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Since 1970 I have argued that the purchase of Alaska by the United States was the direct result of seventy years of expansionist pressure on the Russian colony by the American Government and special business and commercial concerns. Thus, I suggested, that Russia parted with Russian-America only reluctantly, for as Edward de Stoeckl, the Russian Minister who negotiated the sale to the United States explained: "It was a question of our selling them or of our seeing them [the U.S.] seize it." Moreover, if we view American Russian relations in the period 1790 to 1867 from the perspective of the Northwest Coast, rather than the amicable relations alleged by most historians, we uncover a story of conflict and rivalry.[1]

My interest and the direction of my research aimed at discovering how, or even if, American attitudes and actions toward Russian-America fit into the history of U.S. expansion. While in the past thirty years much of American history has been reinterpreted in terms of the relationship between expansion and the requirements (real or imagined) of domestic political, social, and economic forces, the acquisition of Alaska continued to be explained by North American historians in the framework of "Europe's distresses were America's successes."[2] The United States only proved able to purchase Russian-America, the argument ran, because the Russians desired to "unload this bothersome liability" of ice-covered real estate.[3] In fact, according to one version, if it weren't for Secretary of State William H. Seward's unrequited lust after territory,[4] or, according to

another, his desire for Asian markets, Alaska might have remained a Russian possession.[5]

Only Soviet historians have suspected that the story should be revised substantially. A.V. Efimov, the dean of Soviet Americanists, suggested that Seward played upon Russia's post-war weakness by threatening an invasion of American filibusters if Russia refused to relinquish its colony.[6] In 1953 T.M. Batueva argued that the sale of Alaska was due directly to American expansion in the Pacific.[7] Specifying that this particular expansion was the result of Seward's combining with other U.S. capitalists, A.L. Narochnitskii alleged that Russia, financially and militarily too weak to resist, agreed to a sale.[8] Moving beyond the narrow limits suggested by Efimov and Narochnitskii, M. Belov returned to Batueva's broader outlines. Belov attempted to tie the Alaska purchase to what he saw as a combination of nineteenth century American imperialism and tsarist degeneracy.[9]

These explanations are more suggestive than satisfying. The characterizations of American capitalism by Efimov and Norochnitskii are both wooden and conspiratorial. Along with Batueva, their materialist assumptions about American expansion at times seem more a parody than a serious application of marxist theory. Belov's article is too brief, his sources too limited, and his categories too stratified for his work to be considered more than impressionistic.

The recent work of Nikolai N. Bolkhovitinov opens a different prospect. Although he tends to stress the amicable nature of relations between the United States and Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century Bolkhovitinov offers arguments and evidence which tends to support the view

that American expansionist desires played a key role in the cession of Alaska.[10] Of course, we must await Bolkhovitinov's forthcoming volumes for his final conclusions about the Alaska purchase. In any case, by the mid-nineteen-seventies we had reached the ironic historiographical situation which finds Soviet historians suggesting that the United States acquired Russian-America because it was shrewd, while American historians, by and large, attribute the purchase to their nation's mindlessness.[11]

Simultaneous to the publication of my Conflict on the Northwest Coast and Bolkhovitinov's Russian-American Relations, 1815-1832, was Ronald Jensen's The Alaska Purchase and Russian-American Relations.[12] While Jensen's work has many strengths, he arrives at the same conclusions that Frank A. Golder did over a half century ago: by playing upon traditional American friendship and Seward's lust after territory, Russia was able to rid itself of "unwanted land." While Jensen produces much evidence of a long-term conflict between Russia and the United States in the Pacific Northwest, he ignores it when reaching his conclusions. Perhaps the reason that Jensen's thesis is so similar to Golder's and Bailey's is that he is constrained by the questions he poses: why did Russia want to sell and why did Seward wish to buy?

In 1976 James R. Gibson published Imperial Russia in the American Frontier. Gibson, a geographer whose previous work had investigated the provisioning of the Siberian fur trade, concluded that the inability to keep the colony supplied with food "was a major feature of the overall plight that disposed the Russian Government to part with Russian-America." Supply had been a problem from the very first and while the company had attempted various approaches, including dependence on Yankee and British

traders, none were successful. In the end, "Russian-America's harsh environment was not conducive to productive agriculture and its distant location was not amenable to easy delivery." These problems, when added to "the monopolistic character of the company, and the traditional administrative and technological backwardness of the colonizers, helps to explain why Alaska did not remain a Russian colony." While Gibson acknowledges the negative impact of the American traders, he, nevertheless, concludes that "Boston supplies were vital to feeding the company's employees."[14] Gibson makes a sensible and a strong case that the colonies virtually had collapsed from an economic point of view by the 1850s. Nevertheless, it is one thing to demonstrate the colonies were not financially viable and quite another to conclude that the Russian Government sold them to the United States for that reason. Moreover, such an anlysis does not explain why the United States would buy Russian-America.

