the anti-Japanese campaigns of American newspapers – Ambassador James Bryce accused the press of attempting ‘to burn down homes for the sake of having paragraphs describing the fire’ – and feared that their wild and irresponsible predictions of war would become self-fulfilling prophecies.¹⁹ Moreover, they detected significant potential for trouble in the propensity of American statesmen to stir up their already excitable constituents with bluster and careless words. This tendency appeared to be worryingly exemplified in President Roosevelt, who was often portrayed in the reports of the Washington Embassy as impulsive, unpredictable and prone to combativeness.²⁰

These sorts of images of the Americans as volatile and irresponsible informed British concerns about the possibility of war between Japan and the U.S. to a much greater extent than stereotypes regarding the Japanese. The notion of excessive Japanese sensitivity to offence did influence British thinking on some level, but not to anything like the same degree as it did the Americans.²¹ Thus, although British and American policymakers were almost unanimous in disregarding Yellow Peril theories of Japanese schemes for conquest and espionage by immigrants, they were susceptible to stereotyped ideas of national characteristics in dealing with the Japanese-American war scares. The crucial difference was that American anxieties centred on images of the Japanese, while the British set greater store by beliefs about American character.

In addition to sharing the same basic view of the war scare – that conflict was unlikely but could not be ruled out – Britain and the United States had a fundamental shared interest in the avoidance of hostilities between the U.S. and

¹⁹ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, October 1st 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; J. Bryce to C. Hardinge, January 21st 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 22nd 1908, FO 410/51, TNA.

²⁰ H.M. Durand to Lord Lansdowne, January 11th 1906, FO 414/189, TNA; H.M. Durand to E. Grey, December 28th 1906, FO 371/357/874, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, January 20th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 6th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; C. MacDonald to F. Campbell, March 8th 1908, FO 800/428, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 30th 1908, FO 371/566/16149, TNA; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.199, 208 210.

²¹ H. Lowther to E. Grey, January 23rd 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 13th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA.

Japan. From the American point of view, the basis of this interest is fairly self-evident. Policymakers in Washington saw absolutely no benefit in clashing with Japan, a power which up until this point had been considered a particular friend of the United States, but much potential loss. Regardless of the extent of American military prowess, in which policymakers were not overly confident at this point, war with Japan would have been very costly and entailed the forfeiture, at least in the interim, of the Philippines, the American 'heel of Achilles'.²² Though Britain would, of course, be less directly impacted by a Japanese-American conflict, such an eventuality was still unthinkable from the point of view of British global policy. Two essential pillars of the British response to the dilemma of limited resources and almost unlimited commitments were the Anglo-Japanese Alliance on one hand and friendly relations with the United States, which allowed for the exclusion of the latter power from the two-power standard principle in naval planning, on the other. Even in the best case scenario of Britain remaining neutral in a Japanese-American war, the conflict would rob these relationships of much of their utility, and, in the much more likely situation that the British would be forced to choose a side, they risked losing one of these pillars entirely.²³

The response of the United States to the war scare of 1907-1908 was premised on an inextricable link between strained relations with Japan and the immigration question; policymakers believed that there could be no end to the tensions and war rumours without a solid and lasting resolution to this problem. The insistence on an effective end to Japanese immigration as a prerequisite to the restoration of cordial relations with Japan, which appears slightly counterintuitive,

²² T. Roosevelt to W.H. Taft, August 21st 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.761-762; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, pp.348-349; J.M. Henning, 'White Mongols? The War and American Discourses on Race and Religion' in R. Kowner (ed.), *The Impact of the Russo-Japanese War* (London, 2007), p.162; R.W. Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy: A History* (New York, 1962), p.272; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, pp.483-485.

²³ A. Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism: US Foreign Policy to 1914* (London, 1977), pp.206-207; C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. 1 (London, 1972), p.102; C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. 2 (London, 1972), p.276; P. Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan, 1911-1915: A Study of British Far Eastern Policy* (London, 1969), pp.18, 31; I.H. Nish, *Alliance in Decline: A Study in Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1908-1923* (London, 1972), pp.23-24 B. Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement: England and the United States, 1895-1914* (London, 1969), p.232.

is indicative of the recognition amongst American policymakers that feeling on the Pacific Coast was simply too strong to be ignored and that the consequences of failing to address the immigration question would put Japanese-American relations under even greater strain. Roosevelt in particular was convinced that as long as the flow of immigration from Japan continued there would be the potential for outrages which could endanger Japanese-American relations to such an extent that conflict would be hard to avoid.²⁴ The American response to the war scare was thus to insist on strict adherence by Japan to the immigration settlement enshrined in the Gentleman's Agreement, while at the same time maintaining the utmost 'courtesy' towards Japan by quashing demonstrations of anti-Japanese sentiment. Roosevelt would later refer to this balancing act as the policy of combining 'the maximum of efficiency with the minimum of offensiveness'.²⁵

As the previous chapter has discussed, Roosevelt was confident that the most effective route to securing and maintaining the desired immigration settlement would be to obtain British assistance in some form. In addition to its benefits with regard to the immigration question itself, American policymakers were also hopeful that a united front with the British, or at least the appearance of one, would be a strong guarantee of peace, quickly dispelling any bellicose intentions which the Japanese might have been harbouring.²⁶ In two respects, therefore, getting the British on side with regard to the Japanese immigration issue formed an important part of the American response to the war scare.

²⁴ T. Roosevelt to J.S. Strachey, December 21st 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.531-533; J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 19th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, April 8th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.995-996; T. Roosevelt to P. Knox, February 8th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1510-1514; Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race*, p.139.

²⁵ T. Roosevelt to W. Kent, February 4th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1503-1504; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, February 7th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1507-1509; T. Roosevelt, 'The Japanese Question', *The Outlook*, May 8th 1909, [Almanac of Theodore Roosevelt](http://www.theodore-roosevelt.com/images/research/treditorials/o32.pdf) <<http://www.theodore-roosevelt.com/images/research/treditorials/o32.pdf>> (accessed 27/11/13); Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, pp.318-320; Dulles, *Forty Years of Japanese-American Relations*, pp.77-78.

²⁶ J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 14th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; A. Grey to J. Bryce, February 28th 1908, FO 800/331, TNA; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.60.

The British were, as the previous chapter has established, unwilling to risk straining their own relations with Japan by pleading the American case or joining in a united front on the immigration issue, and even the threat of a Japanese-American war was not sufficient to alter this stance. Grey was very firm in his insistence that anything even resembling mediation with the Japanese was to be avoided, perhaps recognising that interceding in the cause of peace on behalf of the United States could be interpreted as implying a degree of suspicion regarding Japan's intentions.²⁷ Though their reliance on good relations with both Japan and the United States put British policymakers entirely in sympathy with the U.S. in seeking to avoid a conflict, it also necessitated very careful handling of the war scare on their part. They recognised that the disruption in relations between the U.S. and Japan provided a prime opportunity for Britain's enemies, whether international rivals or Anglophobes within the United States, to attempt to undermine the Alliance or drive a wedge between the English-speaking powers.²⁸ The British Government therefore needed to strike a careful balance in order to avoid appearing overly sympathetic towards or overly critical of either power.

There is, however, some evidence to suggest that this balance which British policymakers sought to maintain tipped somewhat in the favour of the Japanese, reflecting the concreteness of the Alliance as compared with the less well-defined nature of friendship with the United States. In contrast with the reluctance to take any action at Washington's behest, when the Japanese suggested in early 1908 that Britain's influence might be used to ensure that Japanese-American relations remained friendly, Bryce offered assurances to the new Japanese Ambassador at Washington, Takahira Kogoro, 'that what His Majesty's Government could do for that purpose would be willingly done'.²⁹ This promise did not mean that the British would in any sense warn the United States off following a course that might lead to

²⁷ J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 13th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; E. Grey to J. Bryce, January 24th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 28th 1908, FO 800/81, TNA; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.201.

²⁸ E. Howard to C. Hardinge, January 9th 1907, FO 800/81, TNA; E. Howard to E. Grey, February 21st 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; A. Lee to T. Roosevelt, December 1st 1908, Reel 86, Roosevelt MS.

²⁹ J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 5th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA.

conflict, any more than they would do so with the Japanese, but British policymakers throughout the crisis made efforts towards defusing the war scare by trying to dispel American anxieties about the Japanese. For example, in a letter of February 1907, Grey expressed to Roosevelt his certainty that there would be no trouble between Japan and the United States, emphasising that he was 'sure the Japanese want to pursue a quiet policy for some time to come'.³⁰

This particular letter is interesting because of the contrast it presents with Grey's most recent prior letter to Roosevelt, from December 1906. In the earlier communication, a general discussion of British policy in which the possibility of conflict between Japan and the U.S. was not broached, Grey had commented:

I can give you no forecast of Japanese policy. They have been quite satisfactory allies: cautious and not exacting. But they are very reserved, and I do not feel that I know the working of their minds on questions outside the alliance itself.³¹

This line of thinking, with its hint of ideas of Japanese inscrutability and unpredictability, was entirely jettisoned in the second letter and replaced with a sense of assurance regarding Japanese motives and intentions. This shift suggests that, faced with the context of the war scare, Grey made a conscious choice to avoid alluding to such stereotypes or any line of thinking which had the potential to heighten American anxiety and suspicion.

American policymakers were somewhat less cautious in drawing on stereotyped images of the Japanese when discussing the war scare with the British. Root, for example, while maintaining that matters were being dealt with calmly on all sides, reverted frequently to phrases such as 'Japanese susceptibilities' and '*amour propre*' to hone in on the supposed oversensitivity and pride of the Japanese which lent explosive potential even to very minor incidents.³² American policymakers were careful, however, to avoid giving the British the impression that

³⁰ E. Grey to T. Roosevelt, February 12th 1907, Reel 72, Roosevelt MS; Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism*, pp.207-208.

³¹ E. Grey to T. Roosevelt, December 4th 1906, Reel 70, Roosevelt MS.

³² E. Howard to E. Grey, February 4th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, June 8th 1907, FO 410/50, TNA.

they had succumbed to war hysteria or gave any credit to Yellow Peril alarmism. Roosevelt was emphatic in his denials that he suspected the Japanese of designs on the Philippines or Hawaii, and in conversation with Bryce he laughingly dismissed Kaiser Wilhelm's anxieties about a racial threat from Japan as 'pipe dreams'.³³ The willingness of American statesmen to dwell on Japanese characteristics which made the situation dangerous while simultaneously rejecting claims that Japan represented a viable threat is indicative of the delicate balance which the Roosevelt administration was attempting to strike in interaction with the British. The American aim was to convince British policymakers of the urgency of addressing the immigration issue at the root of the war scare, hence the emphasis on Japanese pride and sensitivity, without appearing to be overly concerned about the possibility of war or responding irrationally to the situation.

This endeavour, much like Roosevelt's policy of combining 'courtesy' with an insistence on an end to Japanese immigration, required a steady hand and careful navigation from American policymakers. Unfortunately, both of these balancing acts were undermined somewhat by the final prong of the President's response to the war scare: naval expansion and preparedness.³⁴ Arguably, Roosevelt's advocacy of a navalist policy actually had very little to do with the war scare, the need for a larger navy and a posture of readiness for conflict having been an article of faith for the President for many years prior to any tension with Japan.³⁵ The war scare did serve to reinforce Roosevelt's beliefs, however, and he judged a policy of naval expansion and preparedness to be an essential part of the American response both because it represented necessary preparation for the eventuality of conflict

³³ T. Roosevelt to E. Grey, December 18th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.527-529; T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, December 21st 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.869-871; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 14th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, October 17th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1292-1294; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, p.119.

³⁴ T. Roosevelt to C. Spring Rice, July 1st 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.698-699; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, February 7th 1909, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1507-1509; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, pp.319-320; Dulles, *Forty Years of Japanese-American Relations*, p.78.

³⁵ Blum, *The Republican Roosevelt*, pp.125-126; K. Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life* (New York, 2004), p.333; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.89-90; P.P. O'Brien, *British and American Naval Power: Politics and Policy, 1900-1936* (Westport, CT, 1998), p.61; W.R. Thayer, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Intimate Biography* (Boston, MA, 1919), p.287.

breaking out and, more fundamentally, because the building up of a formidable American navy would discourage the Japanese from resorting to force in the first place.³⁶ The war scare also provided an opportunity for the President to promote his navalist agenda, and this he grasped with both hands, making use of the fraught state of relations with Japan to press for a significant increase in Congressional appropriations for building up the navy.³⁷ Not only was Roosevelt's emphasis on naval expansion and readiness somewhat at odds with his objectives of minimising talk of war and keeping on the best possible terms with Japan, but his apparent manipulation of the war scare in pursuit of navalist goals also caused a degree of unease to the British. Bryce reflected on more than one occasion that the President's frequent comments regarding the possibility of war in the context of the campaign for naval expansion were apt to further inflame the situation.³⁸

British concerns on this point were aroused to an even greater extent by the culmination of Roosevelt's naval response to the war scare: the world cruise of the U.S. battleship fleet. The cruise had much to recommend itself from the American point of view and appealed to Roosevelt in particular on just about every conceivable level. Not only did it have practical utility as a training exercise, it was also advantageous from a domestic political point of view, both in boosting popular enthusiasm for naval expansion and in counteracting criticism of the Government's handling of the immigration question. Moreover, the spectacle of the 'Great White Fleet' circumnavigating the globe promised to pay dividends in terms of prestige for the United States as a world power and for Roosevelt personally.³⁹ Whatever the

³⁶ T. Roosevelt to E. Root, April 17th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, p.1010; T. Roosevelt to K. Roosevelt, April 19th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1012-1013; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, October 17th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1292-1294; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, p.247; Blum, *The Republican Roosevelt*, pp.135-136; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.268.

³⁷ T. Roosevelt to E. Hale, October 27th 1906, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.473-475; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, p.82; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, pp.140, 156; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.95-96; Neumann, *America Encounters Japan*, p.128.

³⁸ J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 12th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 30th 1908, FO 371/566/16149, TNA.

³⁹ T. Roosevelt to H.C. Lodge, July 10th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.709-710; T. Roosevelt to E. Root, July 13th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 5, pp.717-719; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, p.220; Brands, *T.R.*, pp.607-608, 610-611; Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt*,

original rationale behind the project, the sailing of the fleet into the Pacific in late 1907 took on the cast of a display of American power and resolve, designed to chasten or perhaps even threaten the Japanese. Roosevelt, contrary to his emphasis on 'courtesy', certainly appears to have intended for the movement of American battleships to have a sobering effect on Japanese policymakers, from whom he later claimed to have detected 'a very, very slight undertone of veiled truculence' which he felt needed to be challenged.⁴⁰

This aspect of the fleet cruise comes out most clearly in a series of exchanges between Roosevelt and visiting Canadian politicians, in which the President characterised the undertaking in terms suggestive of a very deliberate objective of browbeating the Japanese into toeing the line with regard to the immigration question. According to William L. Mackenzie King, when they met in late January 1908 Roosevelt did not mince his words on the matter:

We have allowed these people to go too far thro' being too polite to them. I made up my mind that they were simply taking advantage of our politeness. I thought they had done this and I decided to send the fleet into the Pacific, it may help them to understand that we want a definite arrangement.⁴¹

Given the strength of Roosevelt's language, it is hardly surprising that Mackenzie King came away from his time in the U.S. convinced that Japanese prevarication on the immigration question had the potential to bring about a resort to arms on the part of the United States, noting in his diary: 'The whole tone of the President's talk with me today was we must have absolutely what we are demanding or war.'⁴²

p.334; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, pp.182-183; Morris, *Theodore Rex*, pp.493-494; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.109-110, 112, 117, 250; T. Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (New York, 1985 [1913]), pp.563-564; Thayer, *Theodore Roosevelt*, pp.288-289.

⁴⁰ T. Roosevelt to G.O. Trevelyan, October 1st 1911, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 7, pp.348-399; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises*, pp.222-224; Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p.328; Blum, *The Republican Roosevelt*, pp.136-137; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.127; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.54; Neumann, *America Encounters Japan*, p.127; O'Brien, *British and American Naval Power*, p.57.

⁴¹ W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 25th 1908, Nos. 4472-4480, MG26-J13, Library and Archives Canada <<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/politics-government/prime-ministers/william-lyon-mackenzie-king/Pages/diaries-william-lyon-mackenzie-king.aspx>> (accessed 04/06/15) [hereafter LAC].

⁴² W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, January 25th 1908, Nos. 4472-4480, MG26-J13, LAC; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 5th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; A. Grey to Lord Elgin, February 5th 1908, CO 42/918/5844, TNA;

Mackenzie King's report that Roosevelt viewed the cruise of the fleet as primarily a 'big stick' was supported by the account of the group of British Columbian politicians who visited Washington the following month. Bryce met with the leader of this delegation, Ralph Smith, following their encounter with Roosevelt and found that the Canadians had been 'speechless with surprise at the frankness with which the President spoke to them of the risk of war with Japan and of his motives in sending the fleet to the Pacific.'⁴³ Smith's own record of the meeting with Roosevelt is even more explicit, recounting the latter's explanation of the cruise as making the U.S. 'ready to maintain our rights', and quoting him as saying:

I don't make threats, but I was once a frontiersman, and we had a saying there, 'don't draw unless you mean to shoot', so I felt that in the consideration of the interests involved I had to send the fleet around to the Pacific.⁴⁴

Even allowing for a certain amount of exaggeration on the part of the Canadians – which Mackenzie King was certainly guilty of at times – Roosevelt's discussion of the cruise of the fleet in these meetings presents a marked contrast to direct interactions with the British in the early months of 1908. Ambassador Reid, partly in response to Mackenzie King's visit to London, was busy downplaying American anxiety over the possibility of war, while Roosevelt himself emphasised the remoteness of such a prospect and barely mentioned the sailing of the fleet in his communications.⁴⁵ Indeed, on the two occasions the President did touch upon the cruise, in a letter to Arthur Lee and a conversation with Bryce, it was to imply, in entire contradiction with their own accounts, that the Canadians he had met with feared imminent Japanese aggression and therefore viewed the arrival of the fleet as a welcome deterrent.⁴⁶ There is thus clear evidence that Roosevelt and his colleagues carefully tailored their handling of the war scare and the cruise of the

D.C. Gordon, 'Roosevelt's "Smart Yankee Trick"', *Pacific Historical Review* 30 (1961), p.353; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, pp.190-191; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.186, 196.

⁴³ J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 20th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA.

⁴⁴ R. Smith Memo, February 10th 1908 (enclosed in J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 20th 1908), FO 410/51, TNA.

⁴⁵ J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 14th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, March 20th 1908, Reel 105, Reid MS.

⁴⁶ T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, February 2nd 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.918-921; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 14th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 20th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA.

fleet according to context. With the Canadians, Roosevelt apparently felt comfortable to use much stronger language and throw caution to the wind by utilising the possibility of a Japanese-American conflict to advance his agenda with regard to the immigration question. With the British, on the other hand, American statesmen and officials consistently maintained the approach of minimising the significance of the friction with the Japanese and sought to avoid giving the impression that they bought into stories of Japanese schemes for conquest or were themselves stoking the controversy.

Inevitably, though, Roosevelt's unguarded comments to the Canadians filtered back to policymakers in London and generated a certain amount of apprehension. The British were, admittedly, in the habit of taking the President's words with a generous pinch of salt, as suggested by the rather dry comments of Francis Hopwood, Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office, on Mackenzie King's report:

We must not take too seriously what is said by American politicians, not even by the President himself. The flamboyant expressions may simply have been intended to take away Sir W. Laurier's breath and induce him to impress on Japan 'what devils of fellows the Yankees are'.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, Roosevelt's ominous portrayal of the cruise to his Canadian guests served to deepen British anxieties about the American, and the President's personal, propensity for brinkmanship. Looking back on Roosevelt's time in office in April 1909, Bryce highlighted the President's use of 'menacing language' in reference to the fleet cruise as the defining example of the 'more dangerous sort of impulsiveness' in his character.⁴⁸

Roosevelt's apparent willingness to risk further inflaming matters by his bellicose remarks certainly did nothing to dispel the sense of unease in London over

⁴⁷ F. Hopwood Minute on A. Grey to Lord Elgin, February 5th 1908, CO 42/918/5844, TNA; C. MacDonald to F. Campbell, March 8th 1908, FO 800/428, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, March 17th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA.

⁴⁸ G.W. Johnson Minute on A. Grey to Lord Elgin, February 5th 1908, CO 42/918/5844, TNA; C. MacDonald to F. Campbell, March 8th 1908, FO 800/428, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 26th 1909, FO 371/787/16967, TNA; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.60; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, p.24.

the movement of the fleet. British misgivings about the decision to send the fleet to the Pacific had been in evidence from the beginning, with both policymakers and the press expressing scepticism about the wisdom of the American move. Troubled by its apparent provocativeness and poor timing, British officials saw potential for the cruise to complicate rather than facilitate the resolution of the immigration question.⁴⁹ Claude MacDonald, the Ambassador at Tokyo, was adamant that the Japanese needed no prompting as to the seriousness of the situation and would not be bullied into bending to American wishes: 'a menace such as the sending of a fleet, leaves them absolutely cold'.⁵⁰ Some British officials took the view that the cruise was in large part a political manoeuvre designed to address discontent with the U.S. Government's handling of the immigration crisis, and even concluded that it was the prelude to another presidential campaign for Roosevelt which would be marked by exclusionism and hostility towards Japan.⁵¹ Grey and Bryce dismissed such suspicions of the President's intentions but did exhibit some anxiety that Roosevelt might not have fully considered the possible consequences of the cruise, in particular its potential to reinvigorate yellow press speculation of Japanese-American conflict and exacerbate an already fraught situation.⁵²

The British Government was given further reason to regret Roosevelt's decision to sail the fleet in early 1908, when the involvement of the Dominions appeared to put British goals of preserving strong imperial links and maintaining the Anglo-Japanese Alliance into conflict. As the fleet made its way towards the Pacific

⁴⁹ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, July 10th 1907 (enclosed in Foreign Office to Colonial Office, August 19th 1907), CO 42/916/29763, TNA; W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, October 10th 1907, Reel 104, Reid MS; J. Bryce to C. Hardinge, November 1st 1907, FO 800/81, TNA; H. Hood to J. Bryce, February 17th 1908 (enclosed in E. Howard to E. Grey, February 19th 1908), FO 410/51, TNA; Gordon, 'Roosevelt's "Smart Yankee Trick"', p.355; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.233.

⁵⁰ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, March 17th 1908, FO 410/51, TNA.

⁵¹ J. Bryce to E. Grey, September 16th 1907, FO 414/195, TNA; C. Hardinge to J. Bryce, October 14th 1907, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; W. Langley Minute on W.C. Bennett to E. Grey, December 5th 1907, FO 414/195, TNA; W.C. Bennett to J. Bryce, December 5th 1907, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; B.R. James to J. Bryce, January 21st 1908 (enclosed in J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 22nd 1908), FO 410/51, TNA.

