Chapter 24

Russian Imperial and Foreign Policy, 1856–1905

Tsarist policies toward the empire's minority nationalities reached their Russifying and reactionary pinnacle during this era. Because many nationalities (such as the Poles, Ukrainians, and Armenians) existed not only in Russia, but also in large numbers in neighboring countries and because of Russia's poorly defined southern and southeastern borders, nationality policies often overlapped with foreign affairs. Those who were "foreigners" one year might become part of the empire the next, as happened in certain Asian areas during this era. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the government's Asiatic Department dealt with both imperial and foreign policies.

After the Crimean War (1853–1856), the Russian government attempted to maintain its empire and great-power status by modernizing its economy and avoiding costly wars with major European powers. It did not, however, forgo its perceived right to expand in Asia, which it did until checked by Japan in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. Also, it did not cease to believe that it had a special ethnic and religious relationship to the Balkans. This belief helped drag it into the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878. Although Russia's victories won it substantial gains in the Treaty of San Stefano, they were soon reduced by other European powers at the Congress of Berlin.

Although imperial and foreign policy goals during this half-century were generally consistent, the means of implementing them fluctuated. Such changes were due primarily to changing circumstances and to the difficulties of reconciling major goals with each other and determining the best means to achieve them. These uncertainties left the door open for different ministers and public voices to influence tsarist policies.[1]

[1]A plethora of new works on the Russian Empire and colonial policy have appeared in the last decade. They have greatly expanded our knowledge of the different forces influencing imperial policies, and some of these works provide new insights into the attitudes of colonized peoples. At times, influenced by the writings of Edward Said and other scholars of colonialism, they have also provided comparative perspectives with other empires and colonial mentalities. For references to some of these articles and books, see footnotes 2, 4, and 5 and the Suggested Sources for this chapter, section 4 of the Bibliography, and works written or edited by Barrett, Breyfogle, Geraci, Jersild, Khodarkovsky, Knight, Steinwedel, Sunderland, and Werth mentioned at the end of Chapters 15, 19, 20, 25, and 27.

Part of imperial policy was to encourage colonization into border areas including newly conquered territories, and peasants often sought better farming lands in these regions. In the first half of the century, over 3 million rural inhabitants had moved, willingly or unwillingly, to such regions, especially to the steppes of southern Russia. But colonization reached its peak only after portions of the Trans-Siberian railway began operating in the 1890s. From 1896 to 1916 more than 6 million people migrated to Asiatic Russia with the overwhelming proportion of them going to Siberia and the Kazakh steppe. Not all of these colonists, however, were Great Russians, and the mixing of different ethnic groups, the practical goals of the colonists, and the intermingling of frontier traditions make it simplistic to believe that these colonists were passive instruments of Russification or any "civilizing" mission among more "backward" peoples.

THE FAR EAST, THE CAUCASUS, CENTRAL ASIA, AND ALASKA, 1856–1895

Alexander II's policies regarding China, the Caucasus, and Central Asia manifested the long-held Russian conviction that it had a right to Asian expansion and to civilize "backward" peoples. Most of the peoples added to the empire in this period were classified as *inorodtsy*, an indication of their perceived backwardness (see Chapter 20). Many supporters of Russian expansion in both the Far East and Central Asia shared the government's belief in its civilizing mission. These supporters included many moderates and liberals, even some radicals, as well as conservatives. Yet, as one scholar reminds us, even in the Middle Volga, which had been part of the empire for centuries, "the views of Russian authorities and society regarding the assimilation of even a small subset of the empire's peoples . . . was enormously ambiguous, variable, uncertain, and contested."[2] The same held true for many of these newer areas brought into the empire.

Alexander II's gains in these areas built upon those of his father, Nicholas I. They also reflected Russian desires to compensate for the loss of the Crimean War and to battle against any further English gains in Asia.

Alexander II's China policy was strongly influenced by the Amur River gains of the early 1850s made by the governor-general of Eastern Siberia, Nikolai Muraviev (later Muraviev-Amursky in honor of his acquisitions). Muraviev had argued that the Amur was needed to insure Russian control of Eastern Siberia and to subvert any possible British moves to control the mouth of the Amur. He also argued that Russian possession of the Amur would enable Russia to strengthen its control over the Kamchatka Peninsula, expand trade with China, and maintain its influence there.

Alexander II allowed Muraviev to continue strengthening Russia's position along the Amur and to advance into the area east of the Ussuri River. At the same time that British and French troops and diplomats (along with U.S. diplomats) were trying to force concessions of their own from the Chinese emperor, Russia

[2]Robert Geraci, *Window on the East: National and Imperial Identities in Late Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca, N.Y., 2001), pp. 343–344.

was able to win recognition of its territorial gains. By the Treaties of Aigun and Tientsin (both in 1858) and the Treaty of Peking (1860), Russia gained territories from China about the size of Germany and France combined. Although containing few inhabitants, these lands strengthened Russia's Pacific position, placing it on the Sea of Japan and giving it a border with Korea. On that sea and near that border, Russia founded, in 1860, Vladivostok (meaning Ruler of the East) (see Map 24.1).

Russia's other major gain in the Far East under Alexander II was the island of Sakhalin, over which Japan and Russia contested before finally coming to an agreement in 1875. By the Treaty of St. Petersburg, Japan recognized Russia's claim to the island in exchange for Russia's recognition of Japanese control over the Kurile Islands.

In 1859, Russian forces defeated Chechen and other Muslim forces in the eastern Caucasus and captured Shamil, who for a quarter of a century had led the Muslim "holy war" against Russia. (By this time, Shamil had become famous not only in Russia but also in Europe and America, where a combined total of 38 books on him had appeared from 1854 to 1859.) Russian forces were now able to concentrate on the Circassians in the northwest Caucasus. By 1864, Circassian opposition was crushed and the Circassians forced to move to other Russian territories or leave the country. Most of them, some 400,000, left for Turkey, but many never reached it because of the difficulties of the journey. After more than a half century of repeated warfare, almost all the Caucasus was finally under Russian control (see Map 24.3). Although most of the peoples in the region maintained their non-Russian traditions, unsuccessful revolts, especially in the northeastern Caucasus, continued to occur.

