

# Russia's Historical Relationship with the United States. President Lincoln and Czar Alexander II

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"Whenever the government of the United States shall break up, it will probably be in consequence of a false direction having been given to public opinion. This is the weak point of our defences, and the part to which the enemies of the system will direct all their attacks. Opinion can be so perverted as to cause the false to seem true; the enemy, a friend, and the friend, an enemy; the best interests of the nation to appear insignificant, and trifles of moment; in a word, the right the wrong, and the wrong, the right. In a country where opinion has sway, to seize upon it, is to seize upon power. As it is a rule of humanity that the upright and well-intentioned are comparatively passive, while the designing, dishonest and selfish are the most untiring in their efforts, the danger of public opinion's getting a false direction is four-fold, since few men think for themselves." – James Fenimore Cooper (The American Democrat 1838)

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*I think it is evident to most by now that the United States is presently undergoing a crisis that could become a full-blown second civil war.*

*Some might be wondering, is it really so bad that the U.S. could possibly collapse in the not-so-distant future? After all, isn't it acting like the worst of empires? Isn't it wreaking havoc on the world today? Is it not a good thing that it collapse internally and spare the world from further wars?*

*It is true that the U.S. is presently acting more like a terrible empire than a republic based on liberty and freedom. It may even be the case that the world is spared for a time from further war and tyranny, if the U.S. were to collapse. However, this is unlikely and it most certainly would be only temporary, since the U.S. is not the source of such monstrosities but rather is merely its instrument.*

*This paper will go not only through why this is the case and but will also analyze Russia's historical relationship to the U.S. in context to its recognition of this very fact.*

## The Great Liberators

In 1861, the Emancipation Edict was passed and successfully carried out by Czar Alexander II that would result in the freeing of over 23 million serfs. This was by no means a simple task and met much resistance, requiring an amazing degree of statesmanship to see it through. In a speech made by Czar Alexander II to the Marshalls of Nobility in 1856 he stated:

“You can yourself understand that the present order of owning souls cannot remain unchanged. It is better to abolish serfdom from above, than to wait for that time when it starts to abolish itself from below. I ask you to think about the best way to carry this out.”

The success of this edict would go down in history as one of the greatest accomplishments for human freedom and Czar Alexander II became known as the ‘Great Liberator’, for which he was beloved around the world.

Shortly after, in 1863, President Lincoln would pass the Emancipation Proclamation which declared “that all persons held as slaves” within the rebellious states “are, and henceforward shall be free.” There is astonishingly a great deal of cynicism surrounding this today. It is thought that because Lincoln did not announce this at the beginning of the war it somehow was never genuine. However, Lincoln was always for the abolishment of slavery and the reason for his delay was due to the country being so at odds with itself that it was willing to break into pieces over the subject, an intent that Lincoln rightfully opposed and had to navigate through.

Former slave and Lincoln ally, Frederick Douglass, though himself frustrated with the delay to equal rights, understood after meeting and discussing his concerns with Lincoln that the preservation of the country came first, stating:

“It was a great thing to achieve American independence when we numbered three millions [slaves], but it was a greater thing to save this country from dismemberment and ruin when it numbered thirty millions. He alone of all our presidents was to have the opportunity to destroy slavery, and to lift into manhood millions of his countrymen hitherto held as chattels and numbered with the beasts of the field.”

For more on the Lincoln-Douglass story [refer to my paper](#).

In addition, there are many speeches Lincoln gave while he was a lawyer, where he most clearly and transparently spoke out against slavery. In a speech at Peoria, Illinois (Oct 16, 1854), 7 years before he would become president, Lincoln stated:

“This declared indifference, but as I must think, covert real zeal for the spread of slavery, I cannot but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world—enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites—causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men among ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principle of civil liberty—criticizing the Declaration of Independence and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest.”



During the civil war lord Robert Cecil (later called the Marquess of Salisbury and three-time Prime Minister of Britain) expressed his viewpoint on the matter in the British Parliament:

“The Northern States of America never can be our sure friends because we are

rivals, rivals politically, rivals commercially...With the Southern States, the case is entirely reversed. The population are an agricultural people. They furnish the raw material of our industry, and they consume the products which we manufacture from it. With them, every interest must lead us to cultivate friendly relations, and when the war began they at once recurred to England as their natural ally." [emphasis added]

By 1840, cotton made up more than half of American exports. More than 75% of slave cotton was exported to Britain. American slave cotton was the centerpiece of the British Empire's world cheap-labor system.

The autumn of 1862 would mark the first critical phase of the Civil War. Lincoln sent an urgent letter to the Russian Foreign Minister Gorchakov, informing him that France was ready to intervene militarily and was awaiting England. The salvation of the Union thus rested solely on Russia's decision to act.