⁵² J. Bryce to E. Grey, July 12th 1907, FO 371/360/25775, TNA; E. Grey Minute on W.C. Bennett to E. Grey, December 5th 1907, FO 414/195, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, December 12th 1907, FO 414/195, TNA; C. Hardinge to J. Bryce, December 19th 1907, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 30th 1908, FO 371/566/16149, TNA.

at the beginning of 1908, Australian Prime Minister Alfred Deakin began to lobby for a visit from the American battleships. The Australians hoped that such a visit would serve to highlight their vulnerable position in the Pacific and to draw Australia and the United States – who, according to Deakin, were ‘kinsmen’ – closer together in sentiment.⁵³ By the time officials in London became aware of Deakin’s scheme, he had already made some rather unconventional overtures through the American Consul-General at Canberra and Whitelaw Reid, much to the disgruntlement of the Colonial and Foreign Offices.⁵⁴ Deakin’s circumvention of protocol put the British Government in a very difficult position. They did not wish to appear complicit in the cruise, which they judged to be at best a very heavy-handed piece of diplomacy and at worst an open affront to the Japanese. Equally, however, they could not afford to be seen to be interposing a barrier to Australian-American friendship; to oppose the visit would have been a snub to the U.S. and a denial of the wishes of the Australian people at a time when Britain and her Dominions were already in less than entire harmony over the Japanese immigration question. British officials thus reluctantly facilitated Australian communication with the United States, hoping that the invitation would be turned down.⁵⁵

They were to be disappointed in these hopes, as American policymakers, having also recognised that an Australian reception for the battleship fleet would imply a British seal of approval on the enterprise, gladly accepted the request. Indeed, in light of the Australian invitation, Roosevelt began to conceptualise the cruise of the fleet as a means of drawing together the ‘white men’s countries’ of the Pacific, which would inexorably pull the British into alignment with the U.S. over the

⁵³ A. Deakin to W. Reid, January 7th 1908 (enclosed in Colonial Office to Foreign Office, April 14th 1908), FO 371/564/13028, TNA; A. Deakin to Lord Northcote, January 24th 1908 (enclosed in Colonial Office to Foreign Office, March 10th 1908), FO 371/564/8435, TNA; L. Mallet Minute on Colonial Office to Foreign Office, August 24th 1908, FO 371/564/29513, TNA; Gordon, ‘Roosevelt’s “Smart Yankee Trick”’, p.355; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, pp.165, 195, 203-205.

⁵⁴ C. Hardinge Minute on Admiralty to Foreign Office, February 22nd 1908, FO 371/564/6481, TNA; Lord Northcote to Lord Elgin, March 4th 1908 (enclosed in Colonial Office to Foreign Office, April 14th 1908), FO 371/564/13028, TNA; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, pp.197, 208.

⁵⁵ C. Hardinge and E. Grey Minutes on Colonial Office to Foreign Office, February 15th 1908, FO 371/564/5611, TNA; C. Hardinge to J. Bryce, February 21st 1908, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; E. Grey to E. Howard, February 29th 1908, FO 371/564/7080, TNA; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.230-231; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, p.233.

issue of Japanese immigration.⁵⁶ In his meeting with the British Columbian politicians, the President explained that the presence of the fleet in Pacific waters was for the benefit not only of the West Coast States but also of British Columbia and Australia. He even went so far as to claim that the Monroe Doctrine applied to the whole of the Pacific Coast and to Australia as well, apparently assuring his guests, 'if it doesn't, I'll make it apply'.⁵⁷ This kind of thinking was deeply objectionable from a British point of view, not only because it implied a degree of hostility and suspicion towards the Japanese, but also because it tapped into a growing fear amongst British officials that the United States might assume the role of protector over the Dominions to the diminution of British influence.⁵⁸

The sailing of the U.S. fleet very tangibly symbolised American presence and strength in the Pacific, and British policymakers were particularly concerned about the effect that this might have on the already volatile situation in British Columbia. Fortunately for the British, the Canadian Government was in agreement with London that a visit of the fleet to Vancouver was undesirable, both from the point of view of the domestic situation and because, as the previous chapter has suggested, they wished to maintain a certain distance from the U.S. with regard to the Japanese immigration question. Thus, despite a strong lobby in British Columbia for the invitation of the fleet, no such action was taken.⁵⁹ The game changed in March 1908, however, when an invitation from the Japanese for the fleet to visit Tokyo was accepted by the U.S. Government. British and Canadian policymakers thereafter took a less serious view of the matter and acquiesced in the British Columbian invitation. As with the Australian visit, British policymakers were

⁵⁶ J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 15th 1908, FO 371/564/8917, TNA; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.224; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, pp.192-193, 197; E. Lee, 'The "Yellow Peril" and Asian Exclusion in the Americas', *Pacific Historical Review* 76 (2007) p.554.

⁵⁷ R. Smith Memo, February 10th 1908 (enclosed in J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 20th 1908), FO 410/51, TNA.

⁵⁸ E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 30th 1908, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; E. Grey to C. MacDonald, November 14th 1908, FO 800/68, TNA; Gordon, 'Roosevelt's "Smart Yankee Trick"', p.356; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, pp.184-185, 199.

⁵⁹ A. Grey to J. Bryce, November 20th 1907, FO 800/331, TNA; W.L. Mackenzie King Diary, March 3rd 1908, Nos. 4481-4484, MG26-J13, LAC; F. Campbell to J. Bryce, April 2nd 1908, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.193.

keen to avoid any suggestion that they disapproved or were creating obstacles, but they shared the quiet relief of Canadian officials when Vancouver's request was turned down by the United States for logistical reasons.⁶⁰

The fact that the U.S. fleet was to pay a visit to Japan transformed the whole aspect of the cruise; British policymakers generally felt much less anxiety about the possible consequences of American action, with some even daring to hope that the cruise might prove to be a boon to British-American friendship rather than a stumbling block.⁶¹ For the Americans too, the Japanese invitation changed the way the cruise was thought about and discussed. The notion of white solidarity in the Pacific faded into the background as the fleet's presence there came to be valued chiefly as a means of reconciliation with Japan.⁶² The visit of the U.S. fleet to Yokohama in October 1908 was judged by observers on all sides to have been a successful demonstration of the good feeling which persisted between the two nations in spite of the immigration dispute and war rumours. It would prove to be an important preliminary to negotiations for a more concrete expression of stable and friendly Japanese-American relations, the outcome of which was the Root-Takahira Agreement.⁶³

The official exchange of notes between the U.S. Secretary of State and the Japanese Ambassador at Washington which constituted the Root-Takahira Agreement took place in late November 1908. The notes set out in five key points the 'common aim, policy and intention' of the two powers in the Pacific region, which amounted to both governments working for, 'the free and peaceful

⁶⁰ C. Hardinge to J. Bryce, March 27th 1908, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; F. Campbell to J. Bryce, April 9th 1908, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; Foreign Office to Colonial Office, April 27th 1908, FO 371/564/14074, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, May 22nd 1908, FO 371/564/17511, TNA; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.231.

⁶¹ J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 23rd 1908, FO 410/51, TNA; C. Hardinge to J. Bryce, March 27th 1908, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 30th 1908, FO 371/566/16149, TNA; E. Howard to E. Grey, August 22nd 1908, FO 371/564/30373, TNA.

⁶² T. Roosevelt to C.S. Sperry, March 21st 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.979-980; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, April 8th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.995-996; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.208.

⁶³ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, October 26th 1908, FO 800/68, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, November 27th 1908, FO 410/52, TNA; T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, December 20th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1432-1433; Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the American-Japanese Crisis*, pp.293, 301.

development of their commerce in the Pacific Ocean', through the maintenance of the status quo with regard to the Open Door in China and each nation's territorial possessions.⁶⁴ Like the Taft-Katsura Agreement before it, the Root-Takahira Agreement has often been portrayed by historians as a straightforward trade-off whereby the United States attempted to mitigate tension with Japan by compromising its commitment to the Open Door in East Asia, in this case by allowing the Japanese a 'free hand' in Manchuria.⁶⁵ In reality, however, the notes had very little to do with settling substantive issues, and were instead intended simply to clear the air between the two powers and bring an end to the persistent rumours of impending conflict.⁶⁶ As the correspondence of John Callan O'Laughlin, an American journalist who helped lay the groundwork for the exchange, amply demonstrates, the Root-Takahira Agreement was conceptualised both in Washington and Tokyo primarily as a means by which, 'to give striking proof to the American people, to the Japanese people, indeed to the whole world, that our relations were friendly and agreeable'.⁶⁷

Though it should not, therefore, be understood as a direct bargain, the Root-Takahira Agreement did represent a tacit acknowledgement of the conclusion American policymakers had already reached that if the Japanese were to continue to voluntarily restrict immigration to North America it would be wise to allow them some leeway for commercial expansion in North-East Asia. American involvement in Manchuria had, if anything, been declining in the preceding years and so

⁶⁴ K. Takahira to E. Root, November 30th 1908 in U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter *FRUS*] 1908, [University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries Digital Collections <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS>](http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS) (accessed 09/08/13), pp.510-511; E. Root to K. Takahira, November 30th 1908, *FRUS* 1908, pp.511-512; Burton, *William Howard Taft*, p.54.

⁶⁵ S.F. Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (New York, 1955), p.496; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.129; LaFeber, *The Clash*, p.92; Pomeroy, *American Neo-Colonialism*, p.162.

⁶⁶ J. Bryce to E. Grey, December 1st 1908, FO 410/52, TNA; T.A. Bailey, 'The Root-Takahira Agreement of 1908', *Pacific Historical Review* 9 (1940), p.21; R.A. Esthus, 'The Changing Concept of the Open Door, 1899-1910', *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 46 (1959), p.450; S. Giffard, *Japan Among the Powers, 1890-1990* (New Haven, CT, 1994), pp.36-37; Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy*, pp.275-276; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.280.

⁶⁷ J.C. O'Laughlin to T. Roosevelt, October 20th 1908, Reel 85, Roosevelt MS; J.C. O'Laughlin to T. Roosevelt, November 20th 1908, Reel 86, Roosevelt MS.

refraining from challenging Japan's push for predominance in the region was a small price to pay if it would help to direct Japanese energies and immigration away from the Pacific.⁶⁸ As Roosevelt later explained to his successor, William Howard Taft:

Our vital interest is to keep the Japanese out of our country, and at the same time to preserve the good will of Japan. The vital interest of the Japanese, on the other hand, is in Manchuria and Korea. It is therefore peculiarly in our interest not to take any steps as regards Manchuria which will give the Japanese cause to feel, with or without reason, that we are hostile to them, or a menace – in however slight degree – to their interests.⁶⁹

The Root-Takahira Agreement thus formed part of a 'structure of accommodation', along with the Taft-Katsura Agreement and the Gentlemen's Agreement, through which the Roosevelt administration sought to ensure the maintenance of peace with Japan while guaranteeing the nation's most important interests.⁷⁰

This 'structure of accommodation', and the Root-Takahira Agreement specifically, aligned the American attitude towards Japanese predominance in North-East Asia fairly closely with that of policymakers in London. The British had maintained throughout the 1907-1908 war scare that Japan's gaze was directed firmly towards Korea and Manchuria, rather than the Pacific Coast of North America, and that provided this was recognised and accommodated there were no grounds for a serious conflict.⁷¹ The consonance in British and American attitudes on this point was acknowledged, and indeed emphasised, by American policymakers when it came to communicating the details of the Root-Takahira Agreement. Root instructed Ambassador Reid to present the forthcoming

⁶⁸ F.H. Conroy, F. Conroy and S. Quinn-Judge, *West Across the Pacific: American Involvement in East Asia from 1898 to the Vietnam War* (Youngstown, NY, 2008), pp.73-74, 76-77; Iriye, *Across the Pacific*, pp.107-108; W. LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity, 1865-1913* (Cambridge, 1998), p.208; C.E. Neu, 'Theodore Roosevelt and American Involvement in the Far East, 1901-1909', *Pacific Historical Review* 35 (1966), pp.447-448.

⁶⁹ T. Roosevelt to W.H. Taft, December 22nd 1910, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 7, pp.189-192.

⁷⁰ Dulles, *Forty Years of American-Japanese Relations*, pp.83-84; Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism*, pp.195-197, 200, 204; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.318; J.C. Thomson, Jr., P.W. Stanley and J.C. Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists: The American Experience in East Asia* (New York, 1981), pp.147-148.

⁷¹ B.R. James Memo, August 24th 1907 (enclosed in J. Bryce to E. Grey, August 26th 1907), FO 410/50, TNA; E. Grey Memo, March 1908 (enclosed in E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 30th 1908), MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; R.H. Clive Memo, August 15th 1908 (enclosed in C. MacDonald to E. Grey, August 23rd 1908), FO 410/52, TNA; E. Grey to C. MacDonald, November 14th 1908, FO 800/68, TNA; Nish, 'Great Britain, Japan and North-East Asia', pp.362-363.

understanding as, 'in entire accord with the corresponding purposes of the English-Japanese Agreement of August 1905', and as reflecting the shared interests and policy of the two powers in China.⁷² In private, Roosevelt went even further, commenting to Arthur Lee in reference to the Root-Takahira Agreement: 'It is a good thing as keeping England and America closer together too; which, as you know, is something I always have peculiarly at heart.'⁷³ The President's comments suggest that the Root-Takahira Agreement fitted into his scheme of bringing about a common front between the U.S. and Britain with regard to the question of immigration and relations with Japan.

Though British policymakers were, as the previous chapter has shown, reluctant to openly align themselves with the United States in the way that Roosevelt hoped for, there is no doubt that they greeted the Root-Takahira Agreement with approval, and indeed relief. They were gratified both by the similarity between the American position and their own and by the reassurance the exchange of notes offered of the remoteness of Japanese-American conflict, and Grey did not hesitate to signal British pleasure at the apparent normalisation of Japanese-American relations.⁷⁴ Alongside the positive reaction there was also a note of wariness, however, as British officials were quick to identify the limitations of the agreement, which pertained not only to its content but also to its form. In the first place, the notes had not referred directly either to the immigration question or to the issue of Manchuria, and although these omissions were expedient from the point of view of agreeing mutually acceptable wording they also lent the agreement an opacity which effectively disqualified it as a useful basis for

⁷² E. Root to W. Reid, November 22nd 1908, Reel 176, Reid MS.

⁷³ T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, December 20th 1908, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.1432-1433.

⁷⁴ W. Reid to T. Roosevelt, November 24th 1908, Reel 107, Reid MS; E. Grey to C. MacDonald, November 27th 1908, FO 410/52, TNA; E. Grey to W. Reid, November 30th 1908, FO 410/52, TNA; A. Lee to T. Roosevelt, December 1st 1908, Reel 86, Roosevelt MS; E. Grey to J. Bryce, December 4th 1908, FO 410/52, TNA; Bailey, 'The Root-Takahira Agreement', p.31; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.130; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, p.25; T.G. Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge, 2001), p.367; W.L. Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire: A Study in Presidential Statecraft* (Basingstoke, 1997), pp.180-181.

future relations.⁷⁵ On a more basic level, the Root-Takahira Agreement offered no real guarantee for the future because U.S. policymakers had opted for a non-binding executive agreement in order to bypass the need for Congressional approval, which would have required at the very least a more concrete statement on immigration. In consequence, the American note was merely a statement of the policy of the Roosevelt administration, which would come to an end in a matter of months, and in no way obliged future administrations to follow the principles of the agreement.⁷⁶

Roosevelt was reasonably confident that Taft would follow the same line with regard to relations with Japan, especially since the incoming President was himself on good terms with Japanese leaders, so the Root-Takahira Agreement might conceivably have been expected to last for at least four years beyond the expiry of Roosevelt's term in March 1909.⁷⁷ In reality, however, the exchange represented merely a brief remission in the friction and rumours of war between Japan and the United States. Not only did unrest over immigration in California flare up again in January 1909, but Taft and his Secretary of State, Philander Knox, took a rather different view of the situation from Roosevelt. They denied that there was any 'essential connection' between the immigration issue and Japanese expansion in Manchuria, and Knox was particularly critical of the suggestion that the United States should be willing to sacrifice its rights and interests in East Asia in order to ensure that the Japanese followed through on their pledges under the Gentlemen's Agreement.⁷⁸ The Taft administration had, as the next chapter will

⁷⁵ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, December 5th 1908, FO 410/53, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, January 5th 1909, FO 800/68, TNA; Conroy, Conroy and Quinn-Judge, *West Across the Pacific*, p.77; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, pp.272, 284-285; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.65.

⁷⁶ J. Bryce to E. Grey, December 1st 1908, FO 410/52, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 23rd 1909, FO 410/53, TNA; Bailey, 'The Root-Takahira Agreement', p.25; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.273; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, p.25.

⁷⁷ T. Roosevelt to A. Lee, December 26th 1907, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 6, pp.874-875; Burton, *William Howard Taft*, pp.46-47, 54; P.E. Coletta, *The Presidency of William Howard Taft* (Lawrence, KS, 1973), pp.193-194.

⁷⁸ P. Knox Draft of W.H. Taft to T. Roosevelt, Undated January 1911, Reel 454, Taft MS; W.H. Taft to T. Roosevelt, January 17th 1911, Reel 454, Taft MS; Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States*, pp.496-498; Conroy, Conroy and Quinn-Judge, *West Across the Pacific*, pp.77-78; M.H. Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door: Manchuria in Chinese-American Relations, 1895-1911* (New Haven, CT,

detail, grand and ambitious plans for increasing the American commercial stake in China and would not countenance a hands-off policy in Manchuria, the most promising arena for the future expansion of American investment and trade.

Aside from a greater interest in American commerce in China, what distinguished Taft's approach from that of his predecessor was not greater hostility towards Japan, but actually a greater confidence that the Japanese would hold up their end of the bargain on immigration. Whereas Roosevelt was insistent that some consideration needed to be offered to the Japanese in East Asia in order to secure their compliance, Taft worked from the premise that they would deal in good faith and required no further incentive. Indeed, such was their confidence in the sufficiency of Japanese guarantees in the Gentlemen's Agreement that when the Japanese-American commercial treaty came up for renewal in 1911, Taft and Knox concluded that the existing reservation in the treaty as to the right to legislate to exclude immigration was unnecessary and could be removed in accordance with Japanese wishes, a decision which met with bitter criticism from an incredulous Roosevelt.⁷⁹ The Taft administration was also quick to quash anti-Japanese legislation when it arose in California, following the blueprint set out by Roosevelt in forcefully prevailing upon local leaders to abandon offensive bills before a serious controversy developed.⁸⁰ Thus, despite the Taft administration's more confrontational stance in China and Manchuria, relations between the U.S. and Japan from 1909 to 1913 were, for the most part, not nearly as fraught as they had been during the preceding years.

1973), p.222; LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity*, p.232; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.75; Thomson, Stanley and Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists*, p.150.

⁷⁹ R. Miller Memo, October 26th 1910, Box 11, Philander C. Knox Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Knox MS]; W.H. Taft to T. Roosevelt, December 9th 1910, Reel 95, Roosevelt MS; P. Knox to W.H. Taft, December 19th 1910, Box 12, Knox MS; T. Roosevelt to W.H. Taft, December 22nd 1910, *Roosevelt Letters*, vol. 7, pp.189-192; P. Knox to S. Cullom, January 10th 1911, Box 12, Knox MS; Coletta, *The Presidency of William Howard Taft*, pp.199-200; Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p.395.

⁸⁰ P. Knox to P.H. McCarthy, January 19th 1911, Box 13, Knox MS; H. Johnson to F.M. Huntington Wilson, March 24th 1911, Box 91, John Bassett Moore Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Moore MS]; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, pp.50, 52-53; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.75; W.C. Nicholson, 'Anglo-Saxonism at the Crossroads: U.S.-Canadian Response to Japanese Immigration to North America, 1905-1914' (PhD Thesis, Georgia State University, 2004), pp.294-295, 350.

The one major exception to the general lull in war rumours during Taft's presidency was the Magdalena Bay incident, which was initiated by the abortive attempt of a Japanese commercial syndicate to purchase a strategically significant tract of land in Mexico. This controversy generated a spate of alarmist rumours – owing in part to the influence of Yellow Peril suspicions and Asian invasion literature, which often predicted that the Japanese would utilise Mexico in an attempt to conquer the United States – and ultimately resulted in the Lodge Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, an effective prohibition on such transactions anywhere in the Western Hemisphere.⁸¹ The Magdalena Bay issue did not cause any significant tension between the U.S. and Japan, however, in part because of the efforts of American policymakers to minimise the significance of the matter so as to avoid it spiralling into a more serious dispute.⁸² This response to the possibility of friction with Japan is characteristic of Taft's approach, reflecting his unwillingness to be drawn into such controversies and his scepticism as to predictions of conflict with Japan. Throughout the war scare under Roosevelt, Taft, as Secretary of War no less, had maintained a much greater degree of serenity than his colleagues. His visit to Japan in 1907 had served to confirm his predisposition to think of the Japanese Government as moderate, sensible and, above all, thoroughly averse to war with the United States.⁸³ During his presidency, Taft's conviction that the Japanese had absolutely no reason nor desire to fight with the U.S. became even stronger, and he therefore deprived scare stories of traction and kept things on an even keel with

⁸¹ R. Tower to E. Grey, October 1st 1907, FO 410/50, TNA; C. Tower to Roosevelt, January 28th 1908, Reel 80, Roosevelt MS; R. Tower to E. Grey, December 21st 1910, FO 414/225, TNA; D.S. Jordan to W.H. Taft, August 3rd 1912, Reel 423, Taft MS; Fitzpatrick, *The Coming Conflict of Nations*, pp.144, 162-163; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.77; Neumann, *America Encounters Japan*, p.132.

⁸² P. Knox to F.H. Allen, August 14th 1911, Reel 423, Taft MS; F.M. Huntington Wilson to W.H. Taft, April 12th 1912, Reel 423, Taft MS; D.S. Jordan to W.H. Taft, August 14th 1912, Reel 423, Taft MS.

⁸³ W.H. Taft to J.B. Reynolds, September 10th 1907, Reel 70, Taft MS; W.H. Taft to T. Roosevelt, October 18th 1907, Reel 78, Roosevelt MS; W.H. Taft, 'Address to the Lowell, MA, Board of Trade', February 19th 1908, Reel 565, Taft MS; W.H. Taft to H.C. Lodge, December 22nd 1908, Reel 25, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA [hereafter Lodge MS]; Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan*, p.192; Minger, *William Howard Taft and United States Foreign Policy*, pp.152, 156, 160-162.