The focus now shifted to Central Asia and its Muslim peoples, mainly Iranian and Turkic, some of them still nomadic. Before the shift of world trade routes centuries earlier, this area of primarily desert and steppe had been significant as a commercial and strategic link between Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. By the late nineteenth century, however, its heyday was long past. Russian military moves in this region were part of an ongoing rivalry with the British, who controlled India and frequently interfered in Afghanistan. British protests in l863 against Russia's treatment of the rebelling Poles seemed to many Russians just another sign of British hostility to Russia. Russian gains in Central Asia were one means of countering British strengths elsewhere and of forestalling any British attempts to move north from India. Gains also came at the expense of a weakened China, which claimed authority over part of the region.

From 1864 to 1885, Russian troops south of the Kazakh steppe conquered the khanates of Kokand, Khiva, and Bukhara and the Turkmen or Transcaspian region, east-southeast of the Caspian Sea and northeast of Persia. In 1884, Russia took over the city of Merv and the Merv region, and the following year Russian forces moved further south and engaged Afghan troops along the Afghan border.

For a while in the spring of 1885, it looked as if this latest Russian advance might lead to war with Great Britain. Not only were the British agitated over Russia's decades-long southern advance, but also they regarded Afghanistan as a buffer state to protect India. But the powers soon stepped back from the crisis and

MAP 24.1

A Justification for Russian Advances in Central Asia

The following selection is excerpted from Gorchakov's memorandum of November 1864, which was to be communicated to foreign governments. This excerpt was taken from Alexis Krausse, *Russia in Asia: A Record and a Study, 1558–1899* (London, 1899), pp. 224–225. A few spellings have been modernized.

The position of Russia in Central Asia is that of all civilized states which are brought into contact with half-savage nomad populations possessing no fixed social organization.

In such cases, the more civilized state is forced in the interest of the security of its frontier, and its commercial relations, to exercise a certain ascendancy over their turbulent and undesirable neighbors. Raids and acts of pillage must be put down. To do this, the tribes on the frontier must be reduced to a state of submission. This result once attained, these tribes take to more peaceful habits, but are in turn exposed to the attacks of the more distant tribes against whom the State is bound to protect them. Hence the necessity of distant, costly, and periodically recurring expeditions against an enemy whom his social organization makes it impossible to seize. If, the robbers once punished, the expedition is withdrawn, the lesson is soon forgotten; its withdrawal is put down to weakness. It is a peculiarity of Asiatics to respect nothing but visible and palpable force. The moral force of reasoning has no hold on them.

In order to put a stop to this state of permanent disorder, fortified posts are established in the midst of these hostile tribes, and an influence is brought to bear upon them which reduces them by degrees to a state of submission. But other more distant tribes beyond this outer line come in turn to threaten the same dangers, and necessitate the same measures of repression. The state is thus forced to choose between two alternatives–either to give up this endless labor, and to abandon its frontier to perpetual disturbance, or to plunge deeper and deeper into barbarous countries, when the difficulties and expenses increase with every step in advance.

Such has been the fate of every country which has found itself in a similar position. The United States in America, France in Algeria, Holland in her colonies, England in India; all have been forced by imperious necessity into this onward march, where the greatest difficulty is to know where to stop.

agreed to arbitrate the Russo-Afghan border. In 1895, Russia and Britain settled the disputed Pamir frontier, completing Russia's Central Asian expansion.

Although the Central Asian advances were partly motivated by Russia's rivalry with Great Britain, there were other factors at work. Some of these were explained by Foreign Minister Alexander Gorchakov in a memorandum intended to clarify Russia's policy to foreign powers.

Despite the justifications for advancing in Central Asia, the 1864 memorandum stated that Russia's advancement in Central Asia would be limited. When, in succeeding decades, Russia continued to advance far beyond the limits suggested by the memorandum, the cautious Gorchakov sometimes blamed it on adventurous generals who went beyond the orders of the tsar.

Although there was some truth to this excuse and Alexander II apparently possessed no master plan to take all the lands gained in subsequent decades, both he

MAP 24.2

MAP 24.3

and Alexander III supported cautious, piecemeal advancement, The tsars believed (correctly as it turned out) that such a policy could be pursued without leading to a war with Britain,

The memorandum's comparison of Russia's situation with that of Western powers reflected the belief that Russia's policies were consistent with those of other major countries. War Minister Dmitri Miliutin believed that Russia owed Great Britain no apology for its advancement, noting that the British did not consult the Russians before expanding their empire. But the advance in Central Asia was perhaps more comparable to the American white man's movement westward at the expense of Native Americans. Like the Native Americans, the Muslims in Central Asia lost out to a better organized and united force that possessed superior military technology and moved steadily forward on contiguous territory. Only when the British, along with high southern mountain ranges, rose up to impede further advances did Russia's southern thrust come to an end.

Although hope of economic gain also enticed Russia southward, this aspiration was not a major factor. In fact, Minister of Finance Reutern warned about the costs of expansion and made every effort to keep them to a minimum.

Concern about state finances also influenced Russia's decision to sell Alaska to the United States in 1867. Although the new Asian territories gained in the Far East and Central Asia more than compensated for the amount of land lost by the sale of Alaska, it was still a large area to relinquish. By 1867, however, the Russian government considered it more of an economic liability than an asset, and it badly needed the $7.2 million the U.S. government was willing to pay. Besides, Alaska was all but impossible for Russia to defend, and Russia hoped its sale would help solidify good relations with the United States. Although today the price offered by U.S. Secretary of State William Seward seems ridiculously cheap—less than two cents an acre—some Americans thought Russia got the better of the deal and referred to it as "Seward's Folly" and to Alaska as "Seward's Icebox."

EUROPE, THE POLES, AND RUSSIA'S WESTERN NATIONALITIES, 1856–1875

From 1856 until 1870, the regaining of military rights in the Black Sea was an important goal of Russian diplomacy. Gorchakov's appointment as foreign minister in 1856 indicated how this end might be gained, for he was known to favor a rapprochement with France. Yet, despite improved Franco-Russian relations, France's Napoleon III failed to provide the diplomatic support Russia needed to overturn the hated Black Sea clauses. France's opposition to Russian actions during the Polish revolt of 1863–1864 further doused hopes for any Black Sea help from the French.

The full-scale rebellion that broke out in Warsaw in January 1863 was due to many reasons, including permanent Polish resentment against Russian control, rising Polish nationalism, and Alexander II's relaxation of the Russian reins on Poland. This easing fueled Polish expectations that exceeded the concessions Alexander II was willing to grant.

