

# Tomorrow's Arctic: Theatre of War or Cooperation? The Real Story Behind the Alaska Purchase

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*Today, the Arctic has increasingly become identified as a domain of great prosperity and cooperation amongst world civilizations on the one side and a domain of confrontation and war on the other.*

In 2007, the Russian government [first voiced its support](#) for the construction of the Bering Strait rail tunnel connecting the Americas with the Eurasian continent- a policy which has taken on new life in 2020 as Putin's Great Arctic Development strategy has wedded itself to the northern extension of the Belt and Road Initiative (dubbed the [Polar Silk Road](#)). In 2011, the Russian government [re-stated its pledge](#) to build the \$64 billion project.

On the Stone Age side of things, deep state neocons have also looked upon the arctic as a strategic zone of global importance, but with a very different mental filter from their Russian counterparts. NORAD chief [Terrance O'Shaughnessy](#), Secretary of State [Mike Pompeo](#) and a vast array of NATO-philes have repeatedly called upon the Arctic as a domain of militarization and confrontation with their primary "strategic nemeses" Russia and China.

So let's assume the Dark Age nut jobs infesting the USA don't win the day, and a new system emerges from the rubble of the currently collapsing world order premised around certain principles of long term cooperation, infrastructure and science investments, rather than the worship of money and debt slavery. Even the most cynical among us must admit that this is at least possible. After all, Russia Gate has increasingly collapsed, General Flynn has been exonerated, and Putin [has called repeatedly](#) for an emergency meeting of the five nuclear powers of the UN Security Council to discuss the creation of a new system.

So if this new system occurs and if saner forces amongst the western nations go with the Putin Plan for Arctic Development rather than the neocon WWII agenda, then this happier outcome would not exactly be an unprecedented event. It is after all the case that the same [historic American-Russian brotherhood](#) which saved America during the Civil War would finally realize that great intention of leading statesmen in Lincoln's America and Czar Alexander II's Russia from the very moment Russia sold Alaska to America.



## The Civil War and the Alaska Purchase

The sale of Alaska stands out as an incomprehensible historical anomaly for many who choose to see history merely as a sequence of linear events determined by "practical decision making". The failure to recognize higher organizing principles shaping humanity's collective experience as a universal process has blinded many historians from recognizing

the true dynamic from which such a decision sprung and which could only be recognized from a top down perspective.

Just as 19th century America suffered from an internal struggle between factions who interpreted the Constitution in diametrically opposing ways, so too did the Russian state feature a similar battle between forces who saw Russia's destiny likened to a 3rd Roman Empire in opposition to forces who saw Russia's destiny as a sovereign nation state meant to exemplify the highest moral and intellectual powers that human society had attained. These figures, of whom several will shortly be showcased, represented the best traditions set into motion by the [Leibnizian reforms of Peter the Great](#) (Czar from 1682 until 1725).

As Russian expansionism was promoted by opportunist forces dominating the government of Czar Nicholas I (Czar from 1825-1855) who chased after Ottoman possessions in their obsession to expand Russian influence in Central Asia, the seeds of Russia's self-destruction were being sown. While Russian expansionists were expecting the easy capture of territories long held by a failing Ottoman empire, what they found was a spiders' web of Anglo-French intrigue and traps which nearly destroyed the proud nation during [the bloody Crimean War](#) (October 1853 to February 1856). The war's outcome saw Russia humiliated, indebted and crippled morally and physically.

In response to this failure, a new breed of statecraft arose as an enlightened Czar (Alexander II) took the reins from the deceased Nicholas in 1854. With his leadership, statesmen such as the Grand Duke Constantine (Alexander's brother), General Nikolai Muraviev, Foreign Minister Gorchakov and the great Russian Ambassador to America Eduard de Stoeckl gained a new level of influence and a new foreign policy doctrine was created. This doctrine was exemplified by an enhanced appreciation of the destructive role of the British Empire's global strategy and the importance of America as a collaborator and partner.

Alexander II quickly began tackling endemic corruption, and worked to transform Russia by freeing the serfs in 1861 earning him the namesake "the Great Liberator".

Although America had fallen into a Civil War by 1861, the British Empire which had done so much to keep the world subdued during the Crimean War, Opium Wars, and suppression of vast Indian uprisings was petrified that a Russian-American friendship would set into motion a great power alliance capable of undoing its global hegemony.

One of the few means Britain had to keep these two historic allies from uniting remained its territories of Canada and especially the colony of British Columbia. This colony was then an isolated and bankrupt outpost on the west coast separated by 3000 km of undeveloped wilderness [privately owned by the Hudson's Bay Company](#). British Columbia's primary economic connection was not Britain, but rather California and a large movement of colonists had been calling for separation from the Empire in order to annex to the then-prosperous USA.