As we enter the eighties it is time to ask ourselves where all this writing on the Alaska pruchase had led us. In what follows, I will examine American-Russian relations prior to 1868 in light of recent interpretations. In so doing I will also reexamine the analysis I offered for the annexation of Russian-America by the United States in 1867.

I. The Nature of Relations:

I argued that because of the emphasis on European matters, most scolarship on American-Russian relations pictured the period 1790-1867 as friendly.[15] Yet, by focusing on relations in the Pacific Northwest, which largely had been neglected, "one uncovers a history of conflict and, at times, near hostility between Russia and the United States."[16]

Two critical views of this interpretation have emerged. The first, suggested in the works of Professor Bolkhovitinov, is that far from being a new interpretation, the conflict thesis is solidly grounded in American historiography. Rather than picturing relations as cordial, American historians, tied to Cold War rhetoric, attempted "to prove the existence of ominous 'danger from Moscow' to the western hemisphere as early as the first half of the nineteenth century, and to portray the relations betwen Russia and the United States of America as a chain of original 'dramatic confrontations.'"[17] Bolkhovitinov cites Thomas A. Bailey's America Faces Russia (1950) as arguing that "from the day of its emergence until our day, Russia has taken an extremely hostile position toward the United States." In America and Russia: A Century and a Half of Dramatic Encounters edited by Oliver Jensen (1962) Bolkhovitinov finds an overstated picture of "the anti-Russian aspect of the Monroe Doctrine," and a tendency to "exaggerate Russia's expansionist intentions in California." Moreover, Boklhovitinov argues that "advocates of the 'natural hostility' between Russia and the United States" can be uncovered long before the Cold War period.[18]

The second criticism offered by North American scholars, most of whom are Russian area rather than American specialists, is one of interpretation of evidence. They too find Russian-American relations in the Pacific Northwest more suggestive of cooperation than conflict. For instance, Richard A. Peirce argues that "a case might as easily be made for a long-standing friendship. The Russian-American Company colonies also worked with the American traders to mutual benefits; the ice trade and the telegraph venture were pursued in harmony, and there were many expressions of good-

will by individuals."[19] Similarly, Basil Dmytryshyn notes that "while on numerous occasions some Russians as well as some Americans voiced concern over their respective intentions and activities, from 1790 to 1867 Russian-American relations in the Pacific Northwest also abounded in close and continuous cooperation." The Russian-American Company relied upon food, transport, and American made vessels and thus, Dmytryshyn concludes, "the list of American-Russian cooperation in the Pacific Northwest is quite long, indeed longer than the list of conflicts."[20] Another aspect of the conflict thesis which has been questioned is found in the suggestions of C. Bickford O'Brien that mutual distrust of Great Britain played a more important role in unifying Russia and the United States than "tensions, rhetorical attacks, and complaints on both sides" did in dividing them.[21]

While I share Professor Bolkhovitinov's uneasiness about studies of Russian-American relations which were unduly influenced by Cold War rhetoric and assumptions, I do not agree that those studies tended to characterize pre-1867 relations as hostile. Rather, the thesis of Bailey and others was that naive Americans were deceived by Russian policy-makers into believing that Moscow's intentions were friendly. The actual relations between the two nations were not pictured as antagonistic. The only exceptions, which I will discuss below, were the Tsar's Ukase of 1821 and the issuance of the Monroe Doctrine. While Bailey, for instance, refers to the reports of various U.S. Ministers who found Tsarist Russia to be "the calm of despotism," he writes that "diplomatically speaking, the years from 1832 to 1848, and even to the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854, are barren in Russian-American relations." Certainly Bailey discovers no tensions in the Pacific Northwest between the two nations for he explains,

while "American pioneers were pushing west under the propulsion of Manifest Destiny; the Russian people were tending to their own affairs." In fact, Bailey sees this as a period when the United States "had relatively little business with Russia, and most of that was of third-rate importance." The Russians were "determined to cultivate our [U.S.] friendship . . . ."[22]

Typical of this type of approach to American-Russian relations is the interpretation of the visit of Russia's fleet to New York City in 1863. Frank A. Golder argued that Americans were fooled into believing that the Russian fleet was sent to aid the North during the Civil War when in reality the Russian Admiralty had sailed its ships into American waters to avoid its being blockaded in Cronstadt in case of a war in Europe over Poland. Since Golder, scholars have focused their discussions on two questions: were Americans deceived and what were Russia's intentions. Most agree that the cunning tsarists had duped the unsophisticated Yankees.[23]

While the fleet visit has nothing whatsoever to do with the Northwest Coast directly, it is important to our discussion for two reasons. First, it is symtomatic of the parameters of most American scholarship on American-Russian relations. These limits are not so much due to the answers reached as they are a result of the assumptions inherent in the questions posed. Thus, portrayals of the fleet visit or the Alaska Purchase invariably picture U.S. leaders as naïfs, while Russian policymakers emerge as sly, calculating men spurred on by ulterior motives. Second, this view has led historians to conclude that because Northern leaders, like Seward and Sumner, allegedly misconceived the purpose of

the fleet's visit as an act of support for the Union cause, they bought Alaska after the war out of gratitude for this earlier Russian support.[23]