Because of Polish guerrilla tactics and the rebellion's spread to other western

borderlands, it took more than a year for Russian forces to restore order. But restore it they did, and with a special vengeance in the Lithuanian area, where the governor-general, Mikhail Muraviev, became known as "the hangman of Vilna."

In Lithuania, Belorussia, Ukraine, and Kingdom of Poland (which hereafter was officially called the "Vistuala Provinces"), the government instituted new Russification policies that went beyond those of Nicholas I. They involved primarily the further Russification of the schools and government. For example, Russian now became the principal language of instruction in Poland's secondary schools. In the nine western provinces Catherine II had gained from Poland, a law of 1865 forbade people of Polish descent from acquiring further land except through inheritance. Catholicism was also subjected to new discriminations, and, in 1875, the government forced Catholic Uniates in Poland to cease their separate existence and "reunite" with Russian Orthodoxy.

Yet for peasants in Poland and in the Lithuanian, Belorussian, and western Ukrainian provinces, some good did emerge from the revolt. To win them over to the Russian side, the government enacted more generous land provisions for emancipated peasants than it did for Russian peasants. Because so many lords in the western provinces were Polish or Polonized, the government had few qualms about demanding greater land sacrifices from them than from the Russian landowners.

Russification in Ukraine was stimulated not only by the Polish rebellion, but also by signs of growing Ukrainian nationalism among Ukrainian students and intellectuals. In 1863, Minister of Interior Peter Valuev prohibited educational, scholarly, and religious publications in the "Little Russian dialect"—he refused to admit that a separate Ukrainian language existed. In 1876, the government went further by prohibiting Ukrainian from being spoken on the stage or by teachers in the classroom. Furthermore, Ukrainian could not appear in any new or imported publications or in school libraries.

Other nationalities fared better, especially the Finns, who were permitted considerable autonomy. In 1863, in the midst of the Polish rebellion, Alexander II allowed the first Finnish Diet to meet since 1809 and continued thereafter to allow regular sessions of that legislative body. In the Baltic provinces, the Baltic Germans retained their privileged status throughout Alexander II's reign. But resentment of them grew in this nationalistic age, especially on the part of some Great Russian nationalists. In 1867, the use of the Russian language was required by imperial officials in the Baltic provinces, and ten years later Baltic towns were required to adopt Russian municipal institutions and the use of Russian in official activities.

Jewish life under Alexander II improved in some ways but in others foreshadowed the more oppressive conditions that would follow under Alexander III. The hated special draft of Jewish boys was ended in 1856, and more Jews were allowed opportunities outside the Jewish Pale of Settlement and Congress Poland (see Map 24.4). Nevertheless, in 1881 about 19 out of every 20 legally registered Jews continued to reside in these restricted areas. When new municipal rules were enacted in 1870, it was mandated that no more than one-third of any town council could be composed of Jews and that no Jew could serve as a mayor.

In 1871, an anti-Jewish pogrom occurred in Odessa, a city about one-quarter Jewish. Eight people were killed, and hundreds of Jewish apartments and shops

FIGURE 24.1. Statue of Alexander II on Senate Square, Helsinki. This statue was erected in 1894 by the Finns and still stands today, a tribute to Alexander II's relatively tolerant attitude to Finnish autonomy.

were looted or vandalized. By the end of Alexander II's reign, Judeophobia was on the rise. The writer Dostoevsky was just one of many individuals who expressed his prejudices. In 1880, he wrote: "The Jew and the bank now dominate everything: Europe and Enlightenment, the whole civilization and socialism—especially socialism, for with its help the Jew will eradicate Christianity and destroy the Christian civilization."[3]

Meanwhile, internationally, France's strong objections to Russia's crushing of the Polish rebellion, along with Prussia's support of Russian actions, led Alexander II to move closer to Prussia. While Prussia's Wilhelm I (Alexander's uncle) and his indispensable minister, Otto Von Bismarck, were fighting three wars and uniting Germany between 1864 and 1871, Alexander II and Russia remained benevolently neutral. In 1870, Russia used the occasion of the Franco-Prussian War to abrogate the hated Black Sea demilitarization clauses of the Treaty of Paris—a move allowed to stand by an international conference in London the following year.

Russia therefore gained an immediate benefit from Prussia's wars and its own benevolent neutrality. After the tremendous German devastation of Russia in two

[3]Quoted in Hans Kohn, *Prophets and Peoples: Studies in Nineteenth Century Nationalism* (New York, 1961), p. 181, n. 27.

MAP 24.4

twentieth-century wars, however, the question must at least be posed whether aiding the creation of a strong, united Germany was in Russia's long-term interest.

Once Prussia had defeated France in 1871, Bismarck worked to insure diplomatic arrangements that would enable the new Germany to keep its gains. Again, Alexander II was willing to cooperate. In 1873, Russia and Germany agreed to come to each other's aid, with an army of 200,000, if attacked by another European power. Later that year, Alexander II and Franz Joseph of Austria signed an agreement pledging consultation and cooperation in case of another power's aggression. The two agreements together created the Three Emperors' League, which was aimed at any major threat that would destabilize the three empires.

CRISIS IN THE BALKANS AND THE RUSSO-TURKISH WAR OF 1877–1878

Despite the Three Emperors' League, cooperation between Austria and Russia proved difficult. This was primarily because of Russo-Austrian competition in the Balkans, where rising Slavic national movements threatened to overthrow Turkish control. Both Austria and Russia had strong special interests in the area. Containing many Slavic nationalities itself, the Austro-Hungarian Empire feared that unchecked nationalism south of its borders would carry over into its own empire and act as a disintegrating force. Russian interest in the area stemmed primarily from Balkan domination by the Muslim Turks, Balkan linkage with the Black and Mediterranean seas, and Orthodox-Slavic Russia's traditional role as an intermediary for its Balkan co-religionists.

As Russian nationalism grew stronger during and after the Polish rebellion, so too did Russian panslavism. Its most ardent champions, including the historian M. P. Pogodin, dreamed of a Slavic union under Russian hegemony that would stretch from the Pacific to the Adriatic. For more than a decade before his death in 1875, Pogodin had been the president of the Slavonic Benevolent Committee, which reached the height of its influence in the late 1870s. By 1877, its Moscow committee and branches in St. Petersburg, Kiev, and Odessa possessed more than 1,000 members. They included the journalist and Slavophile Ivan Aksakov, who succeeded Pogodin as president; the influential editor Mikhail Katkov; the writer Dostoevsky; General (retired) R. A. Fadeev; the botanist N. Danilevsky; and Russia's ambassador to Constantinople, N. P. lgnatiev. Fadeev's *Opinion on the Eastern Question* and Danilevsky's *Russia and Europe* both appeared in 1869 and called for Russia to battle her enemies and unite the Slavs.