Tokyo by his calm insistence that war between two such friends was all but impossible.⁸⁴

British policymakers broadly shared Taft's confidence that the Japanese Government remained entirely opposed to conflict with the United States. They lacked, however, a corresponding faith in the ability of the Taft administration to maintain control of the situation and ensure the continuation of peace between the two countries. In addition to fretting over the potential for rupture created by mishandling of the perennial issue of immigration, policymakers in London were concerned at the more combative approach to the Manchurian question which Taft and Knox were apparently intent on pursuing, judging it to be ill-conceived and provocative.⁸⁵ For example, Charles Hardinge, Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, complained of the Secretary of State's 'blundering' diplomacy in China, and worried that his bruised ego at the failure of American schemes there might drive him to 'cut up rough' over the Japanese annexation of Korea in August 1910 and possibly even precipitate a conflict.⁸⁶ Such anxiety reflects the continued influence on British thinking of images of the Americans as impulsive and heavy-handed in their approach to foreign affairs which, though perhaps more significant while Roosevelt was in power, transferred easily from one statesman to another with changes in administration.

British policymakers were not overly concerned about the possibility of a Japanese-American War during the years of Taft's presidency, but they did have to field questions, both domestically and from within the Empire, regarding Britain's position under the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in the event of such a conflict. Opposition to the Alliance had been gradually building in Britain as a result of Japan's expansionist policy in Korea and Manchuria, but the more significant

⁸⁴ W.H. Taft to T. Katsura, September 5th 1909, Reel 498, Taft MS; W.H. Taft to M. Egan, November 24th 1910, Reel 504, Taft MS; W.H. Taft to T. Roosevelt, March 22nd 1911, Reel 506, Taft MS; W.H. Taft to J. Foord, April 12th 1911, Reel 506, Taft MS; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.76.

⁸⁵ J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 31st 1909, FO 410/53, TNA; E. Grey to A. Grey, January 27th 1911, FO 800/107, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 5th 1911, FO 371/1273/14784, TNA; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, pp.30-31.

⁸⁶ C. Hardinge to E. Grey, August 16th 1910, FO 800/93, TNA.

objections came from the Dominions. The governments of Canada and Australia, who remained distinctly suspicious of Japan over the immigration question and disapproved of British reliance on Japanese power in the Pacific, were reluctant to remain tied to Japan, especially while the possibility of a rupture with the United States persisted.⁸⁷ British policymakers were still very much committed to the Alliance despite its growing unpopularity, however, concluding that it remained essential from a global strategic point of view. British resources were thinly-stretched around the world and the loss of Japan as an ally in East Asia and the Pacific would necessitate a significant investment in that region, not least because it would become essential to plan for the contingency of hostilities with Japan due to the vulnerable position of Australia and New Zealand.⁸⁸ The British Government was consequently on the look-out for a way to make the Alliance more palatable to its detractors and reconcile the Dominions, with whom policymakers were determined to retain the strongest possible ties so as to ensure the integrity of the Empire, to the unpleasant necessity of dependence on a power which they considered a likely future threat.⁸⁹

Meanwhile, the possibility of a comprehensive arbitration treaty between Britain and the United States was mooted in July 1910 by Andrew Carnegie, a long-time crusader for Anglo-Saxon unity, on the basis that the time had come for the two branches of the 'race that abolished duelling' to come together in an effort to likewise abolish war.⁹⁰ Similar suggestions had been swiftly discounted in the past due to the unpopularity of such an agreement in the United States, but Taft had

⁸⁷ A. Hotta-Lister, *The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910: Gateway to the Island Empire of the East* (Richmond, 1999), pp.14-20, 173-175; Iikura, 'The Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the Question of Race', pp.229-231; P. Lowe, *Britain in the Far East: A Survey from 1819 to the Present* (London, 1981), p.83; F.A. McKenzie, *The Unveiled East* (New York, 1907), pp.3, 6-7, 153; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, pp.45-46; Putnam Weale, *The Coming Struggle in Eastern Asia*, pp.505, 518, 628.

⁸⁸ E. Grey to A. Grey, January 27th 1911, FO 800/107, TNA; M. Beloff, *Britain's Liberal Empire, 1897-1921* (Basingstoke, 1987), p.103; Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, pp.84-86; K. Neilson, 'The Anglo-Japanese Alliance and British Strategic Foreign Policy, 1902-1914' in P.P. O'Brien (ed.), *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1902-1922* (London, 2004), pp.58-59; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, pp.7, 51-52, 71; Nish, 'Great Britain, Japan and North-East Asia', pp.362, 366; Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind*, p.367.

⁸⁹ Beloff, *Britain's Liberal Empire*, pp.149, 169-170; Lowe and Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. 2, p.281; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, p.45; Price, "'Orienting" the Empire', p.78; K. Robbins, *Sir Edward Grey: A Biography of Lord Grey of Fallodon* (London, 1971), pp.236-237.

⁹⁰ A. Carnegie to E. Grey, July 11th 1910, FO 371/1023/26234, TNA.

declared himself open to the possibility of unlimited arbitration treaties, and so the ground appeared much more favourable than ever before.⁹¹ British policymakers thus took up Carnegie's suggestion with a degree of enthusiasm, not only because the arbitration treaty – which would signify the closeness of British-American relations even if its practical effect was limited – was desirable in itself but also because of the impact such an agreement would have on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The Foreign Office immediately recognised that an unlimited arbitration treaty with the United States might come into conflict with the Alliance in the event of a Japanese-American war, but rather than be discouraged by this potential obstacle British policymakers saw in it an opportunity to effectively exempt the United States from the provisions of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, thereby addressing one of the major concerns of its opponents.⁹²

The British Government consequently entered into parallel discussions for a British-American arbitration treaty and the renegotiation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. This endeavour was only possible because the Japanese Government were themselves keen for an early renewal of the Alliance, which was not due to expire until 1915, and accepted the need for the British to address mounting opposition to the arrangement in order to make it sustainable.⁹³ British policymakers had initially hoped to exempt the United States specifically by name in the revised Alliance, but the Japanese objected and a more neutral alternative was therefore agreed upon whereby neither signatory would be compelled to enter into hostilities with any power with whom they had an unlimited arbitration treaty.⁹⁴ For this modification

⁹¹ J.P. Campbell, 'Taft, Roosevelt and the Arbitration Treaties of 1911', *Journal of American History* 53 (1966), p.279.

⁹² C.S. Spicer and C. Hardinge Minutes on A. Carnegie to E. Grey, July 11th 1910, FO 371/1023/26234, TNA; E. Grey to C. MacDonald, September 26th 1910, FO 410/56, TNA; J. Bryce to A. Nicolson, April 15th 1911, FO 800/348, TNA; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, pp.167-168; Hotta-Lister, *The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910*, pp.176-177; Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement*, pp.234-236.

⁹³ E. Grey to C. MacDonald, January 20th 1911, FO 410/58, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, March 16th 1911, FO 410/58, TNA; E. Grey to C. MacDonald, March 20th 1911, FO 410/58, TNA; E. Grey to C. MacDonald, April 7th 1911, FO 410/58, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, April 8th 1911, FO 410/58, TNA; E. Grey to H. Rumbold, May 8th 1911, FO 410/58, TNA; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, pp.44, 48.

⁹⁴ E. Grey to C. MacDonald, March 27th 1911, FO 410/58, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, April 24th 1911, FO 410/58, TNA; E. Grey to H. Rumbold, June 26th 1911, FO 410/58, TNA; E. Grey to H.

to achieve the desired result, it obviously required that Britain and the United States successfully concluded a treaty of arbitration, and British policymakers thus redoubled their efforts to bring this project to fruition. Though he did not feel that he could openly discuss the modification to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance with the Americans, Grey made certain that Washington was left in no doubt that the Alliance would not prove a stumbling block or qualification to an arbitration treaty. The Foreign Secretary explained the progress which had been made with Japan to Reid, and although Grey asked him to keep this knowledge to himself initially, he presumably realised that the gossip-loving Ambassador would waste no time in passing the message back to his superiors, a task Reid undertook with aplomb.⁹⁵

The extent to which the knowledge that the successful negotiation of an arbitration treaty would finally put to bed any uncertainty regarding the British position in a Japanese-American conflict acted as an incentive for American policymakers is not entirely clear. Akira Iriye has suggested that from the beginning of the war scare both British and American policymakers recognised that if war were to break out between the U.S. and Japan the Anglo-Japanese Alliance would fall by the wayside anyway, but it can only have helped the case for arbitration within the Taft administration that a treaty would place this assumption on a solid basis.⁹⁶ A British-American treaty of unlimited arbitration was eventually signed in August 1911, alongside a similar treaty between the U.S. and France, following on from the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance the previous month. Ultimately, however, the arbitration treaty did not survive the ratification process in the U.S.

Rumbold, July 4th 1911, FO 410/59, TNA; E. Grey to H. Rumbold, July 7th 1911, FO 410/59, TNA; Nish, 'Great Britain, Japan and North-East Asia', p.367.

⁹⁵ E. Grey to J. Bryce, April 3rd 1911, FO 414/225, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 11th 1911, FO 414/225, TNA; W. Reid Memo, April 13th 1911, Reel 113, Reid MS; W. Reid to P. Knox, April 13th 1911, Reel 113, Reid MS; W. Reid to W.H. Taft, April 13th 1911, Reel 113, Reid MS; W. Reid to P. Knox, April 21st 1911, Reel 113, Reid MS; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, p.55.

⁹⁶ Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, pp.166-167; Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, pp.164-165; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, p.198.

Senate intact, meaning that the alteration in the Alliance did not become operational as British policymakers had hoped.⁹⁷

In spite of the ostensible failure of the British scheme to exempt the United States from the scope of the Alliance with Japan, the episode was still significant for the relations of the three powers. It confirmed the existence of what had been an unspoken limitation on the Anglo-Japanese Alliance arguably from its inception: Britain would not go to war with the United States.⁹⁸ In attempting to have this caveat made formal and explicit by pressing for a modification, and indeed a weakening, of the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, British policymakers had veered from the blueprint of the previous decade. During the Russo-Japanese War and in relation to the immigration question, not to mention Taft's 'Dollar Diplomacy' projects with which the next chapter will deal, the British Government had opted to weather the irritation and rebukes of Washington rather than risk undermining relations with Japan by appearing to throw their lot in with the United States. There are a number of possible explanations for the apparent decision of British policymakers to put relations with the United States ahead of the Alliance with Japan in this instance, such as the primary motivation actually being the global policy imperative of keeping the Dominions on-side. What really sets this case apart, however, is that an arbitration treaty would have represented concrete progress in British-American relations – a step in the direction of the broad, comprehensive cooperation and partnership which British policymakers so earnestly desired – rather than simply the intangible goodwill which the British elected to sacrifice in other instances in the cause of maintaining the full strength of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

⁹⁷ H.C. Allen, *Great Britain and the United States: A History of Anglo-American Relations, 1783-1952* (London, 1954), p.627; Campbell, 'Taft, Roosevelt and the Arbitration Treaties of 1911', p.287; B. Collier, *The Lion and the Eagle: British and Anglo-American Strategy, 1900-1950* (New York, 1972), p.4; J.M. Cooper, *The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, MA, 1983), p.154.

⁹⁸ H. Rumbold to E. Grey, July 17th 1911, FO 410/59, TNA; H. Rumbold to E. Grey, July 29th 1911, FO 410/59, TNA; J. Chapman, 'The Secret Dimensions of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1900-1905', in P.P. O'Brien (ed.), *The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1902-1922* (London, 2004), p.95; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.168; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, pp.27, 72, 78.

This contention, and the fact that the renegotiation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1911 represents the exception rather than the rule, is illustrated by British-American interaction over the renewed war scare of 1913-14, which fell back into the established pattern of British partiality towards Japan in spite of shared interests. California was once again at the centre of this later flare-up of tension between the U.S. and Japan, as a result of legislation put forward in the spring of 1913 which was designed to deprive Japanese immigrants of the right to own land. The Alien Land Law controversy was rooted in growing fears across the West Coast that the Japanese were becoming increasingly dominant in agriculture, out-competing whites and buying up the land of those they had forced out. For those preoccupied with the preservation of 'white men's countries', this development was particularly alarming, appearing to confirm dire predictions of a 'peaceful invasion' and Japanese colonisation of the Pacific Coast.⁹⁹ The proposed Californian law was offensive from the point of view of the Japanese not only because it related to the fundamental issue of landownership, but because of the barely concealed racial discrimination inherent in it. Though the legislation did not single out the Japanese specifically, the use of the phrase 'aliens ineligible for citizenship' was effectively the same thing, as the naturalisation laws of the U.S. to which this referred only excluded Asians from becoming citizens. In early April 1913, Tokyo thus called on the newly-installed Wilson administration to block the legislation for the sake of Japanese-American amity.¹⁰⁰

Whereas Roosevelt and Taft had been quick to quash similar discrimination when it arose and threatened relations with Japan, President Woodrow Wilson faced an impressive list of ideological and political handicaps in dealing with the situation in California, and was therefore considerably less resolute on the issue. In

⁹⁹ W. Kent to W.J. Bryan, April 7th 1913 in A.S. Link et al. (eds.), *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (Princeton, NJ, 1978) [hereafter *Wilson Papers*], vol. 27, pp.265-266; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 15th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; D. Young to C. Spring Rice, May 28th 1913 (enclosed in D. Young to E. Grey, May 28th 1913), FO 410/62, TNA; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.265.

¹⁰⁰ N. Makino to S. Chinda, April 11th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.293-294; C. Greene to E. Grey, April 14th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; S. Chinda to N. Makino, April 16th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.318-321; C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, May 19th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.272.

the first place, Wilson viewed the Japanese immigration question primarily through the lens of Southern race relations, and had come out publicly during his election campaign in favour of the principle of Asian exclusion on the basis that the nation already had one 'race problem' to deal with.¹⁰¹ Worse still, California's Democrats were the faction most strongly committed to exclusion, while Governor Hiram Johnson – a Roosevelt Progressive with no love for the new administration – was disinclined to cooperate.¹⁰² Finally, Wilson and his Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, were strong advocates of the principle of states' rights and therefore very reluctant to involve themselves in California's business, in spite of its significance for the international relations of the nation.¹⁰³

The best response Wilson was able to muster to the situation was to send Bryan to California to attempt to arrange a compromise, in the hope that this gesture would be sufficient to appease the Japanese. Bryan's mission to the West Coast was not particularly successful; the Secretary of State was unwilling to offer anything more than vague advice about finding a less offensive way of wording the bill, and Californian legislators were in no mood to concede the major point of contention, the disqualification of 'aliens ineligible for citizenship' from the right to own land.¹⁰⁴ The lack of any sort of resolution was deeply frustrating to the

¹⁰¹ W. Wilson to J.D. Phelan, May 3rd 1912, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 24, pp.382-383; R.W. Curry, *Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy, 1913-1921* (New York, 1957), pp.44-45; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, p.56; F.H. Matthews, 'White Community and "Yellow Peril"', *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 50 (1964), pp.619-620.

¹⁰² W.J. Bryan to W. Wilson, March 24th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.220-221; J.B. Moore Memo, May 9th 1913, Box 90, Moore MS; T.A. Bailey, 'California, Japan, and the Alien Land Legislation of 1913', *Pacific Historical Review* 1 (1932), pp.39, 43; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.270; A.S. Link, *Wilson: The New Freedom* (Princeton, NJ, 1956), p.294.

¹⁰³ S. Chinda to N. Makino, March 7th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, p.162; W. Wilson Remarks at a Press Conference, April 14th 1913; *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.301-305; Bailey, 'California, Japan, and the Alien Land Legislation', p.39; P.E. Coletta, "'The Most Thankless Task': Bryan and the California Alien Land Legislation', *Pacific Historical Review* 36 (1967), p.167; Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy*, p.277; Link, *Wilson*, p.293; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.80.

¹⁰⁴ W.J. Bryan to H. Johnson, April 18th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, p.326; W. Wilson to H. Johnson, April 22nd 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.343-344; J. Daniels Diary, April 22nd 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.384-351; Minutes of Executive Joint Conference of the Senate and Assembly of the State of California, April 28th 1913, Box 29, William Jennings Bryan Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.; Bailey, 'California, Japan, and the Alien Land Legislation of 1913', p.56; Coletta, "'The Most Thankless Task'", pp.168, 170, 174, 187; Curry, *Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern*

Japanese, and the controversy dragged on well into the following year, with the Wilson administration merely attempting to placate Tokyo with repeated assertions that the discrimination was not essentially racial but merely a matter of economic competition.¹⁰⁵

The failure of the American Government to offer anything more than token friendliness and bland excuses in response to the discrimination in California revived popular resentment in Japan and with it speculations in Europe and the United States of impending conflict.¹⁰⁶ American military and naval leaders stoked the hysteria by calling for readiness on the part of American forces in the Pacific and leaking their recommendations for the reinforcement of naval defences at Manila and Hawaii. Wilson, furious at this blatant attempt to force his hand, rejected the proposals as needless and deeply provocative.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, he took a similar approach to Taft with regard to rumours of war, staunchly refusing to give them the slightest credit or do anything which might encourage jingoes in either country. Nevertheless, the Wilson administration's inability to deal with the root issue of the tension meant that the possibility of war continued to loom over Japanese-American relations into 1914.¹⁰⁸

The British Government took a particularly keen interest in the controversy over California's land legislation because of the knock-on effect it was having in

Policy, pp.50-54; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, p.271; Nicholson, 'Anglo-Saxonism at the Crossroads', p.389.

¹⁰⁵ W.J. Bryan to S. Chinda, May 19th 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.631-632; S. Chinda to N. Makino, June 6th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.501-502; W.J. Bryan to S. Chinda, July 16th 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.641-645; Bailey, 'California, Japan, and the Alien Land Legislation of 1913', pp.49-50; Coletta, "The Most Thankless Task", pp.171, 180, 183; Link, *Wilson*, pp.299-303; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.82.

¹⁰⁶ J. Daniels Diary, May 13th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.425-428; Conroy, Conroy and Quinn-Judge, *West Across the Pacific*, p.98; LaFeber, *The Clash*, p.105; Link, *Wilson*, p.293; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.81.

¹⁰⁷ J. Daniels Diary, May 15th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.441-442; J. Daniels Diary, May 17th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.446-448; LaFeber, *The Clash*, pp.105-106; Link, *Wilson*, pp.297-299; E.S. Miller, *War Plan Orange: The U.S. Strategy to Defeat Japan, 1897-1945* (Annapolis, MD, 1991), p.22; Neumann, *America Encounters Japan*, p.133; Nicholson, 'Anglo-Saxonism at the Crossroads', p.388.

¹⁰⁸ J. Daniels Diary, May 16th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.442-445; C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, May 22nd 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; Bailey, 'California, Japan, and the Alien Land Legislation of 1913', pp.54-55; Coletta, "The Most Thankless Task", p.176; Curry, *Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy*, p.60; Link, *Wilson*, p.299.

British Columbia, where similar anxieties also manifested themselves in pressure for restrictions on Japanese ownership of land.¹⁰⁹ British officials also kept a close watch on developments with an eye to the possibility that the situation might at some point spiral into conflict between the U.S. and Japan, apparently with a greater degree of apprehension than they had evidenced in earlier war scares. The modification of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance meant there was no longer any real danger of Britain being called upon to intervene, but a Japanese-American war would still have been disastrous from a British point of view, not least because of the steadily deteriorating situation in Europe which made close relations with those two powers ever more essential. Though policymakers in London retained the fundamental belief that the Japanese Government had no design or desire for war with the United States, there was a heightened sense of anxiety that Japanese public opinion would become so aroused over the discrimination in California that Tokyo would be left with no choice but to embark on a course which would lead to hostilities.¹¹⁰

British concerns on this point may have been influenced to some degree by the greater credence which the new Ambassador to Tokyo, Conyngham Greene, appears to have given to stereotyped notions of Japanese sensitivity and volatility.¹¹¹ More significant than such ideas, however, were British doubts about the ability of the American foreign policy establishment to handle the delicate matter of relations with the Japanese. Anxiety over this question had, as suggested above, persisted in the transition from Roosevelt to Taft, and with Wilson in the White House it only seems to have intensified. The British Ambassador at Washington, Cecil Spring Rice, was particularly sceptical of the capacity of Wilson

¹⁰⁹ C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, May 16th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, May 20th 1913, FO 800/83, TNA; C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, July 7th 1913, FO 800/83, TNA; Robbins, *Sir Edward Grey*, pp.273-274; P. Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914* (Vancouver, 1989), p.248.

¹¹⁰ C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, May 19th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; E. Grey to C. Spring Rice, May 20th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, May 20th 1913, FO 800/83, TNA; C. Greene to E. Grey, May 21st 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, May 26th 1913, FO 800/83, TNA; J.B. Moore Memo, May 29th 1913, Box 90, Moore MS; C. Spring Rice to W. Tyrrell, February 3rd 1914, FO 800/84, TNA.

¹¹¹ C. Greene to E. Grey, May 23rd 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; C. Greene to E. Grey, April 20th 1914, FO 410/63, TNA.

and, to an even greater extent, Bryan to understand and effectively handle the delicate situation. In July 1913, he explained his anxieties to Grey:

Bryan is an excellent man but he thinks he has settled a question when he has talked about it and that a good speech which goes down well with a country audience makes further action unnecessary.¹¹²

Spring Rice's estimation of the Wilson administration only decreased as the controversy with Japan dragged on. This was largely in consequence of friction between London and Washington in relation to Mexican affairs, which drove the Ambassador to describe Wilson's as 'the most incompetent government which America has ever had' and shook any remaining faith the British had in the ability of American policymakers to summon up the necessary tact and ingenuity to keep relations with Japan on an even keel.¹¹³

Part of the British issue with the Wilson administration was the lack of insight they received into the official mind as a result of the President's very unilateral and secretive approach to foreign policy. This factor, perhaps coupled with the greater Democratic tendency towards Anglophobia, meant that British-American interaction to a large extent lost the candid and informal approach to communication which had prevailed under Roosevelt and continued, at least to some degree, while Taft was President.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that American policymakers continued to hope for British assistance in resolving the tension with Japan over immigration. The American Ambassador in London, Walter Hines Page, certainly followed the line that Britain and the United States were in the same boat with regard to Japanese immigration and that the issue would fade into insignificance altogether as soon as the British took decisive

¹¹² C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, July 21st 1913, FO 800/83, TNA.

¹¹³ C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, July 5th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, July 7th 1913, FO 800/83, TNA; C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, July 21st 1913, FO 800/83, TNA; W.H. Page to D. F. Houston, Undated 1913, MS AM 1090.1/659, Walter Hines Page Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA [hereafter Page MS]; G.R. Conyne, *Woodrow Wilson: British Perspectives, 1912-21* (Basingstoke, 1992), pp.41-42.