Of course there is, as I suggested earlier, one exception to this view--the events leading to the promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine. Bolkhovitinov criticized "the thesis that Monroe's Message of December 2, 1823, was aimed at Russia." He suggested that far from playing a defensive role, both American expansionism and nationalism kept pressure on Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century.[25] With the latter view I have no disagreement, except to note that one of the characteristics of U.S. expansion has been the projection of hostile desires and actions on those against whom the expansion was to take place.[26] Thus, traders and whalers sold weapons to Northwest Coast Indians and committed other acts which endangered the Russia settlements, while Washington protested all Russian actions aimed at self-preservation, characterizing them (as in the case of the Ukase of 1821) as expansionist provocations. No matter what the reality or the justification was, American leaders such as Floyd, Benton, Clay, and ultimately, Adams and Monroe, believed that the Ukase posed a threat to American interests. Even if one could prove conclusively that such fears were unjustified, it would be irrelevant, for people tend to act upon their perception of events and not upon some mythical, objective reality.

More specifically, beginning in 1820 supporters of overland fur trade and landed expansion attacked the policies of the Monroe Administration--and especially his Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams--for not protecting more vigorously American interests in the Pacific Northwest. Men such as Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, Representative John

Floyd of Virginia, and fur magnate John Jacob Astor feared that the Administration's policy would play into the hands of the newly merged British North West and Hudson's Bay Companies. This new organization found itself in virtual control of the landed fur trade of the Pacific Northwest at the conclusion of the War of 1812. Benton had proposed that the Federal Government establish "an American Fur Company" which would "sap at its foundation the solid pillar of British wealth and power [in North America]."[27]

In December 1820, Floyd urged passage of a bill "to authorize the occupation of the Columbia River and to regulate trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes." But the British, he warned, were not America's only enemy in the Pacific Northwest: "Russia . . . has long been informed of the great and increasing value of that [Asiatic]commerce" and Russian "forts, magazines, towns, cities, and trade, seem to arise . . . as if by magic." Thus, while Floyd urged American expansion, he projected his own hostile plans on the Tsar, who "with an army of a million of men . . . menaces . . . even the king of Spain's dominions in North America." While Floyd, Benton, Astor, and even Adams desired the Pacific Northwest for the United States, Floyd warned that Russia's expantionist designs, if left unchecked, would allow them to "command the whole northern part of the Pacific Ocean."[28]

Not surprisingly the Russian Minister to the United States, Pierre de Poletica, was concerned about the increasing hostility he perceived vis-a-vis Russian-America. "The curiosity of Americans about the northwest coast of America and about our settlements in that wild region attained a degree of intensity that truly amazed me." He had refrained until now, he apologized

to his foreign office, [February, 1821] from submitting reports of these "instances of political madness" because he "noticed no disposition on the part of the American government to preoccupy itself seriously" with Russian-America. But, Poletica warned, "all this may radically change, especially now when Congress is preoccupied with these settlements."[29]

Poletica's.dispatches and the reports of Captain Vasilli Golovnin, who recently had returned from a voyage to the colony, added weight to the constant pleas of the Governing Board of the Russian-American Company that the activities of U.S. nationals be restricted. On September 16, 1821 Emperor Alexander I issued an Imperial Ukase which proclaimed that "from the Behring Strait to 51° northern latitude" (extending to the Aleutians and the eastern coast of Siberia) was "exclusively" Russian territory and foreigners were excluded from "the pursuits of commerce, whaling, and fishery, and all other industry" there. The ukase also claimed a one hundred mile territorial water right, warning that foreign vessels in these waters were "subject to confiscation along with the whole cargo." Nine days later the Tsar issued a second ukase authorizing the Company "to annex . . . newly discovered places to Russian dominion" south of the fifty-first parallel, "provided that they have not been occupied by any other European nation, or by citizens of the United States."[30]

The ukase, of course, stimulated further anti-Russian sentiment among landed expansionist circles in the Congress and the press. Floyd, who could now claim that he had predicted this course of events, turned his sights both on the Russian Government and on the Monroe Administration which he accused of laxity.[31] Soon spokesmen for the maritime Northwest Coast trading and whaling interests added their voices in support of immediate

federal action to pressure the Russian Government to withdraw its ukase. In January and February of 1822 William Sturgis, a prominent Boston merchant whose fortune had been made in the sea otter trade, published a series of articles explaining the importance of the Northwest Coast trade to his fellow citizens. In October, in an article entitled "Examination of Russian Claims to the Northwest Coast of America" published in the North American Review, Sturgis argued that the Russians desired "to monopolize commerce and usurp territory." "The Ukase appears," Sturgis warned, "a little short of an actual declaration of hostilities."[32] It is fair to call Sturgis' essay influential since the United States Government used this piece as the basis for contesting the Ukase.[33] By early 1823, whether a Russian threat was real or imagined, a considerable body of American politicians, businessmen, the press, and the public seemed convinced that the Tsar's ukase posed a danger to U.S. trade and expansion in the Pacific Northwest and beyond.[34]