In mid-1875, Herzegovina and then Bosnia revolted against Turkish rule. The following spring, Bulgaria joined them in revolt; and early in the summer of 1876, Serbia and Montenegro declared war on Turkey.

At first, Alexander II worked with other European rulers to deal with the crisis. The major powers, with the exception of Great Britain, agreed upon a program of land, tax, and religious reform in the Balkans that Turkey would administer under their watchful eyes. But British Prime Minister Disraeli distrusted Russian intentions and hoped to drive a wedge between the members of the Three Emperors' League. His attitude encouraged Turkish resistance to European diplomatic efforts.

Meanwhile, Russia's enthusiasm for the heroic struggle of its fellow Orthodox Slavs spread rapidly, inflamed by the Russian press. The Slavonic Benevolent Committee and Orthodox Church leaders were in the forefront of relief efforts. The tsarina and the tsarevich also helped. Russian officers were allowed to take furloughs to serve as volunteers in the Serbian army. Other Russian volunteers also assisted the Serbs. The semiretired Russian General Cherniaev, called the "Lion of Tashkent" for his Central Asian conquest, soon became the head of the Serbian army. Leo Tolstoy, who was then writing *Anna Karenina* and who was unsympathetic with the mood of educated society, described it in his novel (as translated by Aylmer Maude).

> Among the people to whom he belonged, nothing was written or talked about at that time except the Serbian war. Everything that the idle crowd usually does to kill time, it now did for the benefit of the Slavs: balls, concerts, dinners, speeches, ladies' dresses, beer, restaurants—all bore witness to our sympathy with the Slavs . . . The massacre of our co-religionists and brother Slavs evoked sympathy for the sufferers and indignation against their oppressors. And the heroism of the Serbs and Montenegrins, fighting for a great cause, aroused in the whole nation a desire to help their brothers not only with words but by deeds.

In Constantinople, still another force acted to encourage Russian assistance to the Slavs—Russia's ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Nikolai Ignatiev. Apparently without tsarist authority, he encouraged the Serbs to believe they could count on Russian aid if they went to war with Turkey.

In the autumn of 1876, after the Serbs had suffered a series of defeats and the Turks were threatening Belgrade, Alexander sent an ultimatum to the Turks, demanding a truce. They agreed to a six-week armistice. With his finance minister, M. K. Reutern, warning of the economic consequences of a war, Alexander continued to seek a diplomatic solution. He assured the British ambassador to Russia that British fears of Russian intentions regarding Constantinople and India were ludicrous. But Disraeli remained un-cooperative, and Alexander remained under pressure from various quarters, including his wife Maria and his oldest son, the future Alexander III. After several more months of futile diplomatic efforts and fearful of alienating public opinion, Alexander II decided on war. In April 1877, after obtaining Austria's assurance of neutrality by assenting to a future Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia declared war on Turkey.

Russia's educated public cheered the declaration. Many liberals and radicals supported the Slavs rebellions in the Balkans because they saw them as a struggle of freedom-fighters against Turkish tyranny. Others, such as Dostoevsky, thought that Russia was fighting for a sacred cause and that the war would help to unite Russia around the true Orthodox ideas it should be following.

Although Russian troops suffered some setbacks in Bulgaria and the Caucasus, they generally advanced, and in early 1878 Turkey agreed to an armistice. In March, the two powers signed a treaty at San Stefano, a little village occupied by Russian troops only about six miles from the walls of Constantinople.

Among others, Ignatiev and Dostoevsky had wanted Russia to seize

Constantinople, but fear of English and Austro-Hungarian intervention restrained the tsar. British ships had already advanced to within a few miles of the Turkish capital, and Britain threatened war if Russia seized it.

The Treaty of San Stefano allowed Russia to regain southern Bessarabia (lost in the Crimean War); created a large autonomous Bulgaria with a sizable Aegean coastline; provided for Russian territorial gains in the Caucasus and a Turkish indemnity to Russia; recognized the independence of Serbia, Montenegro, and Rumania; stipulated territorial gains for Serbia and especially Montenegro; and mandated Turkish reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Russian nationalists and panslavists were generally happy with the treaty, although some thought it was the minimum Russia could accept. Austria and Britain were far from pleased, however, and exerted diplomatic pressure for modifications to it. Fearing war and its effects on an already strained Russian budget, Alexander II agreed to a peace congress in Berlin, where Bismarck was to act as an "honest broker."

The Congress of Berlin met in mid-1878. By the Treaty of Berlin, the enlarged Bulgaria that Russia hoped to dominate was greatly reduced in size; Austria-Hungary obtained the right to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina and Britain to administer the island of Cyprus. In Asia Minor, Russia retained most of its gains at Turkey's expense. The powers also recognized Russia's right to annex southern Bessarabia.

Although territorial gains, an indemnity, expanded rights for the peoples of the Balkans, and a weakening of the Ottoman Turkish Empire remained as real accomplishments, Russians realized that the new treaty was a diplomatic setback and a blow to Russian pride. Although he felt helpless to prevent it, Alexander II considered it one of the darkest moments of his reign. Russian nationalists were especially upset. The panslav leader Ivan Aksakov openly criticized Russian actions in Berlin, a criticism that led to his exile in the countryside and the closing of the Moscow Slavonic committee.

EUROPEAN RELATIONS, 1881–1905

Although angered at Germany and Austria-Hungary for their part in the Berlin settlement of 1878, Alexander II once again pressed these two neighbors to renew the Three Emperors' League. This was after he received word that they had entered negotiations for a new treaty, which they soon signed in 1879. In this alliance, they promised to come to each other's aid if either were attacked by Russia. Later, in 1882, they would join with Italy to sign a Triple Alliance, which stipulated that if one or two of the three signatories were attacked by two or more powers, the other member(s) of the alliance should render assistance. Alexander II feared diplomatic isolation, and the conservative monarchies of Germany and Austria-Hungary still seemed the best potential allies.