¹¹⁴ C. Spring Rice to W. Tyrrell, January 27th 1914, FO 800/84, TNA; D.H. Burton, *Cecil Spring-Rice: A Diplomat's Life* (London, 1990), p.148; P. Calvert, *The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1914: The Diplomacy of Anglo-American Conflict* (Cambridge, 1968), pp.170, 297; Conyne, *Woodrow Wilson*, pp.22-23, 27, 40-41; Link, *Wilson*, p.279.

action to bring it to an end in Canada and Australia, though he only expressed this view to the British in a casual manner as his own opinion.¹¹⁵ More substantially, Spring Rice reported fairly early on in the Alien Land Law controversy that Bryan had conveyed to him, very much off the record, that British intervention of some description with the Japanese would be appreciated. Spring Rice was himself, however, a consistent advocate of British mediation to avert a breakdown in Japanese-American relations, so it is possible that he misrepresented or exaggerated this informal overture from the Secretary of State.¹¹⁶

Whether or not the Wilson administration actually requested it, British intervention with Japan on behalf of the Americans was again rejected by Edward Grey for the usual reasons dictating British inaction on this issue. Not only had the Japanese not invited British involvement, meaning that intervention of any sort risked causing offence, but the whole question remained a 'delicate one' from the British point of view, not least because Canada's immigration settlement still hinged on Japanese goodwill.¹¹⁷ Spring Rice nevertheless assumed a sort of personal mediatory role between the Japanese Ambassador at Washington and the Wilson administration in an attempt to compensate for deficiencies in communication between the two nations and offer reassurances of mutual good intentions.¹¹⁸ The Japanese Government, far from regretting this unwarranted interposition, expressed their appreciation for Spring Rice's involvement and requested that he continue to use his good offices to keep Japanese-American communication in Washington as frank and cordial as possible.¹¹⁹

Apparently spurred on by this Japanese encouragement, the British seem to have ventured even further during the war scare of 1913-14 than they had

¹¹⁵ W.H. Page to D. F. Houston, Undated 1913, MS AM 1090.1/659, Page MS.

¹¹⁶ C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, May 16th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; J.B. Moore Memo, May 16th 1913, Box 90, Moore MS; C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, May 20th 1913, FO 800/83, TNA.

¹¹⁷ E. Grey to C. Spring Rice, May 20th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA.

¹¹⁸ A. Mitchell Innes to J. Bryce, May 20th 1913, MSS Bryce 106, Bryce MS; C. Spring Rice to E. Grey, June 23rd 1913, FO 800/83, TNA.

¹¹⁹ C. Greene to E. Grey, June 5th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; C. Greene to E. Grey, June 7th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA.

previously in intervening with the U.S. on behalf of Japan. Beyond simply emphasising the desire of the Japanese to remain on good terms with the United States, Spring Rice – with support from James Bryce, his predecessor as Ambassador – began to offer the Americans advice as to the importance of avoiding inflaming Japanese public opinion. In May and June 1913, Spring Rice urged on the Wilson administration a course entailing the ‘extreme of courtesy’, a phrase straight out of Roosevelt’s handbook for dealing with the Japanese, and stressed the necessity of taking the pride and sensitivity of the Japanese into consideration.¹²⁰ Such entreaties represent something of a shift in the British approach; previously British officials had tended to avoid engaging with stereotypes of the Japanese, whereas Spring Rice consciously utilised them in an attempt to guide the United States towards a more conciliatory stance. Though such employment of racial stereotypes would seem to reflect a negative British image of the Japanese, in actual fact these warnings about the volatility of Japanese public opinion came straight from the mouths of Japanese statesmen, who pleaded their helplessness in the face of popular anger and sensitivity.¹²¹ The British use of stereotypes in this instance is thus an interesting example of the tactical deployment of such ideas, as Spring Rice appears to have opted to talk in these terms at least partly because such a line of argument came with Japanese approval. Overall, there would seem to have been a good deal of continuity in the British approach to handling Japanese-American war scares, even with the renegotiation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in the interim. British policymakers remained reluctant to do anything resembling leaning on the Japanese on behalf of the Americans, but were considerably more open to Japanese requests for assistance.

The tension between Japan and the United States over the immigration question did not simply come to an end in 1914, but with the onset of the First World War the prospect of actual conflict between the two nations ceased to have

¹²⁰ J.B. Moore Memo, May 16th 1913, Box 90, Moore MS; C. Spring Rice to H.C. Lodge, June 13th 1913, Reel 93, Lodge MS; C. Spring Rice to J.B. Moore, June 26th 1913, Box 23, Moore MS.

¹²¹ C. Greene to E. Grey, May 8th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; C. Greene to E. Grey, May 14th 1913, FO 410/62, TNA; C. Greene to E. Grey, May 23rd 1913, FO 410/62, TNA.

any real significance for the time being. At various times during the period covered by this chapter, however, a Japanese-American war appeared to British and American policymakers as a very real, if not particularly likely, possibility. Throughout, the two powers proceeded from the same basic premise that war in the Pacific was a deeply undesirable outcome, and yet there was very little in the way of cooperation between them in the cause of averting conflict.

The nearest that Britain and the United States came to a collaborative approach to the war scares was the simultaneous negotiations for a British-American arbitration treaty and the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance which, if successful, would have ruled out the possibility of the British siding with the Japanese in conflict with the United States. Though American domestic politics once again proved a stumbling block in this endeavour, the bigger point is that British willingness to subordinate relations with Japan to relations with the United States in this instance was very much the exception. Throughout the rest of the war scares the major obstacle to British-American cooperation was London's consistent deferral to global policy needs in the prioritisation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Though Roosevelt, and to a lesser extent the Taft and Wilson administrations, sought British assistance in ensuring that Japanese-American relations did not break down and that immigration was removed as a potential source of conflict, British policymakers resolutely resisted American overtures. Moreover, they actually exhibited something of a preference for working with the Japanese in the cause of peace by attempting to calm the transpacific tensions in Washington rather than in Tokyo.

This approach reflected not only the desire to remain on good terms with Japan, but also concerns in London that the United States, rather than the Japanese, would be the responsible party in the event of a conflict. Such fears were unquestionably influenced by images of the Americans as impulsive and brash in their approach to foreign policy, and it was these stereotypes, rather than images of the Japanese as oversensitive and belligerent, which had the greater influence on

British-American interaction over the war scares, in spite of the susceptibility of the Americans to the latter. More broadly, though, it is the relative absence of ideological content in British-American interaction which is once again the most striking trend. Notions of an inevitable, epoch-defining clash between East and West for 'the mastery of the Pacific' and Yellow Peril ideas regarding the threat of a Japanese invasion are nowhere to be found in communication over the possibility of conflict, despite providing the basic framework through which many people in the United States in particular viewed the war scares. Such inflammatory ideas were entirely at odds with the desire of British policymakers to keep a lid on tensions, and although they might in theory have served Roosevelt's case for British intervention he appears to have realised that they could ultimately have proved counterproductive, implying that the Americans were in a state of irrationality and paranoia, hence his active efforts to distance himself from this kind of thinking.

Though American efforts to garner British support in averting a conflict with Japan were ultimately unavailing, the lack of cooperation between the two governments over the war scares did not cause any great decline in cordiality and goodwill. As the next chapter will demonstrate, however, the same cannot be said of interaction with regard to affairs in China during the same period. After Taft and then Wilson took the helm of American China policy, East Asia would once again inject an element of tension into the theoretically harmonious British-American relationship.

Chapter 5

Railways and Revolution in China, 1909-1913

Following the resolution of the Boxer Rising, China moved somewhat into the background in British and American thinking regarding East Asia; even as the Russo-Japanese War was playing out on Chinese soil the powers treated China as little more than a passive bystander. It was not until 1909, with the re-entry of the United States into the contest for investment in Chinese railways, that China began to assume a significant place in British and American foreign policy calculations again, a trend which was further accelerated by the outbreak of the Xinhai Revolution in 1911. This chapter will address these two key developments and make the case that these years were characterised by a series of extremes in British-American interaction over East Asia. American intervention into the railway question under President William Howard Taft generated the most pronounced friction and mutual irritation of the period as a whole, while by contrast the initial stages of the Revolution witnessed the only real example of significant British-American cooperation which this study has documented. Finally, the arrival of Woodrow Wilson at the White House in 1913 worked a complete reversal both in American China policy and in British-American relations in East Asia, with an abrupt end to cooperation and a return to the complete rejection of joint action on the part of the United States.

In consequence of the dramatic shifts which took place in British-American interaction over East Asia in these years, the period covered by this chapter is representative of the full range of the trends which the study as a whole has identified. At certain points cooperation between the two powers was ruled out by the British need to prioritise global policy commitments, while at others the limiting factor was the domestic political situation in the United States. Furthermore, shared passivity, the mismatch in British and American concepts of desirable

cooperation and the disparity in the extent of the two powers' respective investment in East Asia all played a role in interaction between Britain and the United States during these years.

The period with which this chapter is concerned is similarly representative with regard to ideology, as the most salient point is that ideas which were significant at the popular level – whether stereotyped notions of Chinese characteristics, Yellow Peril theories about Japanese dominance in East Asia or Anglo-Saxonist notions of a shared destiny to uplift and develop China in the cause of civilisation – were decidedly rare in official interaction. There are a few isolated examples of ideas relating to race and civilisation making an appearance, however, and these are illustrative of several key contentions which this study has put forward. There are further indications, for example, that the racial or civilisational case for British-American cooperation was discussed almost exclusively in abstract terms rather than in relation to concrete opportunities for joint action. Moreover, there is striking evidence that policymakers consciously employed or avoided ideological arguments on a tactical basis. Finally, as with a number of the other events and issues which this study has addressed, the most prominent ideological influence on British and American statesmen and officials was not the kinds of ideas mentioned above, but rather broadly negative images of the character and behaviour of the other power. These preconceived notions had a marked effect on the attitudes of policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic and were firmly reinforced by the events which unfolded in China during these years.

American policy in China in the years prior to Taft's arrival at the White House in March 1909 had been reasonably passive and hands-off, even by American standards, as the Roosevelt administration pursued other more pressing projects and concerns. Policymakers had not, however, forsaken the broad principles of equality of opportunity for trade and the territorial integrity of China, and, contrary to the claims of some historians, nor had they entirely abandoned the Open Door in Manchuria in the hope of relieving the tension with Japan which had been caused

by disputes over immigration.¹ Though it would be fair to say that Roosevelt personally prioritised mitigating the immigration crisis over the nation's rather meagre commercial interests in China, Secretary of State Elihu Root did not simply acquiesce in the closing of the Open Door in Manchuria, chasing up complaints from American businessmen and urging the Japanese and Russians to refrain from unfairly monopolising trade or infringing treaty rights.² Crucially though, American China policy differed under Roosevelt and Taft in one major respect. Whereas Roosevelt and Root largely accepted the limited nature of American commerce and interests in China and accordingly restricted their involvement, Taft and his Secretary of State, Philander Knox, sought to address this lack of interests by expanding the American financial and political stake throughout the Chinese Empire.³

Taft's personal interest in East Asia was well established prior to his arrival at the White House, following his spell as Governor-General of the Philippines and several visits to the region as Roosevelt's Secretary of War. He gave clear indications both on the latter of these trips in 1907 and during his 1908 election campaign of his conviction that the United States should take an active part in East

¹ D.H. Burton, *Theodore Roosevelt: Confident Imperialist* (Philadelphia, PA, 1968), pp.100-101, 177; A.W. Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New York, 1938), p.131; W. LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity, 1865-1913* (Cambridge, 1998), pp.207-208, 232; C. Vevier, 'The Open Door: An Idea in Action, 1906-1913', *Pacific Historical Review* 24 (1955), p.50.

² E. Root to F.M. Huntington Wilson, March 24th 1906, U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter *FRUS*] 1906, [University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries Digital Collections](http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS) <<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS>> (accessed 09/08/13), p.174; R. Bacon to F.M. Huntington Wilson, April 20th 1906, *FRUS* 1906, p.186; E. Root to W. Reid, July 31st 1908, Reel 176, Whitelaw Reid Papers, Reid Family Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Reid MS]; R.A. Esthus, 'The Changing Concept of the Open Door, 1899-1910', *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 46 (1959), pp.445-451; C.E. Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship: Theodore Roosevelt and Japan, 1906-1909* (Cambridge MA, 1967), pp.264-266; P.A. Varg, *The Making of a Myth: The United States and China, 1897-1912* (East Lansing, MI, 1968), pp.152-153.

³ D.F. Anderson, *William Howard Taft: A Conservative's Conception of the Presidency* (Ithaca, NY, 1973), p.242; W.I. Cohen, *America's Response to China: An Interpretive History of Sino-American Relations* (New York, 1980), pp.67-68, 76-77, 83-84; P.E. Coletta, *The Presidency of William Howard Taft* (Lawrence, KS, 1973), p.192; M.H. Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (New York, 1983), pp.206, 209-210; M.F. Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York, 2000), p.34; LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity*, pp.228-229; C.E. Neu, *The Troubled Encounter: The United States and Japan* (New York, 1975), pp.65-66; Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship*, pp.310, 318; J.C. Thomson, Jr., P.W. Stanley and J.C. Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists: The American Experience in East Asia* (New York, 1981), p.150.

Asian affairs with a view to upholding the Open Door, boosting American trade and guiding China along the path of modern civilisation.⁴ On becoming President, Taft articulated a new approach to foreign policy, built around what he later described as 'substituting dollars for bullets': using private investment to solidify American influence in the political arena and promote development, which would in turn be beneficial to trade.⁵ Though this 'Dollar Diplomacy' has been pilloried by some historians as an instrument of financial 'special interests', in the conception of the Taft administration, investment in China was not so much an end in itself as a means of 'giving new life and practical application to the open-door policy'.⁶ As it unfolded, however, the policy of Taft and Knox became not just a reiteration but a significant expansion of the Open Door, entailing a duty to actively uplift and protect China, and recognising few of the caveats and limitations inherent in Hay's original policy.⁷

In his Inaugural Address, Taft spoke of the need for the United States to begin backing up the defence of her interests in China and the principles of the Open Door with more than 'mere verbal protest and diplomatic note', and from the outset the administration was on the lookout for an opportunity to put American

⁴ W.H. Taft, 'China and Her Relations with the United States', October 8th 1907 in D.H. Burton (ed.), *William Howard Taft: Essential Writings and Addresses* (Madison, NJ, 2009), pp.214-221; W.H. Taft, 'Address to Lowell, MA, Board of Trade', February 19th 1908, Reel 565, William Howard Taft Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Taft MS]; W.H. Taft, 'Address to Chicago Commercial Club', April 4th 1908, Reel 565, Taft MS; D.H. Burton, *William Howard Taft: Confident Peacemaker* (Philadelphia, PA, 2004), pp.51-52; A. Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism: US Foreign Policy to 1914* (London, 1977), p.223; R.E. Minger, *William Howard Taft and United States Foreign Policy: The Apprenticeship Years, 1900-1908* (Urbana, IL, 1975), pp.167, 178-179; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, pp.67-68; W. Scholes, 'Philander C. Knox' in N.A. Graebner (ed.), *An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1961), p.67.

⁵ W.H. Taft, 'Fourth Annual Message', December 3rd 1912, [The American Presidency Project](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/) <<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/>> (accessed 28/11/13); Burton, *William Howard Taft*, pp.61, 63, 74; Cohen, *America's Response to China*, p.78; F.R. Dulles, *China and America: The Story of their Relations since 1784* (Princeton, NJ, 1946), pp.129-130; Minger, *William Howard Taft and American Foreign Policy*, p.164; E.S. Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to the World: The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy* (Durham, NC, 2003), pp.1-2, 61-62.

⁶ W.H. Taft, 'Fourth Annual Message', December 3rd 1912; F.R. Dulles, *Forty Years of American Japanese Relations* (New York, 1937), p.85; F.M. Huntington Wilson, *Memoirs of an Ex-Diplomat* (Boston, MA, 1945), pp.214-216; Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism*, p.215; Vevier, 'The Open Door', p.53.

⁷ Esthus, 'The Changing Concept of the Open Door', pp.444, 451-454.

money where its mouth was.⁸ Such an opportunity arose in an arrangement between China and banking groups representing Britain, France and Germany for the financing and construction of railways in southern China. This project, labelled collectively as the Hukuang Loan, had a complex history, including an earlier incarnation in which the United States had originally been guaranteed participation. In the spring of 1909, officials in the State Department highlighted this all-but-forgotten guarantee as a justification for the inclusion of American capital in the scheme.⁹ Knox and Taft concluded that participation in the Hukuang Loan would be an essential first step in the new activist policy, providing the necessary stake to ensure that the United States had a voice along with the other powers in all future dealings with China. They therefore arranged for the formation of an American banking group to make the investment on their behalf.¹⁰

In late May and early June 1909, the State Department informed the Chinese and the three European powers of the American desire to participate in the Hukuang Loan on the basis of their claim to preference in the earlier project and the principles of the Open Door.¹¹ This American intervention came as a complete shock to the European powers, not least because by the beginning of June 1909 the loan agreement had, after an extended and rather fraught process of negotiation, been effectively concluded and was awaiting only the final Chinese seal of approval. Consequently, all parties involved in the Hukuang project, the British perhaps most

⁸ W.H. Taft 'Inaugural Address', March 4th 1909, The American Presidency Project (accessed 28/11/13); W.H. Taft to H. Taft, July 14th 1909, Reel 497, Taft MS.

⁹ W. Phillips to P. Knox, May 13th 1909, 5315/206, M862/445, RG-59, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD [hereafter NARA]; W. Phillips to P. Knox, May 21st 1909, 5315/208-208, M862/445, RG-59, NARA.

¹⁰ J. Bryce to E. Grey, August 31st 1909, FO 405/191, The National Archives, Kew [hereafter TNA]; W.H. Taft to G.W. Painter, September 5th 1909, Reel 198, Taft MS; Department of State Memo, September 30th 1909, Box 8, Philander C. Knox Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Knox MS]; A. Butt to C. Butt, November 21st 1909 in L.F. Abbot (ed.), *Taft and Roosevelt: The Intimate Letters of Archie Butt, Military Aide*, vol. 1 (Garden City, NY, 1930), pp.214-216; Anderson, *William Howard Taft*, p.246; F.V. Field, *American Participation in the China Consortiums* (Chicago, IL, 1931), pp.17, 37; J. Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asian Policy* (Cambridge, MA, 1983), p.48; J.G. Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers, 1908-1912: An Episode in Pre-War Diplomacy* (Berkeley, CA, 1935), p.34; W.V. Scholes and M.V. Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration* (Columbia, MO, 1970), pp.133, 140-141.

¹¹ P. Knox to W. Rockhill, May 24th 1909, *FRUS* 1909, pp.144-145; P. Knox to W. Reid, June 2nd 1909, *FRUS* 1909, pp.145-146; W. Reid to E. Grey, June 8th 1909, FO 405/197, TNA.

strongly of all, declared that it was simply too late to provide for American participation.¹² Undeterred, Knox began to lobby the European powers to change their stance, meanwhile putting pressure on the Chinese Government to halt the project until the claims of the United States had been met.¹³

The Secretary of State, while maintaining that the U.S. had the right to participate in any case, sought to win the support of the British Government by arguing that American participation in the Hukuang Loan represented an opportunity to give substance to the Open Door by means of international cooperation.¹⁴ Ambassador Whitelaw Reid took this argument in a slightly different direction, suggesting to Foreign Secretary Edward Grey that the collaboration of the four powers would be advantageous as it would powerfully ‘impress the Oriental imagination’ and avoid a situation where the Chinese were tempted to play the powers off against one another.¹⁵ The significance of this suggestion that the impressionable Chinese might become easier to manage – less inclined to engage in their customary intrigue and evasion – in the face of the combined power of the Western nations is demonstrated in the subsequent instructions Reid received from his chief in Washington. Knox specifically highlighted this aspect of Reid’s communication and encouraged the Ambassador to make full use of such ideas informally, ‘if their influence would be effective in securing the arrangement desired’. He warned him, however, to avoid in official communications reference to ‘the Oriental imagination or any other phraseology which if allowed to become generally known would create an unfortunate impression regarding the views of

¹² H. Fletcher to P. Knox, June 6th 1909, *FRUS* 1909, pp.157-158; W. Reid to P. Knox, June 8th 1909, Reel 108, Reid MS; E. Grey to J. Bryce, June 11th 1909, FO 405/197, TNA; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.139.

¹³ P. Knox to H. Fletcher, June 12th 1909, *FRUS* 1909, pp.158-160; F.M. Huntington Wilson Memo, June 19th 1909, Box 42, Knox MS; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.124.

¹⁴ P. Knox to W. Reid, June 9th 1909, *FRUS* 1909, p.152; P. Knox to W. Reid, June 13th 1909, Reel 195, Reid MS.

¹⁵ W. Reid to P. Knox, June 10th 1909, Reel 108, Reid MS; W. Reid to E. Grey, June 12th 1909, FO 405/197, TNA.

this Government.’¹⁶ This example of explicit discussion of the tactical deployment and avoidance of racial ideology in British-American interaction is rare, but it indicates quite clearly that statesmen understood such language to hold a great deal of power, both in its potential to influence and in the damage it might do if used too freely and openly.

Whether the projected impact of four-power cooperation on the ‘Oriental imagination’ had any influence on British thinking is not entirely clear, but American persistence in blocking the project certainly seems to have held greater weight with policymakers in London than any of Reid’s arguments. In July 1909, Taft upped the pressure on the Chinese Government by writing personally to the Regent and demanding that American participation be arranged before the loan went ahead. The message to the beleaguered Chinese was uncompromising: refusal would be taken as a rejection of American friendliness, a possible consequence of which might even be the cessation of the programme under which the U.S. was remitting the remainder of the Boxer indemnity.¹⁷ In light of Taft’s ultimatum, British policymakers concluded that the United States intended to block the Hukuang Loan indefinitely if excluded, and they therefore reluctantly acquiesced in the participation of the American banking group.¹⁸

This British ‘capitulation’ was met with a triumphant response from the Americans, but it marked only the beginning of an extensive process of negotiation between the four groups as to how American participation was to be arranged.¹⁹ Knox, who had initially implied that the U.S. was unconcerned with the details of the arrangement, now insisted on absolute equality in every particular, a demand

¹⁶ P. Knox to W. Reid, June 13th 1909, Reel 195, Reid MS; C. Vevier, *The United States and China, 1906-1913 – A Study of Finance and Diplomacy* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1955), p.103.

¹⁷ F.M. Huntington Wilson to W. Reid, June 20th 1909, Reel 191, Reid MS; W.H. Taft to Prince Chun, July 15th 1909, *FRUS* 1909, p.178; P. Knox to H. Fletcher, July 15th 1909, *FRUS* 1909, p.179; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.161; Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers*, pp.43-44; Scholes, ‘Philander C. Knox’, p.69.