Even if John Quincy Adams did not take seriously the Tsar's actions, he could not ignore the tide of protest which accused him directly of incompetently managing the nation's foreign affairs. Such criticism was particularly annoying to Adams for two reasons. First, his claim to leadership rested on his alleged expertise in foreign affairs and second, the opponents of his Northwest Coast policy rallied around Speaker of the House, Henry Clay, Adams' prime competitor for the Presidency in 1824. Of course Adams, as Professor Bolkhovitinov has often pointed out, was second to no one when it came to expansionist desires--he saw the future United States as "a nation, co-extensive with the North American continent."[35] Yet, Adams had viewed Russian-America as posing no threat to the United States and

initially he dismissed Floyd's and Benton's attacks on himself and on the Russian danger as partisan politics.

Whether Adams' subsequnet strong reaction to the ukase was motivated by his presidential ambitions, or by his own fears that Russia might indeed present a danger to his expansionist hopes for the United States, is less important than the impact that his reactions had on American-Russian relations. The Secretary of State's protests against the ukase are well known and the record of his meetings and correspondence concerning it are available in so many places that there is no need to repeat them here.[36] Several points, however, must be emphasized. Adams took a very hard line in opposing the ukase. In July of 1822 Adams and the American Minister to Russia, Henry Middleton, warned that the correspondence relating to the ukase showed that "a state of war between the two powers exists" lacking only "a declaration or act of violence, which latter cannot be long in coming."[37] Second, although the Russian Government agreed to negotiate further before a final decision would be reached regarding the implementation of the ukase, the Monroe Administration continued in its tough public and private pose until those negotiations were completed in April, 1824.[38]

During this period Adams announced his "no future colonization principle" in an open letter to Senator James Lloyd of Massachusetts and in a private note to the Russian Minister to the United States, Hendrik Tuyll. Adams informed Tuyll on July 17 that the United States would "contest the right of Russia to <u>any</u> territorial establishment on this continent, and that we should assume distinctly the principle that the American continents are no longer subjects for any new colonial establishments."[39] And when in November 1823, Alexander emphasized to the United States that he and his

monarchical allies would aid Spain and Portugal in retrieving their lost Latin American colonies, Adams private reply to the Tsar was harsh and direct.[40]

All this occurred before Monroe delivered his message of December 2, 1823. Clearly there has been a confusion between Monroe's Message, which Adams argued was for public consumption, and the Doctrine, which was delivered to the Russians privately, through diplomatic channels in July and November of 1823. When Sectetary of War John C. Calhoun suggested that the best response to the Tsar's note on Latin America would be through a Presidential address, Adams protested vigorously: "The communication from the Russian Minister required a direct and explicit answer. A communication of a paragraph of the President's message would be no answer, and if given as an answer," Adams reminded the cabinet, "would certainly be inconsistent with the position that foreigners have no right to notice it, because it was said among ourselves."[41] Thus, Monroe's Message, written by the Secretary of State, was aimed at Adams' domestic political rivals and at the American public in general, informing them both that the Administration had protected U.S. interests along the Northwest Coast while restraining Russia and the other European powers from further colonization of the Western Hemisphere.[42] No doubt, the message also served as a snub to the British who had proposed a joint declaration opposing any transfer of Spain's former colonies to any other power.[43] Aside from Adams own lack of inclination, it is obvious that from a political point of view it would have been suicidal for him to cooperate with Britain which was also seen by Adams' political opponents and by the American public as a great threat to American expansionist goals.

Thus, unlike Professor Bolkhovitinov, I remain convinced that the Monroe Doctrine was aimed at Russia and at her North American colony, though not for the same reasons that Bailey and others have offered. On the other hand, along with Bolkhovitinov, I am convinced that the key to understanding these events lies more within American expansionist policies than within Russian actions in North America. I remain unpersuaded that the British were the primary intended recipients of Monroe's Message, although they were an oblique target. Finally, given the political, diplomatic, and rhetorical context, it would be difficult to characterize the period 1820 to 1824 as one of amicable relations between the United States and Russia.

We are still left with the suggestions of Pierce, Dmytryshyn, and others that, aside from the controversy over the ukase, American-Russian relations in the Pacific Northwest were cooperative in nature. It is no doubt accurate to list many instances of cooperation between the Russian-American Company and U.S. trading and commercial ventures, but to suggest that such mutual dependence did not exacerbate tensions is to ignore the contradictory nature of the relationship. For the more that the Russian-American Company allowed itself to depend upon the Yankees, the greater the interest grew in the resources of the area among other Americans, and the result was almost always an increase of tensions.