In 1879, however, Bismarck was in no hurry to renew the Three Emperors' League. It was not until mid-1881, after Alexander III had come to the throne, that a secret Three Emperors' Alliance was finally signed. Its most important clause stipulated benevolent neutrality in case any of the three powers became

involved in a war with a fourth power. If that fourth power happened to be Turkey, the agreement became operative only if the three signatories first agreed on the results of a Turkish war. Other clauses reaffirmed recognition of the closure of the Straits to warships—Russia especially wished to keep British naval vessels out of the Black Sea—and addressed Russian and Austro-Hungarian interests in the Balkans, which were to come at the expense of Turkey. These clauses allowed for the eventual enlargement of Bulgaria (by the addition of Eastern Rumelia) and the Austro-Hungarian annexation (when opportune) of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The treaty was for three years and was renewed for another three in 1884.

The fact that the Three Emperors' Alliance called for neutrality, not military aid, is worth emphasizing because Russia's fragile economy necessitated avoiding war with any major power. To put its economic house in order and invest more in the basic industrial structure so important for modern war, Russia cut back on direct military spending in 1882. For more than two decades after that, Russia avoided any major conflict.

As a result of clumsy policies and practices, Russia lost the leverage it had possessed in Bulgaria, and Austrian and British influence in that country increased. Tensions between Russia and Austria-Hungary over Bulgaria helped prevent the renewal of the Three Emperors' Alliance when it expired in June 1887. Yet that same month Germany's Bismarck concluded a secret Reinsurance Treaty with Russia, binding for three years. He was mindful of France's desire to win back what it had lost in 1870–1871 and feared a Russo-French alliance. The Reinsurance Treaty stipulated neutrality if either country became involved in a war with a third power, but if Germany attacked France, or Russia attacked Austria, the neutrality clause would not apply. The treaty also declared that Germany recognized Russia's right to predominant influence in Bulgaria, once again reaffirmed the two powers' support of the closure of the Straits, and promised German "moral and diplomatic support" if Russia found it necessary to defend the entrance to the Black Sea against foreign warships.

German support regarding Bulgaria and the Black Sea had minimal practical effect and cost Bismarck little. Russia's predominant influence in Bulgaria was already disappearing, and the closure of the Straits had already been agreed to many times by the European powers.

Until the mid-1880s, Russo-German relations were buttressed by close economic cooperation. German capital, industrial goods, and technical expertise flowed into Russia, while Germany received large amounts of Russian grain. Already by 1887, however, a tariff conflict between the two powers was underway, as protectionism became more prominent in both countries. Toward the end of that same year, Germany seriously curtailed its loans to Russia. In 1890, two years after coming to the throne, the young Emperor Wilhelm II of Germany dismissed Bismarck and refused to renew the Reinsurance Treaty. The Russian government finally overcame its ideological scruples toward republican France and moved toward a Franco-Russian alliance.

Already in 1888 and 1889, republican France and autocratic Russia had begun to move closer. French bankers furnished loans, helping to fill the vacuum created by the tightening of German credit in 1887, and French officials agreed to furnish

information about, and allow the purchase of, a new French rifle then being developed.

After Emperor Wilhelm's rebuff, Franco-Russian cooperation accelerated. In July 1891, Alexander III greeted a French naval squadron and its admiral at Kronstadt, the naval base guarding St. Petersburg. A Russian band played the "Marseillaise," the anthem of the French Revolution, while the autocratic Alexander III stood at attention. The following month, the two countries signed an agreement promising to consult if peace was endangered.

In 1892, the French presented the Russians with a draft military convention. After considerable changes and delays, it was ratified in January 1894 (N.S.). The heart of this Franco-Russian secret agreement was the mutual promise to assist each other, with all available forces, in case of a German attack on either country. German support for Italy against France or for Austria against Russia obligated the nonattacked ally (Russia or France) to fight Germany. The French were so pleased with the new treaty and Alexander III that in 1896, two years after his death, they began building the Alexander III bridge over the Seine River in Paris.

Yet the Russian government remained hopeful that war with Germany would not occur, and it continued attempting to improve relations with both Germany and Austria. In 1894, Russia and Germany signed a new tariff treaty, and during the next decade, Russia's trade with Germany exceeded that with any other country. In 1897, Russia and Austria agreed not to disturb the status quo in the Balkans.

Russia's desire for peace was partly motivated by its realization of its weak economic and military position at a time when world military spending and military technology were advancing rapidly. In 1898, this same realization helped prompt the Russian government to call for an international conference to limit armaments. Out of this Russian initiative, two peace conferences (in 1899 and 1907) eventually resulted, both held in The Hague. But in this militaristic era, there was little chance of any serious arms limitation agreement. All that the delegates could agree on were the rules of war and the establishment of an international (but not compulsory) court of arbitration.

NATIONALITIES, RUSSIFICATION, AND DISCRIMINATION, 1881–1905

By 1897, Great Russians were a minority in the Russian Empire, and together with the Ukrainians and Belorussians (both mainly Orthodox Slavs), they still constituted only about two-thirds of the empire's population. It is important to realize, however, that Russian officialdom and much of public opinion thought of both Ukrainians and Belorussians as Russians and underestimated the significance of the nationalities issue. Many believed that most of the smaller nationalities, especially in the Asian part of the empire, would eventually become part of a larger empire-wide Russian culture. Although Brooks has written that the popular literature of the last few decades of the Imperial period displayed a growing cosmopolitanism and appreciation of the diversity of the empire, he also notes that such literature still allowed for Great Russians to think of themselves as superior to the empire's smaller and more "backward"

nationalities. One scholar, while stressing the absence of any uniform state policy to eliminate all linguistic and cultural differences, sums up the prevailing attitude this way: "It was the tragedy of official Russia (and, it must be said, of much of the Russian public) that it could never really accept Russia as a multinational empire."[4]

Russification Policies

Despite some Russification of Russia's nine western provinces and the former Kingdom of Poland after the Polish revolt of 1863, Russification and discrimination against non-Russians did not reach their height until 1881–1905. Although in retrospect such policies seem foolish and counterproductive, there were many factors nudging the government in the direction it took, primarily the desire to maintain a strong, unified Russia.