¹⁸ J. Jordan to E. Grey, July 22nd 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; W. Hillier to C. Addis, July 23rd 1909 (enclosed in C. Addis to W. Langley, August 9th 1909), FO 405/198, TNA; E. Grey to J. Jordan, July 24th 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; E.W. Edwards, ‘Great Britain and China, 1905-1911’ in F.H. Hinsley (ed.), *British Foreign Policy Under Sir Edward Grey* (Cambridge, 1977), p.359.

¹⁹ W. Straight to F.M. Huntington Wilson, August 3rd 1909, 5315/470-472, M862/446, RG-59, NARA.

which even the American bankers considered unreasonable.²⁰ The State Department's intransigence on this point created a serious obstacle to the renegotiation of the arrangement and condemned the whole project to interminable haggling over minutiae. Indeed, it was not until mid-1910 that a final agreement between the powers was reached, at which point Chinese objections delayed the project still further.²¹ American intervention in the Hukuang Loan thus represented more of a stumbling block than a launch pad for international cooperation in China, and the slow demise of the project certainly did not draw Britain and the United States into closer relations. On the contrary, the whole affair generated a marked feeling of irritation in both London and Washington.

American policymakers had expected that their initiative would be well received in London, and were consequently nonplussed when the British expressed reservations and even sought to prevent U.S. participation. This disappointment bred a sense of frustration and suspicion in Washington, and during the long negotiations over the details of the Hukuang agreement American officials were very quick to place the blame for any given hold-up or impasse at the door of the British Government.²² Such recriminations were resented by British policymakers and officials, for whom the deferral of the railway project was a bitter enough pill in itself after the tortuous process of negotiations they had already been through. British objections to U.S. participation had been based from the outset on well-grounded anxiety that an attempt to integrate American finance into the already

²⁰ J. Bryce to E. Grey, June 22nd 1909, FO 405/197, TNA; A. Mitchell Innes to J. Bryce, June 29th 1909, MSS Bryce USA 29, James Bryce Papers, Bodleian Library Special Collections, Oxford University, Oxford [hereafter Bryce MS]; F.M. Huntington Wilson to W. Reid, July 9th 1909, *FRUS* 1909, pp.169-171; J. Jordan to F. Campbell, July 14th 1909, FO 800/81, TNA; P. Knox to H. Fletcher, July 16th 1909, *FRUS* 1909, p.180; H. Fletcher to P. Knox, July 23rd 1909, *FRUS* 1909, pp.181-186; Edwards, 'Great Britain and China', p.359; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.144.

²¹ W. Calhoun to P. Knox, October 5th 1910, *FRUS* 1910, pp.290-291; E.W. Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China, 1895-1914* (Oxford, 1987), p.147; Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers*, p.39; Scholes, 'Philander C. Knox', p.69.

²² P. Knox to J. Bryce, June 23rd 1909, *FRUS* 1909, pp.164-165; J. Bryce to E. Grey, June 28th 1909, FO 800/82, TNA; H. Fletcher to P. Knox, October 5th 1909, *FRUS* 1909, pp.203-206; P. Knox to W. Reid, December 17th 1909, Reel 195, Reid MS; P. Knox to H. Fletcher, January 19th 1910, 5315/677, M862/447, RG-59, NARA; F.M. Huntington Wilson to W. Reid, March 22nd 1910, *FRUS* 1910, pp.274-275; J. Jordan to E. Grey, January 2nd 1911, FO 414/225, TNA; Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers*, p.111; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.188.

fragile arrangement would prove disastrous, and if the postponement of the scheme thus came as no surprise, it was no less frustrating from the point of view of the Foreign Office.²³ Whereas the Americans approached the Hukuang loan as a path to future commercial expansion, not to mention an exercise in claiming their technical rights, the British stood to lose out substantially from the failure of the project, as the proposed railways would have offered much-needed sustenance to their existing commercial interests.²⁴ The difference in the extent of British and American investment in East Asia thus acted as a hindrance to cooperation and a cause of friction, as the disparity between the hypothetical American stake and the concrete and significant British one left the two powers working somewhat at cross purposes.

Mutual irritation over the Hukuang Loan issue, though fairly short-lived, reflected and reinforced certain images and preconceptions which British and American policymakers held of each other. There was a pronounced tendency within the Taft administration to associate Britain with the 'old world', imperialist powers – or, worse still, with Japan and Russia – and their selfish and exploitative approach to China, in contrast to the disinterested and altruistic policy of the United States.²⁵ This image of the British came to the surface during the negotiations for the Hukuang Loan – with Assistant Secretary of State Francis M. Huntington Wilson in particular railing against perceived British insincerity and self-interest – and the Foreign Office's unwillingness to compromise on British interests amplified pre-existing American doubts as to the genuineness of London's commitment to the Open Door and the welfare of China.²⁶ The prevailing British view of U.S. policy in China was similarly disparaging, however, and policymakers and officials regularly

²³ J. Jordan to F. Campbell, June 7th 1909, FO 800/244, TNA; J. Jordan to E. Grey, June 10th 1909, FO 405/197, TNA; E. Grey to J. Bryce, June 16th 1909, FO 405/197, TNA; F.M. Huntington Wilson Memo, June 26th 1909, Box 42, Knox MS; A. Mitchell Innes to J. Bryce, June 29th 1909, MSS Bryce USA 29, Bryce MS; J. Jordan to F. Campbell, July 14th 1909, FO 800/81, TNA; Scholes, 'Philander C. Knox', p.69.

²⁴ J. Jordan to F. Campbell, September 3rd 1909, FO 800/244, TNA; J. Jordan to F. Campbell, October 11th 1909, FO 800/244, TNA; Edwards, 'Great Britain and China', pp.352-353, 358.

²⁵ W.H. Taft to R. Ogden, April 21st 1909, Reel 124, Taft MS; W. Phillips Memo, May 10th 1909, Box 7, Knox MS; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.21.

²⁶ F.M. Huntington Wilson to W. Reid, October 17th 1909, *FRUS* 1909, pp.206-207; J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 28th 1910, FO 414/218, TNA.

accused the Americans of approaching diplomacy not as statesmen but as lawyers or businessmen, prone to disregard formalities and conventions and engage in sharp practice wherever it served their aims.²⁷ The forthright approach which Taft and Knox adopted in order to secure American participation in the Hukuang Loan substantiated British misgivings about American methods, cementing the image of U.S. foreign policy as brash and crudely legalistic.²⁸

British frustrations over the Taft administration's railroading of the Hukuang Loan were not sufficient to dampen the desire of policymakers in London for British-American cooperation more generally. In their attempts to explain the British position regarding the project, Grey and Ambassador James Bryce consistently dwelt on the long-standing British desire to work with the United States in China. The problem, as they repeatedly explained to American policymakers, was simply one of timing; at any other point the British Government would have heartily welcomed American collaboration, but the eleventh-hour intervention into the Hukuang Loan held little prospect of success and put an otherwise viable project at risk.²⁹ Though such British protestations as to their desire for joint action in East Asia must have rung hollow in Washington, the incident does illustrate the continued significance of the mismatch between British hopes for a broad cooperative approach in the region and the American preference for joint action only on a very specific and limited basis.

²⁷ H.M. Durand to E. Gorst, April 9th 1906, PP MS 55/46, Box 7, H. Mortimer Durand Papers, SOAS Special Collections, London; Foreign Office Memo, January 1908, FO 414/210, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 5th 1909, FO 371/786, TNA.

²⁸ A. Mitchell Innes to J. Bryce, June 17th 1909, MSS Bryce USA 29, Bryce MS; J. Jordan to F. Campbell, June 22nd 1909, FO 800/244, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, June 28th 1909, FO 800/82, TNA; W. Hillier to C. Addis, September 3rd 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; J. Bryce to F. Campbell, September 19th 1909, FO 800/428, TNA; W. Hillier to C. Addis, September 22nd 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 4th 1910, FO 371/1022/10003, TNA.

²⁹ J. Bryce to E. Grey, July 10th 1909, FO 405/191, TNA; W. Reid to P. Knox, July 23rd 1909, Reel 109, Reid MS; E. Grey to J. Bryce, July 27th 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; W. Reid to P. Knox, August 31st 1909, Reel 109, Reid MS; W. Rockhill to F.M. Huntington Wilson, September 3rd 1909, 5315/536, M862/446, RG-59, NARA; W. Reid to P. Knox, October 20th 1909, Reel 109, Reid MS; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, pp.138-142; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.140.

American participation in the Hukuang Loan was only the initial step in the Taft administration's programme of Dollar Diplomacy in China, a prelude to the more significant intervention into the realm of Manchurian railways. Manchuria became the major focal point of Dollar Diplomacy because it was the region with the best prospects for expanding American commerce and also the primary place where the Open Door and Chinese territorial integrity appeared to be under threat.³⁰ Influential voices both within and outside of the State Department had for some years been calling for the United States to assist the Chinese in actively challenging the 'sinister designs' of the Japanese, who stood accused of pursuing a 'policy of aggression and penetration' in Manchuria.³¹ Some – most prominently Thomas Millard, an author and correspondent of Taft's – even suggested that the outcome of Japanese-American rivalry in the region would decide not only the future of China but, ultimately, the fate of civilisation across the globe.³²

Such ideas do not appear to have held much appeal for Taft and Knox, who, though rejecting the notion that it was necessary to curb American ambition in East Asia in order to appease the Japanese, had no wish to antagonise Tokyo. Their preference was rather for the maintenance of a position of impartiality between China and Japan, with Knox observing in August 1909 that it was not the responsibility of the United States to 'undertake a Quixotically altruistic task for

³⁰ H. Hoyt to P. Knox, October 21st 1909, Box 27, Knox MS; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, p.210; Huntington Wilson, *Memoirs of an Ex-Diplomat*, pp.116, 214; F.A. McKenzie, *The Unveiled East* (New York, 1907), pp.3, 6-7, 153; T.F. Millard, *America and the Far Eastern Question* (New York, 1909), pp.15-16, 204, 245, 257-258, 272; B.L. Putnam Weale, *The Coming Struggle in Eastern Asia* (London, 1908), pp.518, 620-621; Scholes, 'Philander C. Knox', p.67.

³¹ T.F. Millard to W.H. Taft, September 26th 1907, Reel 70, Taft MS; Department of State Memo, September 30th 1909, Box 8, Knox MS; E.C. Baker Memo, October 7th 1909, Box 27, Knox MS; Anderson, *William Howard Taft*, p.250; Esthus, 'The Changing Concept of the Open Door', pp.440, 444; M.H. Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door: Manchuria in Chinese-American Relations, 1895-1911* (New Haven, CT, 1973), pp.148, 227-228; Huntington Wilson, *Memoirs of an Ex-Diplomat*, pp.166-167, 217; A. Iriye, *Across the Pacific: An Inner History of American-East Asia Relations* (New York, 1967), pp.121-122; J.I. Israel, *Progressivism and the Open Door: America and China, 1905-1921* (Pittsburgh, PA, 1971), pp.38-39; Millard, *America and the Far Eastern Question*, pp.10-11, 13, 37, 357-358, 361; Minger, *William Howard Taft and United States Foreign Policy*, pp.167-169, 171-173.

³² A. Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement: Japanese and American Expansion, 1897-1911* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), pp.185-187; Millard, *America and the Far Eastern Question*, pp.1, 13, 28, 59, 69, 353, 523; Putnam Weale, *The Coming Struggle in Eastern Asia*, pp.501, 519, 639.

China's benefit'.³³ Nevertheless, coaxed along by his more activist subordinates, the Secretary of State embarked on a programme of railway development in Manchuria which fitted this description to a tee. The basis of the scheme was a proposal for a new line between Jinzhou (Chinchow) in southern Manchuria and Aihui (Aigun) on the border with Russia, sometimes referred to as the Chin-Ai project. This railway was to be funded and built jointly by American and British businessmen with a view to eventual Chinese ownership, and the project thus seemed an ideal fit for Dollar Diplomacy; not only would it provide an outlet for American capital, it was also premised on international cooperation and assisting the Chinese towards modernisation.³⁴ What Knox and Taft appear to have inadequately grasped, however, was that the Chin-Ai project had originally been conceived primarily as a means of undermining the Japanese regional monopoly on railways, an important detail which would ultimately be the undoing of the whole enterprise.³⁵

Before any great progress had been made towards getting the Chin-Ai project off the ground, Knox came to the conclusion that the bilateral scheme was neither wholly in line with the principle of the Open Door nor sufficiently ambitious. He thus developed a more eye-catching and genuinely international proposition: the neutralisation of all railways in Manchuria. The premise of the neutralisation scheme was that an international financial grouping, including any power wishing to participate, would loan the Chinese Government funds not only to build new railways in Manchuria but to purchase the existing lines from Russia and Japan. Any element of competition would thus be eliminated and the powers could

³³ P. Knox to W.H. Taft, August 26th 1909, Box 27, Knox MS; A. Adee to C. Crane, September 29th 1909, Box 27, Knox MS; J. Jordan to E. Grey, October 26th 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; F.H. Conroy, F. Conroy and S. Quinn-Judge, *West Across the Pacific: American Involvement in East Asia from 1898 to the Vietnam War* (Youngstown, NY, 2008), p.79; W. LaFeber, *The Clash: A History of U.S.-Japan Relations* (New York, 1997), p.95; T.J. Liu, *A History of Sino-American Diplomatic Relations, 1840-1974* (Taipei, 1978), p.59; Scholes, 'Philander C. Knox', p.72.

³⁴ Cohen, *America's Response to China*, p.80; LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity*, p.229; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.157.

³⁵ F. Cloud to F.M. Huntington Wilson, June 24th 1909, 5315/421-423, M862/446, RG-59, NARA; Dulles, *Forty Years of American-Japanese Relations*, pp.86-88; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, pp.134, 161, 202-203; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, pp.70-71; Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers*, p.51.

cooperatively oversee the construction and running of a unified rail system in a 'scientific' and efficient manner.³⁶ As Ambassador Reid explained the project to the British Government in a memo of November 1909, neutralisation would be the 'practical application' of the Open Door and should therefore appeal to any power that was in favour of the principles of equality and Chinese integrity.³⁷

Reid's initial overture implied, and later communications made explicit, that American policymakers expected the British Government to support the scheme and lend their influence to convincing the other powers, Japan in particular, to get behind the plan for neutralisation.³⁸ This put British policymakers in a difficult position, as although they were favourable in principle to railway development in Manchuria, and broadly desirous of cooperation with the United States, they had significant reservations about the American proposal, not least its apparent disregard for the interests of Japan and Russia.³⁹ The Foreign Office had for several years taken the view that Japan's predominant position in Manchuria, though somewhat regrettable from a commercial point of view, was justified, and that it would be unwise to attempt to challenge it given the desirability of Japanese immigration being directed towards mainland Asia rather than the English-speaking countries of the Pacific.⁴⁰ Moreover, as anxiety in London grew over German naval expansion, the necessity of remaining on friendly terms with Japan – not to mention Russia, with whom Britain had entered into an understanding in 1907 – increasingly outweighed economic interests in China in the calculations of policymakers.⁴¹ The

³⁶ P. Knox Statement to Press, January 6th 1910, *FRUS* 1910, pp.243-245; F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Baldwin, January 19th 1910, Reel 191, Reid MS; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, p.204; Israel, *Progressivism and the Open Door*, p.93; LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity*, p.229.

³⁷ W. Reid Memo, November 9th 1909, FO 405/198, TNA.

³⁸ *Ibid.*; P. Knox to W. Reid, December 14th 1909, *FRUS* 1910, p.236.

³⁹ J. Jordan to F. Campbell, October 11th 1909, FO 800/244, TNA; W. Reid to P. Knox, October 20th 1909, Reel 109, Reid MS; E. Grey to J. Bryce, October 26th 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; E. Grey to J. Jordan, November 5th 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; E.W. Edwards, 'Great Britain and the Manchurian Railways Question', *English Historical Review* 81 (1966), pp.746, 748, 752.

⁴⁰ E. Grey to J. Jordan, August 13th 1909, FO 800/44, TNA; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, p.159; P. Lowe, *Britain in the Far East: A Survey from 1819 to the Present* (London, 1981), p.83; I.H. Nish, 'Great Britain, Japan and North-East Asia, 1905-1911' in F.H. Hinsley (ed.), *British Foreign Policy Under Sir Edward Grey* (Cambridge, 1977), pp.362-363.

⁴¹ J. Jordan to F. Campbell, November 11th 1909, FO 800/245, TNA; Cohen, *America's Response to China*, p.81; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.145; Edwards, 'Great Britain and

American initiative had the potential to cause significant friction with Tokyo, especially considering the perceived 'anti-Japanese proclivities' of certain key figures in Washington, and so British policymakers wished to avoid being drawn into supporting it, and in fact sought to discourage the Taft administration from pursuing the scheme altogether.⁴²

The British response to American proposals regarding neutralisation was therefore thoroughly lukewarm and non-committal; Grey offered little more than a suggestion that the timing might not be right for such a venture.⁴³ In spite of the lack of encouragement he received from London, Knox consistently cited British backing in pitching the neutralisation scheme to the other powers.⁴⁴ It is not entirely clear whether Knox had received unduly optimistic reports of the British reaction or deliberately misrepresented the British position in the hope of pushing the project forward and dragging them along with him. In any case, American policymakers firmly believed that their interests and those of Britain were identical in the matter of Manchurian railways, and that cooperation in the neutralisation venture could be all but taken for granted.⁴⁵ Such inflated expectations of British willingness to cooperate in the American scheme are reminiscent of Roosevelt's assumption that he would have British support for his peace schemes during the Russo-Japanese War. There was some basis, at least in terms of commercial interests, for expecting British backing for the neutralisation scheme but, just as

China', p.353; C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. 2 (London, 1972), p.283; Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.73; Scholes, 'Philander C. Knox', p.73; Vevier, *The United States and China*, pp.146-147.

⁴² J. Jordan to F. Campbell, June 22nd 1909, FO 800/244, TNA; E. Grey to J. Jordan, August 13th 1909, FO 800/44, TNA; J. Jordan to E. Grey, October 7th 1909, FO 800/44, TNA; J. Jordan to E. Grey, November 29th 1909, FO 800/44, TNA; Edwards, 'Great Britain and the Manchurian Railways Question', p.750.

⁴³ E. Grey to W. Reid, November 25th 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; Nish, 'Great Britain, Japan and North-East Asia', p.364.

⁴⁴ P. Knox to T. O'Brien, December 14th 1909, *FRUS* 1910, p.236; J. Jordan to E. Grey, December 18th 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; P. Knox Statement to Press, January 6th 1910, *FRUS* 1910, pp.243-245; P. Knox to T. O'Brien, January 20th 1910, *FRUS* 1910, pp.246-248.

⁴⁵ H. Hoyt to A. Adey, September 10th 1909, Box 7, Knox MS; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, pp.155, 158-159; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, pp.207, 226; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.159.

Roosevelt had done, Knox failed to grasp that there were other factors influencing British policy.

As British policymakers had predicted, Japan and Russia both had serious objections to the neutralisation scheme and would not entertain the notion of selling off their Manchurian railroads, which in the Japanese case had been gained 'at the cost of much treasure and many lives'.⁴⁶ This did not put the matter to rest, however, as Knox, undeterred by the miscarriage of his grander plan, continued to pursue the original Chin-Ai project in the early months of 1910. The Japanese and Russians each objected to this more limited version of the scheme almost as strongly as they did to the neutralisation proposal, and this again placed British policymakers in an awkward position.⁴⁷ Russian objections, which were ostensibly on strategic rather than simply economic grounds, were substantial enough to force British policymakers to abandon their equivocal position of neither actively supporting nor obstructing the American railway initiatives and come out in opposition to the Chin-Ai project. In addition to bringing up the all-but-forgotten Scott-Muraviev Agreement of 1899, in which the British Government had pledged not to undertake railway projects north of the Great Wall, the Russian Foreign Minister implied that British support for the line was sufficiently serious to threaten the relatively recent entente between the two powers.⁴⁸ Chastened, Grey instructed the British representative in China to make clear to the Chinese that the Chin-Ai project could not be pursued without the acquiescence of Russia and Japan, effectively stopping the whole enterprise in its tracks.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ C. MacDonald to E. Grey, December 20th 1909, FO 405/198, TNA; T. O'Brien to P. Knox, January 21st 1910, Box 10, Knox MS; W. Rockhill to P. Knox, January 21st 1910, Box 10, Knox MS; E. Grey to J. Bryce, February 10th 1910, FO 405/202, TNA; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, pp.208-209.

⁴⁷ T. O'Brien to P. Knox, January 21st 1910, Box 10, Knox MS; W. Rockhill to P. Knox, January 21st 1910, Box 10, Knox MS; Department of State Memo, March 31st 1910, Box 10, Knox MS; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, p.209.

⁴⁸ C. Hardinge to A. Nicolson, February 15th 1910, FO 800/343, TNA; W. Reid to P. Knox, February 16th 1910, Box 42, Knox MS; W. Reid to P. Knox, February 18th 1910, Reel 110, Reid MS; E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 11th 1910, FO 405/202, TNA.

⁴⁹ E. Grey to W.G. Max Muller, February 5th 1910, FO 405/202, TNA; W.G. Max Muller to E. Grey, February 11th 1910, FO 405/202, TNA; E. Grey to J. Bryce, February 16th 1910, FO 405/202, TNA.

The decision of British policymakers to put the brakes on the Chin-Ai project and refrain from backing the neutralisation scheme in light of Japanese and Russian protests was not a reflection of a lack of desire for cooperation with the United States. It is, however, suggestive of a recognition on their part that joint action in this instance would not have brought about the broader regional, and indeed global, partnership for which they hoped. Siding with the United States over the Manchurian railway projects would not have gained Britain anything concrete, but it would have risked the integrity of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the entente with Russia.⁵⁰ Though he was unwilling to pay this price in order to remain in the good graces of the Taft administration, Grey did make an effort to mitigate American displeasure, attempting to sugar-coat the British demurrer by consistent emphasis on his long-standing desire for British-American cooperation in China.⁵¹

Such sentiments were little consolation to the Americans, and for Knox in particular the refusal of the British to support the Manchurian railway projects was a source of acute frustration.⁵² Some in Washington even appear to have singled out Britain's action, or indeed lack of action, as the decisive factor in the failure of the enterprise, though there is admittedly more than a slight whiff of scapegoating about such claims.⁵³ American policymakers denigrated British conduct with regard to Manchurian railways, especially the warning to China over the Chin-Ai project, as a repudiation not only of Britain's own interests in China but of their professed commitment to the Open Door and Chinese sovereignty. Though they understood

⁵⁰ Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.146; Edwards, 'Great Britain and the Manchurian Railways Question', pp.751, 766; Nish, 'Great Britain, Japan and North-East Asia', p.364; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.194.