In 1860, Ambassador Stoeckl wrote to the Czar: "If the United States should win mastery of our possessions then British Oregon (British Columbia) would be squeezed together by the Americans from the north and south and would hardly be able to escape". (1)

Grand Duke Constantine echoed Stoeckl saying: "the United States of North America should in the course of events be eager to conquer all of North America and will therefore meet us

sooner or later and there is not the slightest doubt that it will seize our colonies without great effort and we shall be in no possession to retain them" (2)

As early as 1853, General Muraviev had already promoted Russia's sale to Alaska in a letter to the Czar stating: "Due to the present amazing development of railroads, the United States will soon spread over all North America. We must face the fact that we will have to cede our North American possessions to them." (3)

## **The Civil War and Russia**

By 1862 the Civil War had begun in full force and with [British corporations and Foreign Office supporting of the Confederacy](#) (and banks launching financial warfare launched against the Union), tides had quickly turned against Lincoln. The British possessions of Toronto and Montreal [served as Confederate bases](#) from which dozens of terrorist attacks were launched against Lincoln's Union from the North (including the President's eventual [assassination from Montreal](#)) while British-sponsored battles were being waged from the South.

As the world watched with bated breath Ambassador Stoeckl wrote to Gorchakov:

"The disintegration of the United States as a nation would from our point of view be something to be deplored. The American confederation has acted as a counterpoise to British power and in this sense, its continued existence constitutes an important element in the balance of power." He continued that he desired "the preservation of the American Union as an indivisible nation."  
(4)

Surely the outcome of the Civil War would have been much darker had it not been for Czar Alexander II's deployment of the Russian navy to California and Atlantic coasts of America in 1863 which kept British and French forces from assisting the confederacy in open warfare against Lincoln.

Later describing his motive, Czar Alexander II said:

"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... 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.'" (5)

By December 26, 1864 as the outcome of the war in favor of the union was blossoming, Secretary of State William Seward encouraged the Grand Duke Constantine to come to America with the following words "I think it would be beneficial to us, and by no means

unprofitable to Russia. I forebear from specifying my reasons- They will readily occur to you, as they would to his imperial highness if his thoughts were turned in that direction.” (6)

### **The Sale of Alaska Consummated**

In 1866, Stoeckl was called back to Russia and after a lengthy meeting with Czar Alexander II, the Grand Duke Constantine, the Foreign Ministers and Finance Minister, was given approval to initiate the sale of Alaska to America.

On the evening of March 29, 1867, Ambassador Stoeckl delivered the news to William Seward at his private residence in Washington D.C. When asked if Seward wished to convene a meeting the following day, the Secretary of State asked why wait until tomorrow what could be done that very evening?



At midnight, the office of the state department was opened with a select group of Senator Charles Sumner, Seward and a few trusted members from the Russian consulate alongside Stoeckl.

As the sun rose on March 30, the treaty was written finalizing the sale for \$7.2 million and before the ink was dry, it was presented to a shocked Congress who passed it in the following weeks.

Seward himself described the treaty as the most important diplomatic maneuver of his life saying “this treaty stands alone in the history of diplomacy, as an important treaty conceived, initiated and prosecuted and completed without being preceded or attended by protocols or dispatches”. (7)

### **Events Move Fast in the Post-Civil War Years**

In order to prevent pro-American forces in Canada from declaring independence from a weakened Empire, the 1867 British North America Act was signed establishing a northern Monarchy on Deep State principles for the next 160 years and which this author developed in a 2014 lecture “[Prometheus and Canada 1774-1874](#)”.

The British hand behind the Civil War was exposed for all the world to see in the [Alabama Claims of 1872](#) (the world’s first international trial) finding the British government guilty of militarily supporting the confederacy. In recompense for this crime, Sumner and Seward wanted the British to cede all of their remaining possessions in North America. Such an act would certainly have given great fuel to the connection of the Trans Continental Railway begun during the height of the Civil War and completed in 1869- with Eurasia.

Desperate to keep its independently-minded colony from annexing to America, the British Foreign office offered a bribe its Pacific colony. A desperate Britain purchased the private Hudson Bay lands in 1870, cancelled the colony’s debts and promised to build a railroad from Ontario to the Pacific under a program which I outlined in my 2013 report ‘[The Imperial Myth of Canada’s National Policy](#)’.



Russia had by this time positioned itself to begin construction of its own trans-continental

railroad with the help of American engineers which was finally completed 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.

## **The China Connection**

Both Charles Sumner and William Seward were also strong advocates of uniting America’s destiny with China. Seward and U.S. Consul to Beijing, General Anson Burlingame, worked in tandem with Seward’s son George Frederick Seward (U.S. Consul to Shanghai) to organize the [Seward-Burlingame Treaty of 1868](#) with China, giving China free emigration and travel in America, reciprocal access to education for citizens living in the others’ country, and favored nation status with the United States on trade. While treacherous politicians later annulled this treaty, its existence brought a new generation of Chinese revolutionaries to America including a young student [named Sun Yat-sen](#) who would later lead a revolution in 1911, establishing a new Chinese republic upon the Three Principles elaborated first by Abraham Lincoln!