Among European powers, Germany's growing strength after 1870 most impressed its neighbors. In minority areas, such as its Polish lands, it imposed Germanization by such measures as demanding the use of German in administration and schools. Austria-Hungary was weaker than Germany, and some Russian nationalists believed this was partly because of the Dual Monarchy's inability to impose a unifying nationality policy upon its peoples. Besides the German example, there was a growing fear of Germany, especially by the 1890s, and Russification measures were especially prevalent in border areas that could be threatened by Germany.

Other causes also stimulated Russification. Economic modernization sped up centralizing tendencies that were often accompanied by Russifying measures. In a more backward direction, Russification was part of the counterreform mentality of the times, a reaction to the growing forces threatening autocracy and the empire's political stability. In some ways, this reaction hearkened back to the Official Nationality policies of Nicholas I. By the 1880s, however, nationalism in Russia and throughout Europe (as the philosopher V. Soloviev noted and decried) had taken on harsher tones. The new mood was evidenced by the increased popularity of Danilevsky's Europe-bashing *Russia and Europe*, which was published in new editions in 1888 and 1889.

Certainly one cause of the increased Russification of the 1881–1905 period was Pobedonostsev. As procurator of the Holy Synod and a tsarist adviser, he pushed

[4]Theodore R. Weeks, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier. 1863–1914* (DeKalb, 1996), pp. 12, 194, 196–197 (quote from p. 194). Jeffrey Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861–1914* (Princeton, 1985), pp. 216–217, 241, 245. On attitudes toward cultural homogeneity and Russification, especially as they related to the empire's Muslims, see also Robert P. Geraci, "Going Abroad or Going to Russia?: Orthodox Missionaries in the Kazakh Steppe, 1881–1917," in R&E, pp. 279–283. For an overview of differing opinions on whether Russia was a nation-state, multinational empire, or something in between, see Vera Tolz, *Russia*, Inventing the Nation Series (London, 2001), Ch. 5. Hugh D. Hudson, Jr. in "An Unimaginable Community: The Failure of Nationalism in Russia during the Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth Centuries," RH 26 (Fall 1999): 299–314, also makes some interesting comments on how differences in peasant and elite mentalities contributed to the failure of the Russian people to form a sense of nationhood.

FIGURE 24.2. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Reval (Tallinn), 1894–1900. The construction of this Orthodox Cathedral exemplified Pobedonostsev's policy of trying to strengthen Orthodox influence among the predominately Lutheran Estonians and Latvians.

Russification policies along with ones designed to win converts to Orthodoxy and discourage other religions in the Russian Empire (see Chapter 27).

Pobedonostsev realized the danger of national movements to the unity of "composite states" such as Austria-Hungary and Russia. One reason he gave for rejecting parliamentary government was that in multinational states, a parliament became a forum for "racial hatred, both to the dominant race, to the sister races, and to the political institution which unites them all." Russian autocracy, he claimed, had "succeeded in evading or conciliating" racial or national "demands and outbreaks, not alone by means of force, but by the equalization of rights and relations under the unifying power."

The problem was that Pobedonostsev's "equalization of rights and relations" too often meant forcing Russian ways and the Russian language upon national minorities. Such standardization, which was often supported by other government bureaucrats and military leaders, including some co-opted non-Russians, was a far cry from equal rights. Although some ministers, such as Finance Minister Witte, opposed extreme Russification, thinking it counterproductive to stability and financial growth, their opinions on the subject had little impact .

Both government nationality policies and opposition to them, however, were quite complex and varied from one region to another. Pobedonostsev, for example,

although generally pushing Russification, opposed some of the specific measures applied in Finland. And if non-Russians often suffered from Russification, the ethnic Russians—less urbanized, less literate, and with lower life expectancies than many of the non-Russian western nationalities—could hardly be considered a privileged people.

In many areas, the nationality issue was complicated by the presence of more than one non-Russian nationality. Russia's Jews, for example, resided mainly in the former Kingdom of Poland, Lithuania, Belorussia, Ukraine, and Bessarabia. The Baltic Germans were the dominant class in the Baltic region but were still a minority among native Latvians and Estonians. The Caucasus were a hodgepodge of nationalities. Armenians, for example, were outnumbered by the combined total of other nationalities in most of their own provinces, but Armenian merchants, traders, and artisans were important to the economic life of non-Armenian Caucasian cities such as Tiflis and Baku.

The presence of large numbers of Armenians, Poles, Ukrainians, and other non-Russian nationalities outside as well as inside the empire's borders further complicated Russia's nationality policies. So too did the overlapping of non-Orthodox faiths with non-Russian peoples. Powerful and influential Catholic and Lutheran voices abroad, for example, could not be completely ignored as Russia pursued its policies in its Polish and Baltic lands.

Despite these foreign voices, however, the Russification policies instituted by Alexander II in the western provinces and Poland continued, and his two successors went even further. For example, in 1885, the Russian government extended to Polish primary schools the use of Russian as the language of instruction for almost all subjects. As relations with Germany grew cooler, Russian anxieties about Baltic security increased and helped usher in the most extensive Russification policies the region had ever witnessed. The government enacted them in Estland, Livland, and Courland primarily between 1887 and 1894 and in Finland from 1899 to 1904.

Because of the previous tolerance of Finnish autonomy, the attempted Russification in Finland was especially significant. For five years, until his assassination in 1904, Governor-General N. I. Bobrikov administered a policy that curtailed the rights of the Finnish Diet, decreed Russian the official administrative language, and proclaimed a new conscription law that made Finns susceptible to being drafted directly into Russian units. The law also aimed at integrating the small (and previously separate) Finnish military into the Russian army. After these policies awakened massive resistance, Bobrikov, in 1903, suspended remaining traditional rights and assumed strengthened emergency powers.

In contrast to the Baltic area, there was little direct Russification in Central Asia and among the Turkic and Muslim peoples. Any large-scale Russification effort among these peoples would have been extremely expensive. Largely for this reason, the khanates of Bukhara and Khiva retained autonomy and responsibility for their own internal affairs, and even the directly annexed parts of Central Asia retained considerable control over local affairs.

Yet, aided by the growth of railways, Russian colonists migrated to cities like Tashkent and Samarkand and even to some rural Central Asian areas. This colonization facilitated the growth of Russian schools and other institutions in the region and offered some competition to native Muslim traditions.

Opposition Among the Nationalities

Opposition to Russian nationality policies took many forms from outright resistance to more subtle forms of subversion. On occasion opposition was spurred by religious grievances. In 1898, a Muslim religious leader and his followers proclaimed a holy war against the Russians and marched on the Central Asian city of Andizhan, where they were defeated by Russian troops. After the Russian government confiscated Armenian Church property in 1903, Armenians launched a huge passive resistance campaign.