This pattern of dependence leading to tensions can be traced back as far as Russian-American Governor A.A. Baranov's first contract with Yankee Captain Joseph O'Cain in 1803. Since the Russian Company could not ship its sea otter furs to Canton because of treaty restrictions, Baranov, in need of both supplies and shippers, signed a contract with O'Cain, Winship

and Company of Boston providing sea otters in return for supplies and the shipping of otters to the China market.[44] News of O'Cain's successful dealings quickly spread. By 1805 enough Yankee ships were in Russian-American waters for Grand Chamberlain Nikolai Rezanov to warn the Tsar that his possession "would be an unexhaustible source of wealth . . . were it not for the Bostonians," and thus it was "necessary to take a stronger hold of the country else we shall leave it empty handed."[45] Baranov persuaded Rezanov that the contract system was worth maintaining if only because it forced the Yankees to deal directly with the Russian Company rather than with the Aleuts and Kolosh. Nevertheless, both men agreed that the eventual goal was the self-sufficiency of the colony and the termination of reliance on the Boston traders.[46]

By 1808 the Russian Government issued the first in a sixty-year series of protests about Americans trading illegally in Russia's North American possessions.[47] And, as always, the United States Government not only refused to act against its nationals, but also it questioned Russia's jurisdiction over the Indians and the unsettled areas of Russian-America.[48] And, as almost always, it was the Russians who backed off, believing, for instance during the Napoleonic Wars, that Russia's national interest would be better served by avoiding conflict with the United States.[49] The result, however, was increased American penetration of Russian-America, which led to additional complaints like those of naval captain Vasilli Golovnin, who upon returning from a voyage to Russian-America, persuaded the Governing Board of the Company in December 1811, to petition the tsar to put a halt to "any further interference with Russian business on the part of private North American hucksters."[50]

Of course, there were also internal factors that could account for the complaints of Golovnin who wished to see a stronger Russian navy take a firmer control of the colony. Also suspect were the motives of some members of the Governing Board in St. Petersburg, many of whom personally invested in the outfitting of ships for around-the-world expeditions to supply the colonies.[51] Nevertheless, even if one remains suspicious of the warnings and fears of Rezanov, Golovnin, the Governing Board of the Company, and the Russian Foreign Ministry, Baranov's dependence on the Yankees for supplies and transport of sea otters had not led to a reduction of tensions. Rather, the result of continued American penetration of Russian-America in the following decade was the Tsar's Ukase of 1821 which, according to Foreign Affairs Minister Karl Nesselrode, was issued because "foreign adventurers and smugglers" continue to participate in "fraudulent trade in furs and other articles exclusively reserved for the Russian-American Company. These traders," Nesselrode complained, "appear often to betray a hostile tendency" for they "furnish arms and ammunition to the natives in our possessions" exciting them to "resistance and rebellion" against Russian authority.[52]

While the issues engendered by the ukase and the Monroe Doctrine were settled by the negotiation in April 1824 of a convention opening the Russian possessions to U.S. traders for a ten year period, the agreement itself led to an increased American presence in Russian-America and, eventually, to threats and near hostilities when the Russian Government refused to renew the treaty in 1834.[53] The seeds of future conflict were rooted in the intentions of the foreign ministries of both nations when the convention was

negotiated. Nesselrode viewed the pact as the only way to limit U.S. penetration of Russian-America because "by signing this agreement, the Americans have just as solemnly admitted that, at the expiration of a few stipulated years, we shall have the legal power to forbid them absolutely to trade or fish in that whole area."[54] Adams and his negotiator in St. Petersburg, John Middleton, had very different expectations. They believed that the Russian settlements would become so dependent upon United States trade that the continuance of the free access clause of the treaty would become indispensable to the Russian-American Company.[55] Company officials in St. Petersburg shared Adams' interpretation, although in their case with trepidation rather than with hope. Konrad Ryleyev, manager of the Company's St. Petersburg office, predicted that if the pact were ratified, "the Company has every reason to fear that not alone within ten years but within a much shorter period the foreigners . . . will bring the Company to a state of complete destruction."[56] "Only one thing could assure the security of Sitka," warned another company official, "the complete removal of the citizens of the United States from its shores."[57]

Even though this period witnessed the rapid decline of the sea otter trade, Yankee interest in Russian-America intensified. Boston traders continued to be the chief suppliers of foodstuffs and other necessities for the Russian colony, while increasing numbers of Yankee whalers followed their prey into Pacific Northwest waters, often landing on the shores of Russian-America.[58] But when, in April 1834, the Russian Government attempted to close its colonies to all American traders according to its interpretation of the 1824 Convention, the United States Government vigorously protested. Secretary of State John Forsyth informed the Russian Minister that the

treaty applied only to those areas north of 54° 40' where the Russian-American Company actually had settlements; Americans could not be excluded from the unoccupied areas.[59] The suggestion of U.S. Minister to Russia William Wilkins that "the only way in which you can overt collision and difficulties there, will be to throw the entire coast open to the fair competition of . . . the United States, England, and Russia," found little support among Russian Government and Company officials.[60]