⁵¹ W. Reid to P. Knox, February 16th 1910, Box 42, Knox MS; E. Grey to J. Bryce, February 16th 1910, FO 405/202, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 31st 1910, FO 405/202, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 9th 1910, FO 405/202, TNA; Edwards, 'Great Britain and the Manchurian Railways Question', pp.750, 768; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, p.208; Lowe and Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. 2, p.283.

⁵² P. Knox to W. Reid, February 9th 1910, Reel 196, Reid MS; J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 15th 1910, FO 800/82, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 6th 1910, FO 800/82, TNA; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, pp.210, 223; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, pp.172, 175.

⁵³ Edwards, 'Great Britain and the Manchurian Railways Question', pp.763-764; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.158; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, p.213; Nish, 'Great Britain, Japan and North-East Asia', p.364.

on some level the reasons behind it, key figures such as Huntington Wilson dismissed the British refusal to support the railway project as needless kowtowing to the Russians and Japanese stemming from 'chronic invertebracy'.⁵⁴ These kinds of criticisms indicate the continued influence on American policymakers of an image of the British as irresolute and prone to equivocation, especially when it came to choosing between the path of altruism and that of immediate self-interest.

Confronted with these American reproaches, British officials and policymakers vented, albeit privately, their own irritation over the Taft administration's policy in China. Not only had the Manchurian railway schemes been poorly conceived and executed but, they felt, the British had as much reason for frustration as the Americans given the lack of consideration the latter had shown for the delicacy of Britain's position.⁵⁵ The impetuous manner in which Knox and the State Department had pushed their initiative forward, with minimal regard for the realities of the diplomatic situation, further solidified the British image of American policymakers as jumped-up lawyers rather than serious diplomats.⁵⁶ Moreover, the abject failure of Dollar Diplomacy in Manchuria served to reinforce British preconceptions about the amateurish and half-baked nature of American diplomacy. British Minister to China John Jordan, for example, ridiculed the neutralisation scheme as an 'international will-o'-the-wisp', among other things,

⁵⁴ J. Bryce to E. Grey, May 21st 1910, FO 405/199, TNA; F.M. Huntington Wilson to P. Knox, July 27th 1910, Box 28, Knox MS; J. Bryce to E. Grey, August 24th 1910, FO 405/200, TNA; Department of State Memo, December 5th 1910, Reel 366, Taft MS; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 5th 1911, FO 371/1273/14784, TNA; Edwards, 'Great Britain and the Manchurian Railways Question', p.761; I.H. Nish, *Alliance in Decline: A Study in Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1908-23* (London, 1972), p.40; Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers*, pp.110, 114.

⁵⁵ C. Hardinge to J. Bryce, April 1st 1910, MSS Bryce USA 27, Bryce MS; E. Grey to J. Bryce, September 22nd 1910, FO 405/200, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, December 9th 1910, FO 410/56, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 5th 1911, FO 371/1273/14784, TNA; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, pp.153-154; Nish, *Alliance in Decline*, pp.30-31; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.194.

⁵⁶ J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 4th 1910, FO 371/1022/10003, TNA; A. Mitchell Innes to F. Campbell, November 2nd 1910, FO 800/428, TNA; A. Mitchell Innes to E. Grey, November 11th 1910, FO 405/200, TNA; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, p.224.

and such comments are characteristic of the common attitude among British officials that the United States could not yet be taken seriously on the world stage.⁵⁷

British policymakers and officials, having identified a definite 'touchiness' on the part of the Taft administration over the issue, were careful to keep such disparaging assessments of the American foray into the Manchurian question to themselves, seeking instead to find ways to counteract the potential ill effects of American resentment of their uncooperative stance.⁵⁸ American policymakers do appear to have nursed their grievances over the British refusal to support the Manchurian railway projects for an impressive length of time, probably in part because the venture did not merely fail but ultimately backfired quite spectacularly. The intervention of the United States into Manchurian affairs had been intended to prevent a situation where Japan and Russia came together to further exploit the region and diminish Chinese sovereignty. Knox's schemes actually ended up hastening the rapprochement between these two powers, however, as they found common ground in resisting American interference.⁵⁹ That the British Government approved of this unwelcome consequence of American miscalculation appears to have kept the sting of Britain's perceived backsliding fresh in the minds of policymakers in Washington.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ J. Bryce to E. Grey, December 3rd 1909, FO 414/211, TNA; J. Jordan to F. Campbell, December 7th 1909, FO 800/245, TNA; J. Jordan to F. Campbell, January 1st 1910, FO 800/245, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 15th 1910, FO 800/82, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 28th 1910, FO 800/82, TNA; C. Hardinge to E. Grey, August 16th 1910, FO 800/93, TNA.

⁵⁸ J. Bryce to E. Grey, July 18th 1910, FO 371/1020/27005, TNA; E. Grey to J. Bryce, September 22nd 1910, FO 405/200, TNA; E. Grey to W.G. Max Muller, September 27th 1910, FO 405/200, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, January 31st 1911, FO 800/83, TNA; J. Bryce to A. Nicolson, February 7th 1911, FO 800/346, TNA.

⁵⁹ A. Nicolson to E. Grey, January 23rd 1910, FO 405/202, TNA; C. MacDonald to E. Grey, February 5th 1910, FO 405/202, TNA; W.G. Max Muller to F. Campbell, February 13th 1910, FO 800/245, TNA; Anderson, *William Howard Taft*, p.252; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.147; LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity*, p.230; R.W. Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy: A History* (New York, 1962), p.277.

⁶⁰ E. Grey to J. Bryce, July 6th 1910, FO 410/56, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, August 24th 1910, FO 405/200, TNA; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.156; Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, p.83; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.194; Vevier, *The United States and China*, p.166.

In November 1910, Knox, apparently unable to contain his frustration any longer, vented his feelings on the British role in the failure of the Manchurian railway projects in two interviews with British Chargé d’Affaires Alfred Mitchell Innes. His main gripe remained the British warning to China over the Chin-Ai project, which he described as ‘tantamount to a prohibition’, and he made quite plain his belief that blame for any friction which existed between Britain and the United States lay entirely in London.⁶¹ What is most noteworthy about Knox’s comments, however, is the language in which he explained his expectation that Britain and the United States should have been in harmony in their policies in China. He dwelt, fairly emphatically according to Mitchell Innes, on the notion that ‘the destinies of the two countries lay side by side’ and that they were bound together by ‘indissoluble ties’.⁶² None of the earlier exchanges over the Manchurian railway question contain any of this Anglo-Saxonist-influenced language, and so Knox’s repeated use of such ideas with Mitchell Innes at this point is interesting. It is worth noting that Knox’s diatribes of November 1910, though evidently intended to elicit a degree of contrition from British policymakers, did not have a concrete, practical purpose in mind, the railway schemes being long since defunct. His employment of Anglo-Saxonist tropes in this instance is thus consistent with the broad pattern of ideological language being largely restricted to abstract observations rather than serious discussion of policy and cooperation.

American Dollar Diplomacy, as expressed in the Hukuang Loan and the Manchurian railway schemes, has generally been judged by historians to have been unrealistic and inept, driven by a legalistic view of the questions at stake rather than a sound understanding of the real issues.⁶³ American policymakers apparently failed to grasp the importance which the various interested powers attached to their interests in East Asia, an error which reflected the speculative nature of the

⁶¹ A. Mitchell Innes to E. Grey, November 11th 1910, FO 405/200, TNA.

⁶² Ibid.; A. Mitchell Innes to E. Grey, November 18th 1910, FO 414/218, TNA.

⁶³ Cohen, *America’s Response to China*, pp.83-84; Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States*, p.159; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, p.211; R.E. Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America’s Foreign Relations: The Great Transformation of the Twentieth Century* (Chicago, IL, 1965), p.103.

American stake in the region in contrast to the more concrete investment of Britain and the other nations.⁶⁴ Furthermore, they neglected to account for the extent to which great power politics in China was driven by the balance of power in Europe. In spite of the consistent tendency of British policy in East Asia to defer to global needs, Taft and Knox wrongly assumed that the British Government would place greater value on their own commercial interests than they did on their agreements with Russia and Japan.⁶⁵ American policymakers were forced to face up more fully to the reality of the situation in the Far East in the aftermath of the Manchurian railways debacle. In consequence, they retreated somewhat from the combative and uncompromising stance which had characterised Dollar Diplomacy and began to reconcile themselves, albeit gradually, to a more genuinely cooperative approach.⁶⁶ This shift would become increasingly important as simmering regional unrest in China deteriorated into full-blown revolution.

The story of the Xinhai Revolution of 1911 is a complex one, with various contradictory currents – provincialism and nationalism, radicalism and conservatism – contributing to the overthrow of the Qing dynasty and the establishment of the Republic of China.⁶⁷ The uprising cannot be entirely separated from the Dollar Diplomacy schemes with which the first part of this chapter has been concerned, as one of the main sparks which ignited the revolt in China was provincial opposition to international railway projects such as the Hukuang Loan. Though they do appear to have grasped this connection, British and American policymakers struggled to

⁶⁴ M. Schaller, *The United States and China: Into the Twenty-First Century* (New York, 2002), p.35; Scholes, 'Philander C. Knox', p.72; Vevier, 'The Open Door', p.59.

⁶⁵ Neu, *The Troubled Encounter*, p.67; Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers*, pp.63, 77; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, pp.155, 159; E.H. Zabriskie, *American-Russian Rivalry in the Far East: A Study in Diplomacy and Power Politics, 1895-1914* (Philadelphia, PA, 1946), p.159.

⁶⁶ L. Einstein to P. Knox, October 17th 1910, Box 11, Knox MS; Department of State Memo, May 16th 1911, Box 14, Knox MS; P. Knox to W. Rockhill, June 6th 1911, Box 14, Knox MS; L. Einstein, 'The New American Policy in China' (enclosed in L. Einstein to F.M. Huntington Wilson, October 9th 1911), Box 15, Knox MS; Israel, *Progressivism and the Open Door*, pp.94, 96-98; Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers*, pp.189, 195, 226; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, pp.196, 201, 209.

⁶⁷ J.W. Esherick, '1911: A Review', *Modern China* 2 (1976), pp.156-157, 163, 177-178, 180-181; Schaller, *The United States and China*, p.36; Y-T. Wong, 'Popular Unrest and the 1911 Revolution in Jiangsu', *Modern China* 3 (1977), pp.321-322, 328, 339-341.

make sense of the rapidly developing crisis, especially as the unfolding of the Revolution did not fit all that comfortably with preconceived Western impressions of the Chinese.⁶⁸

The most striking way in which the Revolution diverged from the expected pattern was in the conspicuous lack of anti-foreign rhetoric and violence.⁶⁹ This went against the well-established belief in Britain and the U.S. that the Chinese, if not all Orientals, were inherently predisposed towards xenophobic viciousness, a stereotype which had been firmly cemented by the events of the Boxer Rising a decade earlier.⁷⁰ The eschewal of anti-foreignism was a deliberate strategy on the part of the revolutionaries, who took a good deal of care to ensure that foreign lives and property were not endangered in the hope of garnering Western sympathy. This endeavour to a large extent paid off, as the powers did not feel compelled to immediately intervene, enabling the anti-government forces to gain some momentum in their offensive against the Manchu dynasty unhindered by foreign interference.⁷¹

The flipside of the revolutionaries' abstention from jeopardising foreign interests was that they were in a position to discourage the various powers from interfering by dangling the threat of targeted reprisals against their nationals. The fundamental goal of British and American policy was to ensure the protection of foreign lives and property, and so the approach taken by the revolutionaries strongly reinforced the natural tendency of policymakers in London and

⁶⁸ E.T. Williams to P. Knox, October 19th 1911, Box 32, Knox MS; J. Jordan to F. Campbell, October 30th 1911, FO 800/246, TNA; J. Jordan to F. Campbell, November 3rd 1911, FO 800/246, TNA; Esherick, '1911: A Review', p.141.

⁶⁹ P. Knox to W.H. Taft, October 13th 1911, Box 32, Knox MS; J. Jordan to F. Campbell, October 14th 1911, FO 800/246, TNA; E.T. Williams to P. Knox, October 17th 1911, *FRUS* 1912, p.164.

⁷⁰ J. Jordan to F. Campbell, February 2nd 1911, FO 800/245, TNA; R. Bickers, *Britain in China: Community, Culture and Colonialism, 1900-1949* (Manchester, 1999), p.53; A.R. Colquhoun, *China in Transformation* (New York, 1904 [1898]), p.34; A.H. Smith, *Chinese Characteristics* (Shanghai, 1890), pp.124-125.

⁷¹ P. Knox to W.H. Taft, October 17th 1911, Box 32, Knox MS; J. Jordan to E. Grey, October 17th 1911, FO 405/205, TNA; W. Reid to P. Knox, October 20th 1911, *FRUS* 1912, pp.164-165; D.M. Crane and T.A. Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship: American Opposition to Republican Revolution in China* (Miami, FL, 1986), p.41; Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asia Policy*, p.113; Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers*, p.242.

Washington towards passivity, encouraging them to maintain a posture of non-intervention and strict neutrality even as the Revolution spread and seriously imperilled the Imperial Government. The British were especially circumspect with regard to their actions in China, wishing to avoid appearing to prop up the Manchu dynasty in light of the concentration of their extensive interests in the rebel-dominated Yangtze Valley.⁷² Britain and the United States both took the position that the policy of non-intervention should entail not only military and political neutrality, but financial neutrality as well. The Chinese Government, with support from American representatives in China, pleaded for a loan to avoid a complete collapse, but the Foreign Office and State Department were in agreement that any kind of financial aid prior to a settlement would represent a breach of neutrality and was therefore too much of a risk.⁷³

In order for the policy of non-intervention and financial neutrality to be effective it was vital that all of the major powers were in accord and that none were tempted to pursue an independent course. British and American policymakers were thus committed to maintaining the highest possible degree of international cooperation in response to the Revolution. They were particularly anxious to secure the adherence of Russia and Japan, the powers most likely to intervene unilaterally, to the international concert and were even prepared to acquiesce in the compromise of the Open Door in Manchuria and Mongolia in order to achieve this.⁷⁴ Beyond the immediate priority of ensuring the safety of foreign lives and

⁷² Department of State Memo, October 14th 1911, Box 32, Knox MS; E. Grey to J. Jordan, November 14th 1911, FO 405/205, TNA; P. Knox to W. Calhoun, December 7th 1911, *FRUS* 1912, p.103; E. Grey to J. Bryce January 23rd 1912, FO 405/208, TNA; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, pp.47-48, 50, 54; E.W. Edwards, 'China and Japan, 1911-1914' in F.H. Hinsley (ed.), *British Foreign Policy Under Sir Edward Grey* (Cambridge, 1977), p.369; P. Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan, 1911-1915: A Study of British Far Eastern Policy* (London, 1969), pp.61-62, 86; Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers*, pp.253-254, 271, 276-277.

⁷³ E.T. Williams to P. Knox, October 19th 1911, Box 32, Knox MS; W. Calhoun to P. Knox, December 6th 1911, *FRUS* 1912, p.102; W. Calhoun to P. Knox, December 11th 1911, *FRUS* 1912, pp.104-105; E. Grey to J. Jordan, December 16th 1911, FO 405/205, TNA; F.M. Huntington Wilson to J. Bryce, December 18th 1911, *FRUS* 1912, p.107; Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, pp.75, 125; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.223.

⁷⁴ J. Bryce to E. Grey, December 12th 1911, FO 405/205, TNA; E. Grey to J. Jordan, December 26th 1911, FO 405/205, TNA; E. Grey to J. Bryce, December 27th 1911, FO 405/205, TNA; P. Knox to W. Calhoun, January 5th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.169; P. Knox to W. Reid, February 8th 1912, *FRUS* 1912,

property, Britain and the United States had the shared longer-term goals of an eventual return to stability and the maintenance, as far as possible given the circumstances, of Chinese territorial integrity. Comprehensive international cooperation appeared to be the best means of pursuing these aims as well, the theory being that it would avoid a descent into 'unprofitable competition' amongst the powers and minimise the risk of the more aggressive nations making use of the upheaval for their own self-aggrandisement.⁷⁵

With the two powers adopting almost identical positions on all major issues and working together within the context of broad international cooperation, the initial stages of the Xinhai Revolution represented a high watermark for harmony between Britain and the United States in East Asia. British and American policymakers actually went even further in the direction of fully-fledged joint action, however, agreeing to consult with one another over the various issues thrown up by the Revolution prior to addressing them with the other powers.⁷⁶ In contrast to their approach during the Boxer Rising, where freedom of action was the watchword, it was the Americans who led the way in orchestrating this coordinated British-American approach in China. The State Department set out from the very beginning of the crisis the desirability of working closely with the British Government, not only because of the community of interest between the two powers but also because of the perceived influence of the British with other powers, Japan and Russia specifically, which might prove useful in securing

pp.63-64; L. Einstein, 'The Chinese Revolution and American Policy' (enclosed in L. Einstein to P. Knox, May 23rd 1912), Box 18, Knox MS; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, p.76; Hunt, *Frontier Defense and the Open Door*, pp.239, 241; Reid, *The Manchu Abdication and the Powers*, pp.248, 255, 294; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.227.

⁷⁵ J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 12th 1912, FO 405/208, TNA; J. Bryce to F.M. Huntington Wilson, February 24th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.110; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, p.71; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, pp.158-159, 162; LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity*, p.231.

⁷⁶ J. Bryce to E. Grey, November 29th 1911 FO 800/83, TNA; W. Phillips to P. Knox, January 22nd 1912, Box 32, Knox MS; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 12th 1912, FO 405/208, TNA; Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asia Policy*, p.116.

American objectives.⁷⁷ This degree of cooperation between Britain and the United States in East Asia was almost unprecedented, but it would prove a significant challenge to maintain as the Revolution made the transition from ousting the old regime to attempting to establish a new one.

Negotiations between the revolutionaries and the Manchu Government during the winter of 1911-1912 resulted in a settlement which provided for the abdication of the Emperor and the establishment of a republic, with Yuan Shih-Kai, who had taken charge of the Chinese Government after the outbreak of the Revolution, as provisional president. British and American policymakers were supportive of this outcome, seeing in Yuan the 'strong man' who would be necessary for the establishment of any kind of stability in China.⁷⁸ Though they continued to share the same basic interests and view of the situation in China, cracks did begin to show in relations between Britain and the United States as policymakers' attitudes gradually diverged on the two key issues of financial aid and recognition. This did not mean an end to cooperation, which continued both amongst the various interested powers and on a bilateral level between London and Washington, but it did engender the development of mutual suspicions, influenced to some extent by negative images of one another.

The first order of business for the Republic of China was the question of funding; the new Government was in desperate need of a financial injection in order to consolidate itself. The vehicle for this assistance, which would become known as the Reorganisation Loan, was an international consortium of banking groups formed by the four signatories of the Hukuang Loan with the addition of

⁷⁷ Department of State Memo, October 14th 1911, Box 32, Knox MS; J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 2nd 1912, FO 800/83, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 26th 1912, FO 371/1549/22553, TNA; Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, p.67.

⁷⁸ J. Jordan to E. Grey, January 19th 1912, FO 405/208, TNA; E. Grey to J. Jordan, January 21st 1912, FO 405/208, TNA; J.O.P. Bland, *Recent Events and Present Policies in China* (Philadelphia, PA, 1912), pp.40-41, 147-148; K.C. Chan, 'British Policy in the Reorganization Loan to China, 1912-1913', *Modern Asian Studies* 5 (1971), p.360; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.160; Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism*, p.228; LaFeber, *The American Search for Opportunity*, pp.230-231; T-Y. Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy, 1913-1917* (New York, 1952), p.59; Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, p.87; Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, pp.65, 69.

Russia and Japan. British and American policymakers, as they had throughout the early months of the crisis, consulted together closely with respect to the Reorganisation Loan, openly demonstrating what Ambassador Bryce described as 'reciprocal confidence in one another's disinterestedness'.⁷⁹ They found themselves in agreement, initially at least, on the contentious issues of exclusivity and supervision of the loan, both supporting the recommendations of the banking groups that the Chinese Government should not be permitted to borrow outside of the consortium and that there should be adequate oversight of the expenditure of the funds. The thinking behind this shared position was that external loans had the potential to undermine international cooperation, which British and American policymakers still deemed absolutely vital, while unrestricted spending of the loan was likely to lead to bankruptcy and default, paving the way for infringements of Chinese sovereignty.⁸⁰

Despite broad agreement amongst the powers on both exclusivity and supervision, these two questions became significant stumbling blocks in the negotiations for the Reorganisation Loan. In light of strong popular opposition to even the slightest measure of foreign interference or control, the leaders of the new Republic of China balked at the notion of supervision and sought loans with more palatable terms from alternative sources while lobbying the consortium to relax its conditions.⁸¹ The negotiations thus stalled, and would make very little progress for the rest of the year, a situation which brought to light a divergence in the positions of Britain and the United States.

⁷⁹ J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 25th 1912, FO 405/208, TNA; P. Knox to W. Reid, May 17th 1912, Box 43, Knox MS; F.M. Huntington Wilson to W. Reid, June 26th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.142; E. Grey to A. Mitchell Innes, June 27th 1912, FO 405/208, TNA; Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, p.129.

⁸⁰ J. Bryce to F.M. Huntington Wilson, March 12th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.112; J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 18th 1912, FO 405/208, TNA; F.M. Huntington Wilson to W. Calhoun, March 19th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, pp.115-116; W. Calhoun to P. Knox, March 21st 1912, *FRUS* 1912, pp.117-120; J. Jordan to W. Langley, March 25th 1912, FO 800/246, TNA; W. Calhoun to P. Knox, March 30th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.123; J. Jordan to W. Langley, May 21st 1912, FO 800/246, TNA; P. Knox to W. Calhoun, July 2nd 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.145; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, pp.71-72.

⁸¹ J. Jordan to W. Langley, May 4th 1912, FO 800/246, TNA; W. Calhoun to P. Knox, July 2nd 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.144; W. Calhoun to P. Knox, October 22nd 1912, *FRUS* 1912, pp.157-159; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, pp.169, 174.