Opposition movements among the non-Russians were also fueled by more secular forces. Accompanying increased urbanization was the growth of socialist parties. Although some non-Russians, including Joseph Stalin, joined the Russian Social Democratic party (later split between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks), others joined more local national Marxist or socialist organizations. Among those formed between 1887 and 1904 were the Jewish Bund and socialist parties in Armenia, Georgia, Poland, Ukraine, Belorussia, Latvia, and Lithuania. An important issue to many of these parties was whether national or socioeconomic goals should receive a greater priority. This debate sometimes led to a split and the formation of new parties.

Organized political opposition, whether fueled by religious or secular ideas, developed more slowly among Russia's Muslim population. The most significant development among them was a modernist movement (jadidism) inspired by the Crimean Tatar Ismail Bey Gasprinsky (1851–1914), an influential publicist, educator, and advocate of Islamic modernization. While he believed that the Russian government could greatly assist this modernization, he opposed cultural Russification, advocated the development of a single Turkic literary language, and furthered a sense of unity among Russia's Turkic Muslims. Although he presented himself as a loyal supporter of the Russian Empire, many government officials supporting Russification feared that he was strengthening a Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islam that would disrupt the unity of the empire.

National consciousness and participation in national opposition to Russification varied considerably. Among Poles, Finns, and Armenians, opposition was at times widespread. Among Ukrainians and Belorussians, overt opposition was more limited, involving primarily students and intellectuals. And some non-Russians among virtually all nationalities were willing to pay the price of Russification for the benefits they believed it brought them.[5]

Jews

Russification and reactions to it do not tell the entire story of Russia's nationality policy. Russia's treatment of its Jewish population was less a question of Russification and more a case of exclusion.

[5]Mironov has argued that for the empire's non-Russians in general the "pluses outweighed the minuses," but many non-Russian historians have concluded differently. See Boris N. Mironov, "Response to Willard Sunderland's 'Empire in Boris Mironov's *Sotsial'naia istoriia Rossii*,'" SR 60 (Fall 2001): 581; and Willard Sunderland, "Empire in Boris Mironov's *Sotsial'naia istoriia Rossii*," SR 60 (Fall 2001): 571–578.

After anti-Jewish pogroms broke out in Ukraine in spring 1881, the panslavist Ignatiev became minister of interior. He blamed the anti-Jewish violence (eventually some 20,000 Jewish homes were destroyed) on the Jews themselves. Like Dostoevsky earlier, he complained of Jewish monetary influence, and he thought the pogroms were a reaction to "Jewish exploitation."

Although scholars such as Rogger have challenged the traditional belief of strong government complicity in the pogroms of this period, there remains little doubt that Judeophobic attitudes were widespread in government and conservative nationalist circles, starting at the top with the era's last two tsars. Pobedonostsev was especially hostile to Jews. Although he knew it was unlikely, he hoped—in the words of his leading biographer—"one-third of the Jews would emigrate, one-third would be assimilated, and one-third would die out."[6] Such attitudes fertilized the soil out of which both pogroms and anti-semitic measures germinated.

To curtail "Jewish exploitation" and thereby remove what he considered a main cause of the pogroms, Ignatiev prepared new "temporary regulations." By the May Laws of 1882, any new Jewish settlement in villages or rural purchase of property was prohibited, as was doing business on Sunday mornings or Christian holy days.

Other prohibitions and restrictions soon followed. Jews were limited to no more than 5 percent of army medical personnel. By a law of 1887, Jewish students could make up no more than 10 percent of the total secondary and higher school enrollments within the Pale of Settlement (the restricted western areas where the overwhelming majority of Russia's Jews resided); in St. Petersburg and Moscow, the limit was 3 percent and in other areas 5 percent. In 1889, Jews were excluded from practicing law without special ministerial permission; and in 1890 and 1892, they were denied voting rights in zemstvo and municipal elections. In 1886, many Jews were expelled from Kiev and in 1891 from Moscow.

The series of pograms that began in 1881 finally sputtered to a halt in 1884. Another wave hit Russia from 1903 until 1906, accelerating in frequency with the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 and the rebellion of 1905. The 1903 pogrom in the Bessarabian city of Kishinev became infamous. Because Jews were overwhelmingly confined to an urban existence, Kishinev, like most cities in the Pale of Settlement, contained many Jews—about 50,000 or roughly one-third of the city's population. Inflamed by a local antisemitic paper that spread rumors that religious ritualistic needs had led Jews to kill a Christian boy, mobs attacked the city's Jews, killing about forty-seven of them, wounding hundreds of others, and burning or looting about 1,300 houses and shops.

The response of Jews to all this discrimination and violence (plus economic misery) varied, but it did drive some to revolutionary activities. The most significant Jewish radical group was the Jewish Bund (General Jewish Workers' party of Russia and Poland), founded in 1897 and containing some 25,000 members by

[6]Robert F. Byrnes, *Pobedonostsev: His Life and Thought* (Bloomington, 1968), p. 207. Although John Klier in his "State Policies and the Conversion of Jews in Imperial Russia," in R&E, pp. 92, 106–107, casts some doubts on the accuracy of a Pobedonostsev quote that expressed a similar sentiment, he does not dispute Pobedonostsev's antisemitism; he does, however, insist that Pobedonostsev was not an advocate of efforts to convert the Jews.

1903. Following the Kishinev pogrom, it urged resistance against pogroms and organized self-defense groups. Many other Jews became Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, or members of other radical groups.

As more Jews became revolutionaries, the Russian government overestimated and magnified their impact, contributing to further antisemitism. Among others, Nicholas II and Plehve believed that Jews were the head and heart of the revolutionary movement.

Although some Jews stayed and became radicals, many more left the country, helping fulfill at least one-third of Pobedonostsev's formula for solving the "Jewish Problem." By 1914, almost one-third of Russia's Jews (who had totaled roughly 5 million in 1897) had emigrated, mostly to the United States. The strong appeal of Zionism, which encouraged emigration to Palestine, was another manifestation of the same phenomenon.