Nesselrode found himself in a tough position. On the one hand he hoped to use American-Russian diplomatic amity to offset British commercial and political power in Europe while on the other hand, he was under great pressure to protect Russian-America from further Yankee assaults. The Russian Minister attempted to stall Forsyth, but the inevitable confrontation occurred in August 1836 when the American brig Loriot was seized by the Russian Company on an uninhabited stretch of the Russian-American coast.[61] Claiming that nothing in the 1824 Convention gave Russia the right to interfere with American vessels, Secretary of State Forsyth angrily asserted that at most Russia might claim sovereignty over the actual settlements it had established. The United States never intended to abandon fishing and trading rights on "any unoccupied coast of North America."[62]

Harsh words continued to flow, with U.S. Minister to Russia George M. Dallas suggesting to his government that it protect its "lawful commerce by forceable means," while warning Nesselrode that "armed opposition to American trade" would bring results he could not "venture to foresee."[63] While neither side backed down publicly, the Russians intercepted no other U.S. ships and American traders and whalers continued to sail Russian-American waters. Meanwhile (in 1839), partially in an attempt to halt

Yankee activities, Nesselrode approved a ten year lease of a lisiere running from Cape Spencer south to the fifty-four forty line to the Hudson's Bay Company in return for the British Company's payment of rental in furs, foodstuffs, and supplies to the Russian-American Company. This agreement, Nesselrode hoped, would do "away with all rivalry in the fur trade, . . . putting an end to the frequent occasions of friction with England and with the citizens of the United States of America which have already led to unpleasant correspondence with those Governments."[64] When Forsyth learned of the grant he told the Russian Minister to the United States that he hoped it was not true, for if Russia had signed a contract with the Hudson's Bay Company, "such a lease means renunciation of possession."[65]

While actual war had not broken out, it would be quite difficult to view events during the 1830s as tending to bolster the Russian colony. In fact, the 1824 treaty, rather than settling claims, had served to intensify differences. The same was true of other commercial contacts such as whaling which boomed along the Northwest Coast in the thirties, forties, and fifties. During this era hundreds of Yankee whalers annually hunted the leviathan in Russian-American seas, often landing along the coast. Adolf Etholen, manager of the Sitka settlement, complained in 1843 about "whaling vessels which threatened to ruin the fur trade by scaring the sea otters away and . . . whaling captains, who despite the Convention and Russian orders, continue to enter harbors, etc., in the Russian possession."[66] And the protests continued for the next decade alleging that the Yankees stole oil, as well as food and women from the Aleuts and Eskimos, leaving behind bad liquor and syphilis. All this was ruining trade and Company officials repreatedly demanded armed cruisers to keep Yankee vessels out of

the Russian domain. While the Foreign Ministry agreed to dispatch cruisers, remembering the U.S. Government's reaction to earlier Russian attempts to enforce the Convention of 1824, the ships' captains were instructed to "be very careful in their actions and so far as possible avoid occurrences that can lead to complaints."[67]

As usual the Russian Government could do little to protect its North American colonies. Yankee whaling along the Northwest Coast should not be dismissed as a one-shot enterprise whose threat to Russian-America might end as whaling there grew less profitable by the late 1850s. First of all, whaling was a complex commercial industry whose investors were always willing to diversify to meet or to create changing demands, whether it was the manufacture of cotton textiles, the exploitation of new fisheries, or other more specialized ventures. In short, the leaders of the whaling industry were also the fathers of American manufacturing, industrial, and technological capitalism--and they had political influence as well. When the Yankee whalers that they owned brought back reports of valuable fisheries, minerals, furs, or other potentially profit-making resources, the owners often attempted to diversify into these other areas.[68]

While I would not go so far as to argue that each American commercial enterprise in Russian-America inevitably led to the next, they were not unconnected either. Equally important was the fact that an increasing collaboration between maritime and landed commercial forces in the United States definitely did not make Russian-America more secure. Instead, whether the Russian-American Company was forced to depend upon American commercial interests in some instances, or to resist them in others, the result was the same; the actual weakening of the colony's ability to resist

what Nikolai Muraviev foresaw in 1853: "The ultimate rule of the United States over the whole of North-America is so natural that we must sooner or later recede."[69]

The political power of the Northwest Coast trading and whaling interests is evident from their successful opposition to the Polk Administration's desire to form a closer alliance with Russia in order to put increased pressure on Great Britain to cede all of Oregon to the United States in 1845 and 1846.[70] And, in the 1850s when most other expansionist plans were doomed as the result of increasing national disunity, landed and maritime factions from all regions continued their drive not only to protect American interests in the Pacific Northwest, but also to annex Russian-America. The men who pushed in this direction were not obscure businessmen or unimportant politicians. They included in their midst prominent political leaders of both parties such as Senators William McKendree Gwin of California and William H. Seward of New York. Hiram Sibley of Western Union headed the list of business leaders who invested in the resources and potential wealth of Russian-America. The speeches, letters, arguments, and plans of these men did not appear in some vacuum. Their analyses connected the Northwest fur trade to whaling and to the other resources of Russian-American--coal, ice, timber, and fisheries.[71]