As the negotiations dragged on into the latter months of 1912, the British became increasingly disillusioned with the six-power loan; John Jordan complained in December 1912 that the consortium had 'done little but swell our telegraph bill'.⁸² The Foreign Office chafed at the limitations on new British investments imposed by the consortium's effective monopoly on lending to the Republic of China and, moreover, was mindful of the impact of prolonged instability on Britain's existing commercial interests. Though they were loath to abandon the consortium entirely, British policymakers' frustration led them to push for an end to the insistence on complete exclusivity and a significant relaxation of the conditions regarding supervision in the hope that this would enable the Chinese to agree terms and thus hasten the restoration of order.⁸³

British policymakers' loss of faith in the consortium and willingness to sacrifice previously agreed principles to bring the loan to a speedy conclusion reflected the fact that Britain remained the paramount commercial power in China and was thus hardest hit by the loan impasse. The concerns of British policymakers were not shared by the Americans, whose commercial stake in China remained relatively insignificant, and the British reversal on the issue of supervision was particularly unwelcome in Washington. Knox and his advisers were adamant, and remained so to the very end of the administration in March 1913, that thorough oversight was essential to guard against 'improvident extravagances'.⁸⁴ The State Department thus declined to consider suggestions for lending to the Chinese on more lenient terms and reproached the British for breaking rank and putting international cooperation at risk.⁸⁵ Ultimately, British policymakers put their

⁸² J. Jordan to W. Langley, September 21st 1912, FO 800/31, TNA; E. Grey to J. Jordan, October 31st 1912, FO 800/44, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, December 8th 1912, FO 800/246, TNA.

⁸³ E. Grey to J. Jordan, August 30th 1912, FO 800/428, TNA; A. Mitchell Innes to P. Knox, September 28th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, pp.153-154; E. Grey to J. Bryce, October 7th 1912, FO 405/209, TNA; Edwards, 'China and Japan', pp.377-378; Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, p.138.

⁸⁴ F.M. Huntington Wilson to W. Reid, September 17th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.151; F.M. Huntington Wilson to W. Calhoun, September 26th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, pp.152-153; P. Knox to W. Calhoun, February 27th 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.166-167; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, pp.83, 87-88, 94, 97-99.

⁸⁵ F.M. Huntington Wilson to J. Bryce, October 4th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, pp.154-157; F.M. Huntington Wilson to W.H. Taft, October 5th 1912, Reel 366, Taft MS.

commitment to the maintenance of international cooperation ahead of commercial considerations and swallowed their objections to the consortium for the sake of unity, but interaction over the Reorganisation Loan does indicate the continued potential for the disparity in British and American investment in East Asia to open up divisions between the powers even when their broader interests were aligned.⁸⁶

A similar dynamic is discernible with regard to the question of recognition for the newly-established Republic of China, though in this instance it was the Americans who became impatient with the position adopted by the rest of the powers. As with the loan issue, Britain and the U.S. were entirely in step to begin with: both agreed that the Chinese Government would need to establish itself sufficiently to provide guarantees of the observance of treaty rights and international obligations before recognition could be considered.⁸⁷ Before long, however, the U.S. Government began to push for the concert of powers to consider recognition prior to such guarantees. In July 1912, Knox put the case to the British, along with the rest of the consortium powers, that conditions in China had improved sufficiently to make recognition viable and that stability and the security of foreign interests would actually be realised sooner by early recognition.⁸⁸

The Taft administration's conversion to support for early recognition came in part because of sympathy with the cause of the Chinese, whose welfare the U.S. was supposed to have always had peculiarly at heart. Less altruistically, policymakers and officials also identified in the recognition question an opportunity to boost future American commercial prospects in China by coming out clearly on

⁸⁶ Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, p.90; K. Robbins, *Sir Edward Grey: A Biography of Lord Grey of Fallodon* (London, 1971), p.272.

⁸⁷ J. Bryce to P. Knox, February 24th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.68; F.M. Huntington Wilson to J. Bryce, February 27th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.111; P. Knox to J. Bryce, February 28th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, pp.69-70; Edwards, 'China and Japan', p.371.

⁸⁸ P. Knox to W. Reid, July 20th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.81; P. Knox to W. Reid, August 2nd 1912, Reel 197, Reid MS; Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, p.94; Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asia Policy*, p.139.

the side of the aspiring Republic.⁸⁹ The primary motivation behind the American reversal on recognition, however, was the usual suspect of domestic political expediency. Popular feeling in the United States was very taken with the apparent conversion of the Chinese to the gospel of democracy, and it did not take long before the Taft administration began to face calls for immediate recognition of the Republic of China as a gesture to acknowledge and assist the Chinese people as inheritors of the American legacy of republican revolution.⁹⁰ Popular pressure was particularly acute because it was an election year and, as influential advocate of recognition Bishop James Bashford was quick to point out, ignoring the demands of the American people on this point might have serious consequences for Taft and his party.⁹¹

The potential political fallout of failing to recognise the Republic of China evidently weighed on the minds of American policymakers, who made every effort to deflect criticism for the delay and accusations that they were pandering to the more aggressive, imperialist powers.⁹² Knox also warned the consortium powers that collectively withholding recognition was putting the international accord at risk, as domestic pressure was significant enough that it might force the hand of the

⁸⁹ C. Anderson to P. Knox, January 11th 1912, 893.00/1066, M329/9, RG-59, NARA; F.M. Huntington Wilson to W.H. Taft, February 26th 1912, Reel 378, Taft MS; Anderson, *William Howard Taft*, p.256; Burton, *William Howard Taft*, pp.76-77.

⁹⁰ U.S. House, 62nd Congress, 'H.J. Res 254', February 26th 1912, [ProQuest Congressional](http://congressional.proquest.com/congressional) <<http://congressional.proquest.com/congressional>> (accessed 22/05/14); Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, pp.43-44; H. Deane, *Good Deeds and Gunboats: Two Centuries of American-Chinese Encounters* (Beijing, 2003), p.16; Iriye, *From Nationalism to Internationalism*, p.228; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, p.69; Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, p.91; Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asia Policy*, pp.120, 124, 127-129; Scholes and Scholes, *The Foreign Policies of the Taft Administration*, p.239.

⁹¹ J.W. Bashford to P. Knox, August 17th 1912, 893.00/634, M329/8, RG-59, NARA; J.W. Bashford to W.H. Taft, September 16th 1912, 893.00/1464, M329/11, RG-59, NARA; Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asia Policy*, pp.131, 136.

⁹² F.M. Huntington Wilson to W.H. Taft, February 26th 1912, Reel 378, Taft MS; R. Miller to P. Knox, July 19th 1912, 893.00/1398, M329/10, RG-59, NARA; F.M. Huntington Wilson to J.W. Bashford, August 26th 1912, 893.00/634, M329/8, RG-59, NARA; F.M. Huntington Wilson to E. Baldwin, October 10th 1912, Box 19, Knox MS; W.H. Taft, 'Fourth Annual Message', December 3rd 1912; F.M. Huntington Wilson to Bashford, December 14th 1912, 893.00/634, M329/8, RG-59, NARA; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, p.57.

American Government.⁹³ This line of argument did not go down well in London, and Grey was quick to caution the American Ambassador that unilateral recognition on the part of the United States was likely to have deeply undesirable consequences in China.⁹⁴

British opposition to early recognition had a number of sources, not least the basic principle that it was unnecessary and unwise to recognise a government which had yet to make the transition from provisional to permanent and could therefore offer none of the requisite guarantees regarding its future conduct.⁹⁵ British policymakers and officials were also far more sceptical than the Americans of claims that conditions in China were improving or that recognition would have a positive impact in terms of stability and foreign interests.⁹⁶ Though this was perhaps the more realistic outlook, it also reflected a strain of ingrained pessimism in British assessments of the Revolution. From the earliest rumblings of unrest through to the establishment of the Republic of China and beyond, the British had shown a distinct wariness regarding the 'constitutional wave' in which the Chinese had been swept up, and, though neutral in practice, the Foreign Office appears to have maintained a preference for the retention of the monarchy over the 'risky experiment' of republicanism.⁹⁷ Jordan, in particular, had major reservations as to the capacity and 'fitness' of the Chinese for self-government, questioning the durability of republicanism given that it was 'so unsuited to the genius and habits of the people'.⁹⁸ Such negative racial stereotypes of the Chinese, which echoed the assessments of influential British author J.O.P. Bland, evidently had some influence

⁹³ P. Knox to W. Reid, July 20th 1912, *FRUS* 1912, p.81; E. Grey to A. Mitchell Innes, July 31st 1912, FO 405/209, TNA; P. Knox to W. Reid, August 2nd 1912, Reel 197, Reid MS.

⁹⁴ Foreign Office to W. Reid, August 9th 1912, FO 405/209, TNA.

⁹⁵ E. Grey to C. MacDonald, July 24th 1912, FO 405/209, TNA; W. Reid to P. Knox, August 6th 1912, Box 43, Knox MS; Edwards, 'China and Japan', p.376.

⁹⁶ J. Jordan to E. Grey, July 25th 1912, FO 405/209, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, July 27th 1912, FO 800/246, TNA; Foreign Office to W. Reid, August 9th 1912, FO 405/209, TNA.

⁹⁷ J. Jordan to F. Campbell, September 4th 1908, FO 800/244, TNA; J. Jordan to E. Grey, December 3rd 1911, FO 405/205, TNA; J. Jordan to E. Grey, December 25th 1911, FO 405/205, TNA; E. Grey to J. Jordan, December 26th 1911, FO 405/205, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, January 17th 1912, FO 800/246, TNA.

⁹⁸ J. Jordan to F. Campbell, November 19th 1911, FO 800/246, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, February 5th 1912, FO 800/246, TNA.

on official British thinking with regard to the Chinese Revolution.⁹⁹ These ideas were at no point, however, a feature of British-American interaction, and policymakers may have deliberately avoided them in this context because this image of the Chinese would have jarred with the much more positive American view of the Revolution.

With the other major powers unequivocally averse to early recognition of the Republic of China, the Taft administration ultimately declined to heed popular calls for unilateral action, prioritising instead the maintenance of international cooperation in China in much the same way as the British put aside their misgivings regarding the loan consortium in the name of a united front.¹⁰⁰ There was thus, in practical terms, very little to divide the policies of Britain and the United States on the key issues of recognition and the Reorganisation Loan. The divergence in their preferred approaches to the situation, reflecting the continued influence of American domestic politics and the much more substantial British commercial stake in China, did, however, arouse and reinforce mutual suspicions between the two powers.

British policymakers and officials had a long history of characterising American policy in China as one of 'ostentatious bluster', often accusing them of portraying the United States as the righteous defender and friend of the Chinese even while seeking the same concessions and advantages as the more aggressive powers.¹⁰¹ This image appears to have influenced British assessments of American policy during 1912, with officials inclined to suspect that the United States sought to shift any odium arising from the international concert's treatment of the Chinese onto the other powers. In particular, the Taft administration's preference for early

⁹⁹ Bland, *Recent Events and Present Policies in China*, pp.9-10, 23-24, 40, 120-121, 147-148, 177.

¹⁰⁰ F.M. Huntington Wilson to W.H. Taft, February 26th 1912, Reel 378, Taft MS; F.M. Huntington Wilson to W. Calhoun, September 20th 1912, 893.00/1447, M329/11, RG-59, NARA; P. Knox to S. Cullom, February 4th 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.88-92; R.W. Curry, *Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy, 1913-1921* (New York, 1957), p.29; Edwards, 'China and Japan', p.376; M.H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT, 2009), p.108; Vevier, *The United States and China*, p.207.

¹⁰¹ J. Jordan to F. Campbell, June 11th 1908, FO 800/244, TNA; J. Jordan to F. Campbell, September 4th 1908, FO 800/244, TNA.

recognition generated a degree of resentment, and Jordan dismissed it as a thinly-veiled attempt to curry Chinese favour and steal a march on the other powers.¹⁰² On the other hand, British opposition to early recognition was interpreted by some in Washington as evidence of a deficiency of altruism, reflecting a tendency of the British to look out only for their own interests regardless of the impact on Chinese welfare. William Calhoun, the American Minister to China, drew on a recurrent image of Britain as simply one among the aggressive, imperialist powers in his critique of British policy, accusing London of seeking to secure special privileges in Tibet and undermining the international concert by engaging in 'a big diplomatic game' of European power politics.¹⁰³ The mutual suspicions which the issues of recognition and the Reorganisation Loan aroused amongst British and American policymakers and officials did not have a serious impact on relations between the powers, chiefly because no actual split developed while Taft was in the White House. They did, however, presage the return to friction and division which was to come in the wake of the inauguration of Woodrow Wilson, especially since neither question had been resolved by the beginning of Wilson's presidency in March 1913.

As his predecessor had done, Wilson took hold of American policy in China with both hands and sought to significantly alter the course which the U.S. was following in East Asia. Within a matter of months, the new President reversed the whole thrust of the Taft administration's China policy by abandoning the key principles of government-sponsored investment and international cooperation. The transition from Taft to Wilson did not in itself mark a major change in British-American relations; Wilson was personally positive about cordial relations and his right-hand man, Colonel House, and the American Ambassador in London, Walter Hines Page, were both committed advocates of close friendship between the two

¹⁰² J. Jordan to W. Langley, March 25th 1912, FO 800/246, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, July 27th 1912, FO 800/246, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, October 22nd 1912, FO 800/246, TNA; Coletta, *The Presidency of William Howard Taft*, p.198; Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, p.94.

¹⁰³ W. Calhoun to P. Knox, January 10th 1912, Box 32, Knox MS; W. Calhoun to P. Knox, February 9th 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.152-153; W. Calhoun to P. Knox, February 21st 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.163-164.

nations.¹⁰⁴ With regard to China, however, Wilson's sudden change of direction drew the United States and Britain apart and brought to an abrupt end the cooperation which had characterised their interaction during the earlier stages of the Chinese Revolution.

Wilson and his Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, did not greatly differ from their predecessors in terms of attitude towards East Asia, sharing the same solicitude for China, belief in a special Chinese-American friendship and sympathy for the revolutionary Republic.¹⁰⁵ They did, however, thoroughly reject Taft's *modus operandi*, condemning Dollar Diplomacy and international cooperation as cynical pandering to 'special interests' at home and abroad.¹⁰⁶ Wilson and Bryan also brought to the White House a more intense conviction that it was the sacred duty of the United States to foster democracy and Christianity across the globe. China appeared to them to be a prime mission field for both, as they eagerly put their faith in reports that the revolutionary movement was not only deeply rooted in the American republican model but also predominantly Christian in character.¹⁰⁷ The Wilson administration thus resolved to adopt a more overtly supportive and 'moral' line with regard to the Republic of China, in the hope that by disinterested

¹⁰⁴ J. Bryce to E. Grey, February 21st 1913, FO 414/235, TNA; W. Tyrrell to E. Grey, November 14th 1913 in A.S. Link et al. (eds.), *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (Princeton, NJ, 1978) [hereafter *Wilson Papers*], vol. 28, pp.543-545; R. Gregory, *Walter Hines Page: Ambassador to the Court of St. James* (Lexington, KY, 1970), pp.33, 36, 45; B.J. Hendrick, *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page*, vol. 3 (Garden City, NY, 1925), pp.23, 93-94; C. Seymour, *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, vol. 1 (London, 1926), pp.194, 196-197.

¹⁰⁵ E. House Diary, January 17th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.61-64; W. Wilson to J.H. Arnold, May 23rd 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.465-466; Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, p.108; Thomson, Stanley and Perry, *Sentimental Imperialists*, p.92.

¹⁰⁶ M.E. Cameron, 'American Recognition Policy towards the Republic of China, 1912-1913', *Pacific Historical Review* 2 (1933), p.230; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, p.217; Iriye, *Across the Pacific*, p.129; Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy*, p.280; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, p.23.

¹⁰⁷ W. Wilson to W.J. Bryan, January 16th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.57-58; E. House Diary, January 31st 1913 in Seymour, *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, vol. 1, pp.108-109; W. Wilson to W.J. Bryan, February 21st 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, p.124; J. Daniels Diary, April 18th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.328-333; R. Challener, 'William Jennings Bryan' in N.A. Graebner (ed.), *An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1961), p.83; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, pp.5, 12; A.S. Link, *Wilson: The New Freedom* (Princeton, NJ, 1956), p.278.

aid and encouragement the United States might take a leading role in bringing the Chinese into the light.¹⁰⁸

An early opportunity to demonstrate the new direction in American China policy arose just a few days after Wilson's inauguration in March 1913, when the American banking group requested a statement of the new President's position on the Reorganisation Loan. The consortium was by this point in a very fragile state as a result of the almost complete lack of progress in agreeing terms with the Chinese, and the American financiers were loath to continue with the enterprise without the express backing of the incoming administration.¹⁰⁹ Wilson's response was unequivocal and somewhat unorthodox: without reference to the other five powers in the consortium, he gave a statement to the press declaring that he could not sanction further American participation in the international loan. The new President explained that his objection was fundamentally one of conscience, as the consortium made the U.S. Government party to an arrangement which, by its conditions for supervision, risked infringing the sovereignty and independence of China. Participation in the Reorganisation Loan would thus be 'obnoxious to the principles upon which the government of our people rests', and so the United States would instead seek to aid China through friendship and by upholding the Open Door.¹¹⁰

In addition to the 'moral' motivation for withdrawing the United States from the consortium, there were a number of other factors which made the decision a fairly straightforward one for the new President. Historians such as William Appleman Williams have suggested that American policymakers calculated that

¹⁰⁸ Cameron, 'American Recognition Policy', pp.225, 230; Cohen, *America's Response to China*, p.86; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, p.218; Link, *Wilson*, p.277; Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asia Policy*, p.141.

¹⁰⁹ P. Knox to W. Calhoun, February 20th 1913, *FRUS* 1913, p.163; J. Daniels Diary, March 12th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.174-175; W.J. Bryan to J. Bryce, April 1st 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.177-178; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, p.107; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, pp.32, 35; Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to the World*, p.79.

¹¹⁰ W. Wilson Press Statement, March 18th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.192-194; Dulles, *China and America*, pp.133-134; Link, *Wilson*, pp.284-285; Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to the World*, p.76.

ending the association between the United States and the imperialist consortium powers would pay dividends in Chinese goodwill, ultimately benefitting American commercial interests in China more than involvement in the loan and continued cooperation.¹¹¹ Probably far more significant from the point of view of the Wilson administration, however, was the domestic political rationale for curtailing American involvement in the consortium. Financial collaboration with the other powers, and indeed the whole principle of Dollar Diplomacy in China, had fallen almost entirely out of favour with public opinion. Pulling out of the Reorganisation Loan was thus a politically savvy move on Wilson's part, and a useful demonstration of the legitimacy of his campaign claims that he would pursue a policy based on ideals rather than profits for 'special interests'.¹¹²

Though the decision on withdrawal from the consortium was an obvious one from the perspective of the Wilson administration, it came as an unwelcome surprise to British policymakers. Their displeasure at the American 'bombshell' was not merely a result of the withdrawal itself, but also arose from the President's sudden and unilateral announcement of the move. Not only had the Americans neglected to consult with or offer any warning to the other consortium powers, but Wilson's statement to the press implicitly cast aspersions on the motives of those powers which remained in the consortium.¹¹³ Bryan can only have added to the British sense of insult when he further explained the American decision as a matter of following the policy of 'democracy' rather than that of 'aristocracy'.¹¹⁴ Their own reservations about the consortium notwithstanding, British policymakers and

¹¹¹ W.J. Bryan to W. Wilson, March 23rd 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.218-219; Challener, 'William Jennings Bryan', p.89; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, pp.107, 109 164; Curry, *Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy*, pp.23-24; L.C. Gardner, *Safe for Democracy: The Anglo-American Response to Revolution, 1913-1923* (New York, 1984), p.41; W.A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York, 1972), pp.80, 82-83.

¹¹² J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 21st 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 24th 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, p.108; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, pp.43-44; Link, *Wilson*, p.286; Varg, *The Making of a Myth*, pp.169-170.

¹¹³ E. Grey to J. Jordan, March 20th 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 21st 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, p.108; Link, *Wilson*, p.285; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.174; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, p.44; Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, pp.136-137.

¹¹⁴ J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 1st 1913, FO 405/211, TNA.

officials struggled to contain their exasperation and annoyance over American conduct. Though the loss of the U.S. banking group did not represent much of a material set-back, they feared that American renunciation of the consortium would undermine the cooperative enterprise and make the already challenging task of arranging satisfactory terms for the Reorganisation Loan that much more difficult.¹¹⁵

This prediction was not wholly accurate, as it turned out, and the practical impact of American withdrawal from the consortium was ultimately negligible. The determination of the British and the other remaining powers to hold the consortium together combined with the desperate need of the Chinese Government for funds meant that, against the odds, the Reorganisation Loan was signed in April 1913, less than a month after Wilson's public disavowal of the enterprise.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, the American policy reversal did bring the broader strategy of international cooperation in China into question, raising concerns among the remaining consortium powers that Wilson would follow up his abrupt announcement of American withdrawal with unilateral recognition of the Republic of China. Grey, hoping to head off such an eventuality, instructed Bryce to make a pointed request that the new administration would not neglect to consult with the other powers prior to any moves in this direction.¹¹⁷

British words of caution fell on deaf ears, however, as the Wilson administration was already well on its way towards extending recognition to the Republic of China. Recognition, much like withdrawal from the consortium, appeared to the Wilson administration to be primarily a moral question; the United States was in a position either to support or to inhibit a nation 'trying to get re-born,

¹¹⁵ J. Jordan to E. Grey, March 21st 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, March 24th 1913, FO 800/246, TNA; Gardner, *Safe for Democracy*, p.71.

¹¹⁶ E. Grey to J. Jordan, March 22nd 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, April 21st 1913, FO 800/246, TNA; B. Alston to W. Langley, May 12th 1913, FO 800/31, TNA; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.175; Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan*, p.136.

¹¹⁷ J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 21st 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; E. Grey to J. Bryce, March 29th 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; J. Bryce to W.J. Bryan, March 31st 1913, *FRUS* 1913, p.105; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 1st 1913, FO 405/211, TNA.

as a republic'.¹¹⁸ Wilson and Bryan were not deterred by the evidence of continued unrest and uncertainty in China, apparently taking solace in claims that recognition would bring stability and establish the Republic more firmly among the masses. They may also have been swayed by the predictions of the American Chargé d'Affaires at Beijing, E.T. Williams, that the United States would materially benefit from being the first power to offer recognition.¹¹⁹ Once again, however, probably the most important factor in the Wilson administration's eagerness for recognition was the domestic political situation. The pressure for immediate recognition had passed from Taft to Wilson almost the moment the latter had been elected in November 1912, and, with his greater commitment to spreading democracy and mistrust of the concert of powers, the new President was considerably more receptive to it than his predecessor.¹²⁰

That Wilson's approach to the recognition question was influenced by political considerations is further suggested by his attitude towards broaching the matter with the other interested powers. He was adamant that the United States should not under any circumstances be seen to hesitate over recognition on account of the reservations of other powers, and he was reluctant to give even the impression of consultation lest it seem that foreign governments were in a position to influence American policy.¹²¹ The State Department did, in the end, offer a nod towards the principle of international cooperation by way of an aide-mémoire to the representatives of various foreign powers. This note did not, however, in any sense request the opinions of the powers, merely informing them of the intention

¹¹⁸ W. Wilson to M.A. Hulbert, April 8th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, p.273; Challener, 'William Jennings Bryan', p.89; Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, p.218.