SIBERIA AND THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR OF 1904–1905

After it was humiliated by other European powers at the Congress of Berlin, Russia began focusing more attention on Asia. General M. D. Skobelev's victory over Turkmen forces at the fortress of Gok Tepe in January 1881 delighted panslavists such as Dostoevsky, who now believed Russia should concentrate, at least temporarily, on Asia. He suggested that because Europeans hated Russia, and Russia was part Asian, it should leave Europe to its own squabbles, while it expanded its civilizing influence and control in Asia.

In the next few decades, a number of scholars, publicists, statesmen, and military men echoed Dostoevsky. The focus gradually changed, however, from Central Asia to the Far East. Even Vladimir Soloviev, the philosopher, poet, and eloquent critic of Russian nationalism and antisemitism, wrote in the 1890s about the necessity of Russia advancing in East Asia.

Siberia and Russian Far Eastern Policies

In a report in late 1892, Witte argued that the completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway would greatly facilitate Russian trade with China. At the same time, it would allow Russia to operate a fleet in the Far East, which could dominate the area's Pacific coastline. To supply future Far Eastern Russian forces, whether on land or sea, was certainly one reason for proceeding with the difficult construction of what was to be the world's longest railway. Steven Marks has noted that further Russification of Siberia, partly as a response to perceived Siberian separatist sympathies, was another factor motivating the construction.

The laying of some 4,000 miles of track began simultaneously: westward from Vladivostok, and eastward from Miass in the Urals (about 60 miles west of Cheliabinsk). Tens of thousands of workers, including convicts and Chinese laborers, worked in often appalling conditions. Winter brought subzero temperatures and summer enough daylight for seventeen-hour workdays. To lay track across or through plains, mountains, marshes, and rivers, workers had to chop down millions of trees, transport countless tons of dirt, and cut through miles of rocks. The

most daunting task was constructing bridges over Siberia's wide rivers, including the Irtysh, the Ob, and the Enisei, and completing the final mountainous link around the southern shore of Lake Baikal.

By the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War in early 1904, all but the Baikal link was completed, although most of the railway's eastern section, the Chinese Eastern Railway, cut across northern Manchuria. (Not until World War I would an all-Russian Trans-Siberian line link Vladivostok with European Russia.) The Trans-Siberian greatly facilitated migration to Siberia. In the two decades before the start of World War I, some 3 million people moved to Siberia, which was about the same number of people living in all of Siberia around 1860.

Along with the Trans-Siberian construction, the Chinese-Japanese War of 1894–1895 stimulated more Russian involvement in the Far East. Alarmed by Japanese gains in the war, Witte led a campaign in 1895 to deny Japan the Manchurian Liaotung Peninsula, gained from China in the treaty ending the war.

In 1896, Witte won Chinese permission to have the Russian-run Chinese Eastern Railway constructed, a shorter and easier way of linking the cities of Chita and Vladivostok than completing the eastern Trans-Siberian on Russian territory. In 1898, in the midst of other great-power pressures on China, Russia wrenched from the hapless Chinese what it had denied Japan—the Liaotung Peninsula and, at its tip, the ice-free Port Arthur. Not only did Russia receive a lease to the peninsula, but also permission to build a railway branch (the Southern Manchurian Railway) linking the Chinese Eastern Railway at Harbin with Port Arthur.

FIGURE 24.3. Railway Station at Krasnoiarsk. On the Trans-Siberian Line, the population of Krasnoiarsk almost tripled from 1897 (when Lenin spent five weeks of his Siberian exile there) to 1911.

These steps of 1898 went beyond Witte's more moderate approach to Chinese penetration. As Schimmelpenninck has written, various overlapping—and at times competing—influences helped determine Russia's Far Eastern policy, but it was the advocates of an aggressively imperialistic approach who eventually gained greatest favor with Nicholas. Like their tsar, they greatly underestimated both Japan's determination and strength to contend with Russia in the Far East. Partly as a response to the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, Russia increased its forces in Manchuria; it also stepped up its challenge to Japan's hope to dominate Korea. In the summer of 1903, Nicholas appointed an imperialist admiral, E. I. Alekseev, as Far Eastern viceroy and a few weeks later removed Witte as finance minister. In September, Foreign Minister V. Lamsdorf told the tsar that he found it difficult to comment about Asia since he had lately been kept in the dark about Russia's Asian policy.

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905

Japan was alarmed by Alekseev's appointment and Russia's increasing unwillingness to negotiate in good faith. After Russia failed to live up to a previous agreement to complete a troop withdrawal from Manchuria, Japan decided to launch a surprise attack on the Russian squadron at Port Arthur. This it did in early February 1904. Although a few Russian ships were damaged, none sank. Nicholas II shrugged the attack off as a flea bite and was confident Russia would successfully end the war Japan had begun.

But the Japanese "flea" proved more than a match for the Russian bear. Japan profited from modernized military forces operating close to their home base and enthusiastically supported by the civilian population. In contrast, Russian Far Eastern forces were undermined by overconfidence, by poor governmental and military leadership, by insufficient weapons, by great distances from the Russian industrial heartland, and by quickly dissipating societal support for the war.

Symbolic of Russia's frustration was the fate of its Baltic Fleet, sent halfway around the world to link up with its ships at Port Arthur. After more than seven months at sea, during which time Port Arthur had surrendered to Japan, the Baltic Fleet was met by a Japanese fleet before it could reach safe harbor in Vladivostok. In May 1905, at the battle of Tsushima Straits, the Baltic Fleet was sunk, scattered, or forced to surrender. By insisting that the fleet include outdated ships and other actions, Nicholas II greatly contributed to the disaster. The loss shocked Russian society and contributed to growing discontent back home. Despite Russia's improving capacity to ship men and equipment to the Far East and its ability eventually to far outnumber Japanese forces, public opinion and financial considerations led it to seek peace.

U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt, not wishing either side to grow too strong, offered to host a peace conference at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. By the Treaty of Portsmouth (September 1905), Russia ceded to Japan the southern half of Sakhalin, its lease of Port Arthur and the rest of the Liaotung Peninsula, and the Southern Manchurian Railway. It also recognized Japan's paramount interests in Korea. Russia was permitted to retain control over the Chinese Eastern Railway and maintain predominant influence in northern Manchuria. Despite considerable

pressure on Witte, who negotiated for Russia, he refused to go along with Japanese demands for monetary indemnity. Yet there was little doubt that Japan had won the war against one of Europe's major powers. Besides its treaty losses, the war cost Russia billions of rubles and hundreds of thousands of dead and wounded.

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