Also, they viewed Russian-America as the stepping-stone to Asian markets, which it had been since the first Boston traders took sea otters from Baranov and sold them in Canton. Of course, like all those Americans concerned with the Northwest Coast, they desired cooperation, not conflict, with the Russian-American Company. Nevertheless, their goals were the exploitation of the resources of Russian-America and if cooperation failed

to gain results, they were open to other means of persuasion. So, when Seward proclaimed to an American audience in 1860 that he would advise the Russians to "go on and build your outposts all along the coast, even to the Arctic Ocean--they will yet become the outposts of my own country--monuments to the civilization of the United States in the Northwest," he was not only predicting the future, he was recapitulating the history of American expansion.[72]

While there is no need to repeat the story of the American-Russian Ice Company of San Francisco here, it is important to remember that the Tsar, was reluctant to sign the original twenty-five year contract with the Ice Company, because it "exceedingly reduced the value of our possession in North America." Yet Russia had no choice but to agree to the Ice Company's terms since there was no other way to guarantee the colony's supply of necessities during the Crimean War.[73] Whatever the final results of the Collins Telegraph Line, the McDonald Fisheries Scheme, or the Goldstone-Cole trading and fur proposals, they all combined to remind U.S. leaders and the Russian Government of the actual weakness of the colony to sustain a concernted American commercial drive in that area.[74] Even though the Ice Company, the Collins Line, the McDonald scheme, and the Goldstone venture all were based upon cooperation with the Russian-American Company, none had the effect of bolstering it. Rather, in combination, they delivered the final blows to a colony that for seventy years reeled under the impact of dependence, cooperation, and conflict with U.S. nationals and their government. Perhaps this dialectical process was best understood by Edward de Stoeckl, the man who negotiated the sale of Russian-America to the United States. Beginning with the 1824 Convention, he noted how, time and again,

the U.S. Government had pushed to keep Russian-America open to Yankee commerce. "But another problem menaced our possessions. I am speaking of American filibusters who swarm in the Pacific . . . . It was hoped that the little resources of our colonies would shelter them from the rapacity of the filibusterers, but it has been otherwise." For while American citizens had many rich areas of their own to exploit, "the fish, the forests, and several other products . . . have not escaped the lust of the Americans."[75]

Therefore, even if Professor Dmytryshyn is correct that "the list of American-Russian cooperation is quite long," his list is irrelevant to our understanding of the impact of American-Russian relations in the Pacific Northwest. Not all events are of equal importance. Moreover, initial cooperation or even cooperative intentions did not avoid conflicts, rather more often it led to them. Even mutual distrust of Great Britain never drove American commercial ventures or the Federal Government to ease their pressures for trading and commercial rights in Russian-America. On the other hand, distrust and fear of British power in Europe did have a limited impact on Russian policy in the Pacific Northwest in that, at times, the Russian Government resisted American demands with less vigor than it might have otherwise.[76] Nevertheless, the key to understanding the relations between the United States and Russia in regard to Russian-America has more to do with the nature of American expansion than with British or Russian policy. For as Admiral Ivan Popov concluded in 1860:

> Whatever they may say in Europe about . . . the 'Monroe Doctrine,' or the doctrine of 'manifest destiny,' anyone who has lived in the North American life cannot fail to understand instinctively that

> this principle is entering more and more into the blood of the people, and that new generations are sucking it in with their mother's milk . . . . [Americans] try to maintain . . . advantage by all means at their disposal and the question of the destruction of the influence of neighbors leads in practice to the principle of not having any.[77]

II. The Purchase of Alaska:

I argued that the nature of the relationship between American expansionist interests and Russian-America led a reluctant Russia to sell its possession to the United States in 1867. Recent scholarship has disputed my interpretation, essentially, although with more sophistication, by reasserting the traditional arguments for the reasons behind the purchase. While most admit, along with Richard Peirce, "that the fears of Marav'ev-Amurskii and Grand Duke Constantine did help bring about the sale,"[78] they, nevertheless, emphasize that four other factors were crucial: (1) The colonies had proved unprofitable for many years and showed no likelihood of ever being so.[79] (2) From a strategic point of view Russian expansion along the Amur had made the retention of the North American colonies less important.[80] (3) "Far from acting out of fear or hostility, the St. Petersburg government chose to cede Alaska in order to maintain cordial relations with Washington."[81] (4) Stoeckl was able to play upon "Seward's eagerness" to expand American territorial holdings in the Pacific in order to persuade the United States to "purchase the unwanted land," for "apparently only Seward cared much about Alaska."[82]

To argue that Russia sold Russian-America because it proved to be an

unprofitable venture and to stop there, neglects two more pressing considerations: why had the colony proved unprofitable and was unprofitability alone enough to convince Russian decision makers to sell such a vast territory? As I have shown, investors in and officers of the Russian-American Company, Russian naval officers, and various government officials all alleged that the activities of Yankee traders and whalers directly interfered with the ability of the colony to achieve financial success. No doubt, as James Gibson ably demonstrates, there were other factors which contributed to the financial condition of the colonies.[83] Nevertheless, it is crucial to recall that prior to 1853 key officials associated with the Company blamed American commercial and expansionist policies for obstructing and retarding the economic potential of Russian-America. Of course, some of these analyses were rhetorical, while others masked self-serving explanations for company failures. However, the complaints about the Yankees, as well as the attempts by the St. Petersburg government to keep traders and whalers out of Russian-America, were too frequent and too sustained to be passed off as mere oratory. Even if some cliometrician could demonstrate that, on the whole, Russian-America's economic position actually were enhanced by the American presence, it would be irrelevant because Company, government, and naval officials <u>believed</u> that the impact of the United States was detrimental to the survival of the colony.