¹¹⁹ E.T. Williams to W.J. Bryan, March 18th 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.96-98; E.T. Williams to W.J. Bryan, March 28th 1913, *FRUS* 1913, p.100; E.T. Williams to W.J. Bryan, April 1st 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.106-108; J. Daniels Diary, April 4th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.261-262; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 7th 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, p.122.

¹²⁰ J.W. Bashford to W. Wilson, November 28th 1912, 893.00/634, M329/8, RG-59, NARA; W. Wilson to W.J. Bryan, January 16th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.57-58; J. Mott to C. Dodge, March 1st 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.144-145; J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 1st 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, pp.69-70; Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asia Policy*, p.142.

¹²¹ J. Bryce to E. Grey, April 1st 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; J. Daniels Diary, April 1st 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.248-250; Cohen, *America's Response to China*, p.88; Curry, *Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy*, p.30; Link, *Wilson*, p.288.

of the United States to recognise the Republic of China and inviting them to join in doing the same.¹²² The British Government's response to this American 'overture' was to emphasise once again that international cooperation was the most important principle in dealing with China. Indeed, Bryce gently chided Bryan for failing to allow a reasonable length of time for consultation among the powers, as this made quite clear the Wilson administration's lack of interest in actually cooperating.¹²³ As if to illustrate this point, before the British response even reached the U.S. Government, the State Department had given instructions to Williams to recognise the Republic of China upon the meeting of the Assembly, which eventually took place on May 2nd 1913.¹²⁴

Though U.S. recognition cannot be said to have had much practical impact on the situation in China, there is no question that it was a source of significant frustration to those powers which had been intent on maintaining international unity on the issue.¹²⁵ British policymakers and officials were particularly irked by the move, complaining of Wilson's 'indecent haste' and 'headlong eagerness' to show solidarity with the Republic of China in spite of the delicacy of the situation. Not only were American assessments of conditions in China and the likely impact of recognition, in their view, overly optimistic, but the British position remained that assurances regarding foreign treaty rights and China's international obligations constituted an essential prerequisite for recognition.¹²⁶ Thus, while American recognition policy under Wilson was driven, at least in part, by domestic political concerns, British policy continued to be influenced by the significant commercial stake which the nation had in China.

¹²² W.J. Bryan Aide-Mémoire to Foreign Representatives, April 2nd 1913, *FRUS* 1913, p.108; Cameron, 'American Recognition Policy', p.227; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, p.57; Liu, *A History of Sino-American Diplomatic Relations*, p.74.

¹²³ J. Bryce to W.J. Bryan, April 7th 1913, 893.00/1667, M329/11, RG-59, NARA.

¹²⁴ W.J. Bryan to E.T. Williams, April 6th 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.109-110; E.T. Williams to W.J. Bryan, May 2nd 1913, *FRUS* 1913, p.115; Liu, *A History of Sino-American Diplomatic Relations*, p.76.

¹²⁵ Cameron, 'American Recognition Policy', p.229; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, p.80.

¹²⁶ E. Grey to J. Jordan, April 4th 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, April 6th 1913, FO 800/246, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, April 21st 1913, FO 800/246, TNA; J. Jordan to E. Grey, May 3rd 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; Liu, *A History of Sino-American Diplomatic Relations*, p.75; Reed, *The Missionary Mind and American East Asia Policy*, p.144.

The arrival of Woodrow Wilson in the White House brought a definitive end to British-American cooperation in the Chinese Revolution, but the shift in approach which the new President inaugurated was in some ways not as dramatic as it seemed, and going forward the China policies of the two powers were by no means radically different. As tensions between Yuan Shih-Kai's Government in Beijing and Sun Yat Sen's southern radicals descended into civil war in the summer of 1913, Britain and the United States were to be found very much on the same side. Policymakers in London and Washington, sharing the same essential goal of the reestablishment of order and stability throughout China, gave their tacit backing to Yuan and stuck with him even as it became increasingly apparent that his regime fell a long way short of the democratic ideals of the Revolution.¹²⁷ The new American policy in China was thus defined not so much by the substitution of moralism for self-interest, as Wilson and Bryan liked to claim, but rather by the rejection of cooperation in favour of a unilateral approach. The Wilson administration's major priority in overhauling Taft's policy was to chart an independent course which would disassociate the United States from the imperialist powers, an approach at least in part designed to tap into popular enthusiasm for a return to the 'traditional' American policy of eschewing foreign entanglements.¹²⁸

With the revival of a fiercely individualist American policy in China came also, perhaps inevitably, a retreat into the passivity which had characterised U.S. involvement in East Asia prior to the turn of the twentieth century. The Wilson administration, in spite of the activist tendencies of Ambassador to China Paul

¹²⁷ A. Adey to W.J. Bryan, March 28th 1913, 893.00/1669, M329/11, RG-59, NARA; E.T. Williams to W.J. Bryan, April 1st 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.106-108; J. Jordan to W. Langley, April 21st 1913, FO 800/246, TNA; J.B. Moore Memo, November 13th 1913, Box 92, John Bassett Moore Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. [hereafter Moore MS]; R. Bickers, *The Scramble for China: Foreign Devils in the Qing Empire, 1832-1914* (London, 2011), p.369; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, pp.126-127, 129-132, 135, 163; Curry, *Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy*, p.31; Edwards, *British Diplomacy and Finance in China*, p.174; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, pp.6, 72, 139-141, 143; Lowe, *Britain in the Far East*, p.92.

¹²⁸ J. Daniels Diary, March 28th 1913, *Wilson Papers*, vol. 27, pp.235-238; Conroy, Conroy and Quinn-Judge, *West Across the Pacific*, p.98; Crane and Breslin, *An Ordinary Relationship*, pp.xxi, 124; Curry, *Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy*, p.24; Israel, *Progressivism and the Open Door*, pp.107-108; Leopold, *The Growth of American Foreign Policy*, p.280; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, pp.23-24.

Reinsch, took the line that the U.S. Government should not take an active role in supporting American interests in China, or indeed in Chinese affairs more generally.¹²⁹ British policymakers were unimpressed by this return on the part of the United States to a posture of aloofness and inactivity in East Asia, and the new policy direction served to reinforce negative British images of American diplomacy. For example, the haste of the Wilson administration in reversing Taft's policies with regard to both the consortium and recognition smacked, in British eyes, of a desire to attain a privileged position by posing as a friend of the Chinese. Jordan in particular poured scorn on what he saw as a reversion by the U.S. to its 'traditional policy of letting others do all the spade work and trying to reap a share of the results'.¹³⁰ The abrupt abandonment of the cooperative policy in China also appeared to offer explicit confirmation of the preconception that American statecraft was inconsistent, unreliable and not to be taken seriously.¹³¹

British frustration over American conduct in 1913 reflected the fact that Wilson's policy shift had effectively inaugurated a return to the broad aversion to collaboration which had characterised U.S. policy in the late nineteenth century. British-American interaction over East Asia thus came full circle after a brief flirtation with genuine collaboration in the earlier stages of the Xinhai Revolution. This cooperation had itself been a fairly dramatic departure after the travails of Dollar Diplomacy, which had not only failed to bring about joint action but had actually engendered a great deal of tension and mutual resentment. These various swings in British-American interaction over China between 1909 and 1913 illustrate

¹²⁹ W.J. Bryan to E.T. Williams, September 11th 1913, *FRUS* 1913, pp.186-187; J.B. Moore Memo, November 13th 1913, Box 92, Moore MS; R.A. Esthus, 'The Open Door and the Integrity of China, 1899-1922: Hazy Principles for Changing Policy' in T.H. Etzold (ed.), *Aspects of Sino-American Relations since 1784* (New York, 1978), p.61; Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, p.133; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, p.35; Li, *Woodrow Wilson's China Policy*, pp.164, 194, 212; N. Pugach, 'Making the Open Door Work: Paul S. Reinsch in China, 1913-1919', *Pacific Historical Review* 38 (1969), pp.157, 170.

¹³⁰ J. Bryce to E. Grey, March 21st 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; J. Jordan to W. Langley, March 24th 1913, FO 800/246, TNA; J. Jordan to E. Grey, May 3rd 1913, FO 405/211, TNA; Gardner, *Safe for Democracy*, p.75.

¹³¹ J. Jordan to W. Langley, March 24th 1913, FO 800/246, TNA; J. Jordan to J. Bryce, May 2nd 1913, MSS Bryce 86, Bryce MS; J. Jordan to W. Langley, May 5th 1913, FO 800/247, TNA; G.R. Conyne, *Woodrow Wilson: British Perspectives, 1912-21* (Basingstoke, 1992), pp.15, 41-42.

the key trends which this study had identified by way of accounting for the rule of noncollaboration, to which joint action during the Revolution was the one major exception.

In the first place, the overarching concerns of British global policy needs and American domestic political needs were central to the failed attempts at joint action. The British did not lend their support to the Taft administration's attempt to preserve the Open Door in Manchuria because such cooperation would have been detrimental to Britain's relations with Japan, while the Wilson administration abandoned joint action over the Reorganisation Loan and the recognition question largely in deference to popular support for an independent American course. Events in China during these years also showcased other trends at work, such as the mismatch in the powers' hopes for cooperation during the wrangling over Dollar Diplomacy. Probably the more significant trend during this period, however, was the difference in British and American stakes in East Asia. Both in the Hukuang Loan negotiations and to a lesser extent during the Revolution, the British balked at the sacrifices to their commercial interests which were expected by the comparatively uncommitted Americans, whose only concern was for principles.

The same recapitulation of earlier trends is in evidence during these years with regard to ideology, with the main theme undoubtedly being the distinct lack of ideas relating to race and civilisation in British-American interaction. Such examples as there are, however, are particularly telling. For example, Knox's instructions to Whitelaw Reid regarding the care required in using the language of racial stereotypes in selling international cooperation in railway enterprises offers a rare insight into the tactical calculations policymakers made with regard to ideology. Similarly, Knox's references to a shared British-American destiny and 'indissoluble ties' in post-mortem discussions of the Manchurian railway schemes is suggestive of the willingness of policymakers to speak in ideological terms in the abstract but not in relation to actual proposals of joint action. Throughout this chapter, however, the most common recurrence has been the influence of stereotypes of one

another's national character on British and American policymakers. The tendency of the British to think of the Americans as either incompetent or guilty of cloaking opportunism in the guise of idealism was paralleled by the American habit of viewing the British as baldly self-interested and fundamentally imperialistic rather than altruistic. Even when the powers were engaged in cooperation during the Revolution, their interaction served more to solidify than to dispel such negative images.

Though interaction over China between 1909 and 1913 finally witnessed the translation of rhetorical closeness into practical collaboration, this period by no means bucks the trend of shared interests and ideology proving insufficient to guarantee a cooperative approach to the East Asian situation. If anything, these years were especially representative of the broader period, as a familiar cast of limitations and constraints continued to obstruct the path to harmonious joint action in pursuit of common goals.

Conclusion

At its most basic level, this study has sought to demonstrate that British-American interaction over East Asia between 1898 and 1914 did not live up to the ideal implied by the notion of the 'great rapprochement'. It has shown that cooperation between the two powers was not the norm and that, barring one or two exceptions, joint action did not materialise during these years to any significant degree. The simplest explanation for the absence of cooperation would be that Britain and the United States lacked a real basis in shared interests or any ideological rationale for working together in East Asia, but on neither count was this the case. This study has attempted, therefore, to explain why a community of both ideas and interests did not, for the most part, translate into practical collaboration. It has established, on the one hand, that external concerns and priorities frequently trumped the interests which the two powers shared in determining their respective policies. On the other, it has suggested that ideas relating to race and civilisation which might have served to encourage a united front were largely absent in British-American interaction, at least in part because policymakers deliberately avoided them, and that negative images of each other were more prominent as an influence on the thinking of the two governments. Though these various contentions have been traced in some detail through the individual chapters, this brief conclusion draws together the key findings of the study.

The central, unifying theme of the study has been the failure of Britain and the United States to engage in a cooperative approach to East Asian affairs during the period under consideration. The preceding chapters have clearly demonstrated that in dealing with issues of commercial expansion and internal upheaval in China, the Russo-Japanese War and the crises surrounding Japanese immigration to the Pacific Coast of North America, either one or both of the powers declined to engage in joint action or actively support the endeavours of the other. The one significant

exception to this rule is the cooperative approach which Britain and the United States adopted during the early stages of Xinhai Revolution of 1911. What set this instance apart from the general run of British-American interaction over East Asia was not simply the context of broader international cooperation – which was not in itself sufficient to prompt the same level of cooperation during the Boxer Rising a decade earlier – but rather the extent to which both powers prioritised their shared goals and interests over other concerns. Virtually every other opportunity for joint action in East Asia was stymied by the interposition of external pressures and constraints which outweighed the community of interest.

On the American side, the major factor militating against cooperation with Britain was the domestic political scene; popular Anglophobia and suspicion of ‘foreign entanglements’ presented a significant obstacle for American policymakers in pursuing cooperative policies. During both the ‘scramble for concessions’ of 1898 and the Russo-Japanese War, British overtures for an understanding geared towards the preservation of the status quo in East Asia were rejected by American policymakers, primarily for reasons of political expediency. Moreover, even independent American policies which appeared to put the U.S. in line with Britain, such as John Hay’s Open Door notes, were politically suspect, encouraging policymakers to artificially distance their actions from the British. Domestic political concerns were also responsible for the abrupt cessation of British-American cooperation in the Xinhai Revolution, as Woodrow Wilson responded to the popular pressure for an independent policy which William Howard Taft had been prepared to weather.

British hopes for cooperation in East Asia were thus regularly dashed by the vagaries of the American political scene, but policymakers in London were themselves responsible for obstructing collaboration between the powers due to the perceived need to prioritise global policy imperatives over interests in East Asia. Though concerns about ‘overstretch’ and limited resources on one level encouraged British policymakers to seek a partnership with the United States in East Asia, they

also led to an ever-increasing reliance on relationships with other powers, most notably Japan. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance regularly became something of a point of tension between Britain and the United States, as British policymakers were loath to take any action which risked damaging their relations with Tokyo and therefore leaving them unable to maintain their global commitments. Thus, during the Russo-Japanese War, the immigration crisis and Taft's attempts to bring Dollar Diplomacy to Manchuria, British cooperation and assistance were withheld for fear of causing offence to the Japanese or pursuing a course which was in conflict with their interests.

These two overarching concerns have, throughout the preceding chapters, provided the basic explanation for the failure of Britain and the United States to cooperate in East Asia. There were also, however, three more or less interconnected trends which the study has highlighted to further elucidate the consistent lack of joint action between the two powers. The first of these, a shared preference for passivity, was to a large extent an outworking of the powers' respective concerns. American policymakers were constrained by popular apathy towards East Asian affairs and hostility towards an activist foreign policy in a supposedly peripheral region, while the British were discouraged from playing an active role in East Asia by the need to conserve resources for more pressing concerns elsewhere in the world. Though the common predilection for a minimal commitment in East Asia did serve to align British and American policies in the region, particularly in relation to upheavals such as the Boxer Rising, it also to some extent circumscribed opportunities for cooperation between the powers. For example, had either power been prepared to take a strong independent stance in the Manchurian controversy prior to the Russo-Japanese War, they would most likely have received the backing of the other, significantly improving the prospects for joint action.

Probably even more significant to the failure of the two powers to work together in East Asia than the shared tendency towards passivity was the second

trend: a mismatch in British and American hopes and expectations for cooperation. The British, conscious of the necessity of forging partnerships with other powers in order to sustain their global position, sought longer-term, comprehensive joint action with the United States, ideally in the form of a commitment to the preservation of the regional status quo. American policymakers, constrained by the political risks of any sort of 'entanglement' with a foreign power, favoured cooperation only on a much more limited scale and with very specific goals in mind. This mismatch was thus largely a function of the overarching concerns of the two powers, but it also had the effect of significantly increasing the potential for tension between London and Washington and thereby rendering any sort of cooperation more difficult to achieve. The British regularly spoke of their desire for close cooperation between the two powers but were unwilling, absent some kind of concrete commitment from the United States, to offer their support in the specific instances the Americans sought it, for reasons already discussed. American expectations of British backing were thus built up and repeatedly not met, generating resentment in Washington, for example during the Russo-Japanese War and in relation to the Manchurian railway schemes of 1909-1910.

The final trend which has recurred throughout the study is the disparity in the extent of British and American investment in East Asia. Britain had significant commercial interests in China and therefore much to lose, whereas the United States, despite a widespread conviction amongst policymakers that commercial expansion in the region was essential to future prosperity, had only very modest tangible interests to consider. The unevenness of the two powers' respective stakes was mitigated somewhat by the tendency of British policymakers to put broader imperatives ahead of purely economic interests, but it still had the potential to complicate attempts to orchestrate joint action between London and Washington. For example, in the negotiations over the Boxer settlement, the Hukuang Loan and, albeit less significantly, the Reorganisation Loan, British policymakers proved reluctant to acquiesce in arrangements which would disproportionately prejudice their commercial interests for the sake of expediency. American policymakers and

officials did not sympathise with British stubbornness on such points – in large part because they had little to lose themselves and thus minimal compunction about putting principles ahead of profit – which created further potential for friction between the two powers.

Given that the combined effect of these trends and the overarching concerns of the two powers was to preclude cooperation between Britain and the United States in East Asia by effectively negating their community of interests, it might reasonably be objected that this whole notion of shared interests is somewhat questionable. There was, however, a reasonably solid basis of common interests – primarily the maintenance of the status quo and open trade in China and the balancing of immigration restriction with cordial relations with Japan – and policymakers do appear to have recognised that in declining to engage in joint action they were, on some level, acting against their interests. For example, John Hay frequently expressed frustration that domestic political constraints prevented the U.S. from pursuing its objectives in East Asia by working with the British, while policymakers in London lamented the negative repercussions of prioritising the relationship with Japan with regard to the immigration issue and the Manchurian railway question. It would perhaps be fair, however, to suggest that the extent of the British-American community of interests in East Asia was somewhat inflated in the minds of policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic owing to the ‘community of sentiment’, in other words the ideological basis for a united front in the region.

There was, as the study has documented, a range of shared ideas and images which had the potential to facilitate or encourage cooperation between Britain and the United States in East Asia. Notions of Anglo-Saxon unity and Yellow Peril threat were pervasive in popular culture and relatively influential amongst policymakers. Moreover, many East Asia events and issues, such as the Boxer Rising and the Japanese-American war scares, were understood at all levels in at least partially ideological and racial terms. Throughout the study, however, it has been the absence of such ideological content in British-American interaction which has

been the most striking finding. The surprising lack of ideas regarding race and civilisation in communication between the two powers does provide a basic explanation as to why the shared ideological framework proved inadequate to bring about cooperation, but, as the preceding chapters have indicated, there is a little more to the story than this.

Almost as persistent a theme throughout the study as the absence in interaction between Britain and the United States of ideological incentives for cooperation in East Asia has been the presence of negative images which policymakers held of the other power. These images did not necessarily prevent a cooperative approach, but they did have the potential to increase friction between the powers and fuel mutual suspicions when cooperation was not immediately forthcoming. For example, the criticisms which British policymakers and officials expressed regarding U.S. conduct during the Boxer negotiations and the Xinhai Revolution drew on an established image of American foreign policy as equal parts sanctimonious and unscrupulous. Likewise, American policymakers and officials were quick to revert to an image of the British as vacillating and irresolute whenever they did not adequately support U.S. policy, such as in the build-up to the Portsmouth peace conference. The prominence of these negative stereotypes of one another over shared ideas and images which might have promoted collaboration between Britain and the United States does offer further insight into the failure of the 'community of sentiment' to engender a united front in East Asia. It does not, however, satisfactorily account for the paucity of the latter ideas in interaction between the two powers.

The major contention which the study has put forward by way of explaining the absence of racial or civilisational ideology in British-American interaction over East Asia is grounded in the principle that policymakers opted to employ or reject ideological arguments and language in interactions with the other power based on tactical calculations. On this basis, the study has argued that the surprising lack of ideological content was at least in part a consequence of policymakers' conscious

decisions to avoid and downplay ideological lines of reasoning because they believed that these would prove ineffective or even counterproductive in securing their objectives. For example, both during the Russo-Japanese War and the Japanese-American war scares, American policymakers appear to have gone out of their way to dismiss ideas of Japan as a Yellow Peril threat and to avoid language which was suggestive of this kind of thinking in their attempts to secure British assistance. The reasoning behind this approach was presumably that British policymakers were not in sympathy with negative, racialised portrayals of their allies, and so the employment of such ideas and images would not have helped to win them over and might even have jeopardised the credibility of U.S. policymakers. A more explicit insight into tactical engagement with ideology is found in the instructions given by U.S. Secretary of State Philander Knox to the American Ambassador in London, Whitelaw Reid, in 1909 regarding his employment of a stereotyped image of the Chinese in discussions of railway projects. Knox took the line that such ideas and language could be used informally if this promised to be effective, but also cautioned that they were to be handled carefully so as to avoid any risk of undermining the American position with the Chinese.

Knox's warning to Reid also serves to illustrate the other main contention of the study with regard to the absence of ideological content in British-American interaction – that the use of ideology was generally restricted to unofficial and abstract contexts – as it implies that informal communication was the appropriate setting in which to employ ideological language. The preceding chapters have demonstrated that the majority of examples of ideological content in British-American interaction are to be found not in the official interaction of the two powers but in more unconventional and informal settings, such as the correspondence between Theodore Roosevelt and junior British diplomat Cecil Spring Rice. Moreover, even in such instances it is very unusual for ideological discussion to be directly related to opportunities for joint action in East Asia. Rather, as in correspondence between Roosevelt and King Edward VII during the Russo-Japanese War, the tendency was for ideological observations and arguments

to be somewhat abstract and speculative rather than directed towards a specific, practical purpose. The evidence that policymakers observed such a demarcation between official and practical contexts and informal and abstract contexts, and restricted ideological language and reasoning almost exclusively to the latter, offers further insight into the general absence of shared ideas regarding race and civilisation in British-American interaction over East Asia.

The broad picture which this study has painted of British-American interaction over East Asia between 1898 and 1914 represents a significant challenge to the standard narrative of the 'great rapprochement' establishing a period of harmony and a budding 'special relationship' in the years prior to the First World War. Though relations between the two powers did, in certain respects, undergo a marked improvement and were undoubtedly relatively cordial during these years, British and American policymakers were also frequently left disappointed and frustrated by each other's unwillingness or inability to pursue a cooperative solution to common problems in East Asia. On paper, there was every reason to expect Britain and the United States to be able to work together in the region. In practice, however, both the community of interests and the 'community of sentiment' which the two powers shared failed to pave the way for genuine collaboration. A more fundamental change, it would seem, was required before the rhetoric of rapprochement could be translated into the reality of transatlantic cooperation.

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