The Foreign Minister Gorchakov wrote in response to Lincoln's plea:

"You know that the government of United States has few friends among the Powers. England rejoices over what is happening to you; she longs and prays for your overthrow. France is less actively hostile; her interests would be less affected by the result; but she is not unwilling to see it. She is not your friend. Your situation is getting worse and worse. The chances of preserving the Union are growing more desperate. Can nothing be done to stop this dreadful war? The hope of reunion is growing less and less, and I wish to impress upon your government that the separation, which I fear must come, will be considered by Russia as one of the greatest misfortunes. Russia alone, has stood by you from the first, and will continue to stand by you. We are very, very anxious that some means should be adopted—that any course should be pursued—which will prevent the division which now seems inevitable. One separation will be followed by another; you will break into fragments."

Russia's proclaimed support in its letters to Lincoln would be put to the test during the summer of 1863. By then, the South's invasion of the North had failed at Gettysburg and the violent anti-war New York draft riots also failed and Britain, as a result, was thinking of a direct military intervention with the backing of France. What would follow marks one of the greatest displays of support for another country's sovereignty to ever occur in modern history.

The [Russian Navy arrived on both the east and west coastlines](#) of the United States late September and early October 1863.

The timing was highly coordinated due to intelligence reports of when Britain and France were intending their military action. The Russian navy would stay along the US coastline in support of the Union for 7 months! They never intervened in the American civil war but rather remained in its waters at the behest of Lincoln in the case of a foreign power's interference.

If Russia had not done this, Britain and France would most certainly have intervened on behalf of the Confederate states as they made clear they would, and the United States would have most certainly broken in two at that point. It was Russia's direct naval support that allowed the United States to remain whole.



Czar Alexander II, who held sole power to declare war for Russia, stated in an interview to the American banker Wharton Barker on Aug. 17, 1879 (Published in *The Independent* March 24, 1904):

“In the Autumn of 1862, the governments of France and Great Britain proposed to Russia, in a formal but not in an official way, the joint recognition by European powers of the independence of the Confederate States of America. My immediate answer was: ‘I will not cooperate in such action; and I will not acquiesce. On the contrary, I shall accept the recognition of the independence of the Confederate States by France and Great Britain as a *casus belli* for Russia. And in order that the governments of France and Great Britain may understand that this is no idle threat; I will send a Pacific fleet to San Francisco and an Atlantic fleet to New York.

...All this I did because of love for my own dear Russia, rather than for love of the American Republic. I acted thus because I understood that Russia would have a more serious task to perform if the American Republic, with advanced industrial development were broken up and Great Britain should be left in control of most branches of modern industrial development.” [emphasis added]

What was Czar Alexander II referring to exactly when mentioning the advanced industrial development of the American Republic? Well, in short he was referring to the Hamiltonian system of economics. Notably, Alexander Hamilton’s 1791 [Report on the Usefulness of the Manufactories in Relation to Trade and Agriculture](#) which was published in St. Petersburg in 1807, sponsored by Russian Minister of Finance D.A. Guryev.

It was Hamilton who pioneered a new system of political economy coming out of the war of Independence which saw America bankrupt, undeveloped, and agrarian. Hamilton solved this problem by federalizing the state debts and converting it into productive credit, channelled by national banks into large scale internal improvements with a focus on the growth of manufacturing. Anyone wishing to learn more about this should read Anton Chaitkin’s recent publication [Who We Are: America’s Fight for Universal Progress](#).

In the introduction to the translated Hamilton pamphlet, Russian educator V. Malinovsky wrote:

“The similarity of American United Provinces with Russia appears both in the expanse of the land, climate and natural conditions, in the size of population disproportionate to the space, and in the general youthfulness of various generally useful institutions; therefore all the rules, remarks and means proposed here are suitable for our country.”

This “American system” was what Tsar Alexander II recognised as the only economic system to have successfully challenged the system of empire, which he recognized as the root of all slavery. The ineffective and ultimately costly labour of slaves was no match for competing against a machine tool industry to which [Frederick Douglass attested](#). The construction of rail that was made possible through the development of this machine tool industry is what

freed countries from Britain's maritime supremacy.

### The "American System"

In 1842, Czar Nicholas I hired American engineer George Washington Whistler to oversee the building of the Saint Petersburg-Moscow Railway, Russia's first large-scale railroad. In the 1860s, Henry C. Carey's economics would be promoted in St. Petersburg's university education, organised by US Ambassador to Russia Cassius Clay. Carey was a leading economic advisor to Lincoln and leading Hamiltonian of his age.

Sergei Witte, who worked as Russian Minister of Finance from 1889-1891 and later became Prime Minister in 1905, would publish in 1889 the incredibly influential paper titled "*National Savings and Friedrich List*" which resulted in a new customs law for Russia in 1891 and resulted in an exponential growth increase in Russia's economy. Friedrich List publicly attributed his influence in economics to Alexander Hamilton.