Senator Sumner expressed his understanding of America’s connection with China and the Trans-continental railroad during his [1867 speech in defense of the Alaska Purchase](#):

“To unite the East of Asia with the West of America is the aspiration of commerce now as when the English navigator (Meares) recorded his voyage. Of course, whatever helps this result is an advantage. The Pacific railroad is such an advantage; for, though running westward, it will be, when completed, a new highway to the East.”

When President Ulysses Grant came to power in 1869, he gave much support to this internationalization of the American system while also fighting valiantly to advance Lincoln’s plans for reconstruction and reconciliation with an emancipated America.

## **Gilpin’s World Land-Bridge**

Lincoln’s former body guard and first [Governor of Colorado William Gilpin](#) was not least among this group. Gilpin had been known as one of the earliest champions of America’s Trans Continental Railroad from as early as 1846 and his hundreds of speeches, published maps and writings went further than any other statesman to concretize what those international public works would look like.

Describing his grand design for international public works, Gilpin wrote in his widely read 1890 magnum opus [‘The Cosmopolitan Railway’](#):

“Railways continue to extend themselves, soon to become a universal system over all the lands of the globe. We have seen the energies of the American people, bringing into line and into use these new powers, span their continent with the Pacific railways... they will continue to expand their work to Bering Straits, where all the continents are united. This will extend itself along similarly propitious thermal selvage of the oriental Russian coasts into China. To prolong this unbroken line of cosmopolitan railways along the latitudinal

plateau of Asia, to Moscow and to London, will not have long delay. The less significant and isolated continents of the southern hemisphere- South America, Africa, and Australasia- will be reached by feeders through Panama, Suez and the chain of Oriental peninsulas and islands. The whole area and all the populations of the globe will be thus united and fused by land travel and railway.”

Gilpin re-iterated his view that it was only by embracing its promethean heritage and fully committing to develop Alaska that America could avoid falling back under British manipulation. As applicable then as it is to today’s emerging Four Power alliance and expanding Belt and Road Initiative, Gilpin knew that national institutions must stay in the driver’s seat when he said:

“Twenty four years have already elapsed since we first assumed the responsibility of ownership, and since then what have we done? What improvement have we made upon the condition of life, the stolid, animal existence of the half civilized Russians and Aleuts! None whatsoever.... Place Alaska on the line of a world-encircling railway, give her a special code of laws befitting her requirements, and men of enterprise and capital to develop her resources, and she would pay for the road five times over. There is every reason to believe that Russia would hail the opening of her great eastern interior with joy. She would have everything to gain by it and nothing to lose... Since the time of Peter the Great, the ambition of Russian rulers has been not only to extend their possessions, but to improve the conditions of those who inhabit them.”

Within his 1890 book, Gilpin again continuously emphasized his long held belief that the inevitable awakening of China would be the basis for renewal and salvation of the west:

“In Asia, a civilization resting on a basis of remote antiquity has had, indeed, a long pause but a certain civilization- although hitherto hermetically sealed up from European influence- has continued to exist. The ancient Asiatic colossus, in a certain sense, needed only to be awakened to new life, and European Culture finds a basis there on which it can build future reforms”.

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. A New York Times article [reported on March 27, 1906](#):

“The Czar of Russia has issued an order authorizing the American syndicate, represented by Baron Loicq de Lobel, to begin work on the Trans-Siberian-Alaska railroad project. The plan is to build a railroad from Siberia to Alaska by bridging and tunneling the Bering Strait. It is said that the enterprise will be capitalized at from \$250 to \$300 million and that the money centers of Russia, France and the United States will be asked to take bonds.”

While the Anglo-American financed revolution deposed of the Czar and his family by 1917, the Russian government under the guidance of Vladimir Putin, working in tandem with Xi Jinping’s China have put the project back onto the agenda, and with the first American System President in decades at the helms of the USA government who has repeated stated his desire to unite America’s interests with those of Eurasia, the vision of Gilpin’s New

Paradigm is being given a new chance at life.

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## Notes

(1) S.B. Okun, *The Russian-American Company*, 1951 p.251

(2) Okun, p. 242

(3) *Pacific Historical Review* vol. 3, 1934 p. 30

(4) Okun, p. 259-260

(5) Published in *The Independent* March 24, 1904

(6) *American Relations 1815-1867*, N.Y. DaCapo Press, 1970, p.148

(7) *Congressional Globe*, Volume 40, by USA Congress, 2nd Session, p. 1339

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