Lincoln's Pacific Railroad superintendent, General Grenville Dodge, advised Russia on its Trans-Siberia railroad, [built with Pennsylvania steel and locomotives from 1890-1905.](#)



In his 1890 budget report, Sergei Witte- echoing the Belt and Road Initiative unfolding today, wrote:

"The railroad is like a leaven, which creates a cultural fermentation among the population. Even if it passed through an absolutely wild people along its way, it would raise them in a short time to the level requisite for its operation."

Sergei Witte was explicit of his following of the American model of political economy when he described his re-organization of the Russian railways saying:

"Faced by a serious shortage of locomotives, I invented and applied the traffic system which had long been in practice in the United States and which is now known as the "American system."

By 1906, Czar Nicholas II of Russia supported the plan for the American-Russian Bering Strait tunnel, officially approving a team of American engineers to conduct a feasibility study.

Russia would complete the trans-Siberian railway in 1905 under the leadership of "American System" follower Count Sergei Witte. On its maiden voyage the Trans-Siberian rail saw Philadelphia-made train cars run across the Russian heartland, and it is no accident that all of the key players involved in the Alaska purchase were also involved in the Russian continental rail program on both sides of the ocean.

### Bismarck's Zollverein



In 1876 Henry C. Carey organized the centennial exhibition where 10 million people from 37 countries came to Philadelphia to see the achievements of the United States in its

advancements in machine tool industry, which propelled their economy to the first in the world.

Only three years later, Otto von Bismarck broke Germany's free trade system implementing an American style tariff policy for his nation. The kinship between Germany and the United States became so strong at this time that Otto von Bismarck's speech in the parliament (1879) was quoted by McKinley on the floor in US Congress:

"A success of the United States in material development is the most illustrious of modern time. The American nation has not only successfully born and suppressed the most gigantic and expensive war of all history, but immediately afterward disbanded its army, found employment for all its soldiers and marines, paid off most of its debt, given labour and homes to all the unemployed in Europe as fast as they could arrive within its territory and still by a system of taxation so indirect as not to be perceived, much less felt... Because it is my deliberate judgement that the prosperity of America is mainly due to its protective laws, I urge that Germany has now reached that point, where it is necessary to imitate the tariff system of the United States."

Otto von Bismarck was heavily organising for the building of the Berlin to Baghdad railway, which after much resistance and delay would only be completed in 1940. If this has been accomplished during Otto von Bismarck's life, the Middle East could have avoided the [Sykes Picot carving up](#).



In 1869, Japanese modernizers working directly with the Lincoln-Carey strategists ran the Meiji Restoration which industrialized Japan.

In the 1880s and 90s, Lincoln-Carey Philadelphia industrialists were contracted for huge infrastructure and nation-building projects in China. Hawaiian Christian missionary Frank Damon, having participated in the Carey group's strategies at a very high level, [helped instigate, shape, and build](#) the Sun Yat-sen organization that gave birth to modern China.

Sun Yat-sen referred to his admiration of Lincoln's USA as the basis for a new multipolar system saying:

"The world has been greatly benefited by the development of America as an industrial and a commercial Nation. So a developed China with her four hundred millions of population, will be another New World in the economic sense. The nations which will take part in this development will reap immense advantages. Furthermore, international cooperation of this kind cannot but help to strengthen the Brotherhood of Man."



How Did We End Up Where We Are Today?

With such a glorious outlay of cooperation and common interests across the globe united against an economic system of empire, it begs the obvious question "What went wrong? How did we end up where we are today?"



To give one a quick glimpse into the reason why, let us look at some of the major assassinations and soft-coups from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century of American system proponents (refer to the image below).



Henry C. Carey stated it best when he described the situation as such, in his “Harmony of Interests” (1851):

“Two systems are before the world; the one looks to increasing the proportion of persons and of capital engaged in trade and transportation, and therefore to diminishing the proportion engaged in producing commodities with which to trade, with necessarily diminished return to the labor of all; while the other looks to increasing the proportion engaged in the work of production, and diminishing that engaged in trade and transportation, with increased return to all, giving to the laborer good wages, and to the owner of capital good profits... One looks to pauperism, ignorance, depopulation, and barbarism; the other in increasing wealth, comfort, intelligence, combination of action, and civilization. One looks towards universal war; the other towards universal peace. One is the English system; the other we may be proud to call the American system, for it is the only one ever devised the tendency of which was that of elevating while equalizing the condition of man throughout the world.”

We have yet to conclude the victor between these two opposing systems, the fight is not over and we would be foolish to give up at the finishing line. What we do today will decide the course of things in the future, and whether we live under a true recognition of freedom and prosperity, or whether we are ruled-over and our liberties treated as “privilege,” that can be given or taken based on the judgement of a ruling class, remains to be seen.

Thus, let us hearken to the words of Lincoln, who in a debate with the slave power’s champion Stephen Douglas, said:

“That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles – right and wrong – throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time, and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity and the other the divine right of kings.”

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