To these earlier fears were added, after 1853, the growing conviction that Russian-America could not be defended against American annexationist desires. Interestingly, many of those who urged the cession of Russian-America to the United States considered the territory to be of actual and potential economic value, but a strategic liability. On the other hand,

many of those who urged retention of the possession concluded that the colony's economic value was insignificant but believed it absolutely essential from a strategic point of view.

Thus, urging cession to the United States in 1853 Muraviev argued that "due to its 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."[84] In 1854, at the outbreak of the Crimean War, the Russian-American Company considered a fictitious sale of Russian-America to the Ice Company of San Francisco in order to avoid a British seizure. The Russian Foreign Ministry rejected the plan fearing that once the colony was in U.S. hands, it would never be relinquished.[85]

Nevertheless, when Federal officials learned of the possible Russian willingness to sell, they immediately informed Stoeckl of the Washington government's eagerness to buy. Stoeckl worried that once American leaders believed that Russia's commitment to its territories was weak, they would press for its cession. "They are dangerous neighbors," he cautioned, "and we must avoid giving them the least quarrel."[86] By the end of 1857 the Tsar's brother, the Grand Duke Constantine, warned that the Russian-American Company could not continue in its efforts to exclude U.S. nationals "without involving our Government . . . in controversies with the Americans" which would "harm not only the company's trade, but all Russian trade in North America." The United States, Constantine predicted, "is bound to aim at the possession of the whole of North America . . . . No doubt they shall take possession of our colonies without much effort and we shall never be in a position to regain them."[87] Like Muraviev, the Grand Duke urged

his brother's government to concentrate its energy on preserving the new acquisitions along the Pacific coast of Asia.

Others, like former Russian-American Governor Ferdinand Wrangell, advocated a cession to the United States because of the colony's wealth of "rich coal deposits, ice, construction timber, fish, and excellent seaports," as well as its potential for "the development of industrial activity." For, Wrangell believed, that while "even twenty million silver rubles" could not be regarded as a fair price for Russian-America, "anticipatory prudence" dictated a sale to the United States.[88] Constantine's and Wrangell's memorandums convinced both the Tsar and the foreign ministry that negotiations should begin with 1861 as the goal for cession. Reports from Stoeckl in the United States and urgings from Admiral Ivan Popov reinforced the decision. Only the impending American civil crisis interfered with finalizing the sale with the willing Buchanan Administration.[89]

Thus, in 1863 the Tsar convened an "Extraordinary Commission" headed by Minister of Trade and Interior Butovsky to reevaluate the future of Russian-America. The Commission, while alleging that the colonies were of "small value . . . as far as industries and trade are concerned," nevertheless concluded that there were "political reasons which make their preservation by us an absolute necessity." Russian-America must be retained "as a support to our power in the Far East" and "for the revival and reinforcement of our navy."[90]

Even during the Civil War, Americans continued to push for concessions in Russian-America and these requests accelerated at the war's termination. I have discussed the impact of the American-Russian Ice Company of San Francisco, the Collins' Overland Line, The Goldstone-Cole proposals, and the

McDonald plans at great length elsewhere.[91] These ventures, plus the continued warnings of Minister Stoeckl, convinced Foreign Affairs Minister, Prince Alexander Gorchakov, that the findings of the Extraordinary Commission of 1863 should be reevaluated. Thus, in December 1866, Gorchakov submitted to the Tsar the opinions of Grand Duke Constantine, Minister of Finance Michael Reutern, and Asia Department Head Theordor R. Osten-Saken concerning the policy which should be pursued vis-a-vis Russian-America. Constantine, consistent with the position he had advocated since 1857, urged cession of the territories before the United States seized them. Reutern agreed, noting that because the colonies remained indefensible against the Americans, they would continue to be a financial failure.[92]

Osten-Saken, however, disagreed. Accepting the logic of the 1863 Extraordinary Commission, he urged retention of Russian-America because cession to the United States would place Russia's Asian holdings in the same peril to which its North American possessions had long been exposed. "Are we in a position to oppose them [the United States] in the Eastern Siberian territories?" Osten-Saken warned that, armed with the possession of Russian-America and with the Collins' telegraph, the United States would have a "sufficiently strong motive for gaining access to Japan and China along the chain of volcanic islands connecting America with Kamchatka, Kamchatka with Sakalin etc." He disputed that the sum Russia would receive for its colony could be a significant motive for the sale since "a few millions or even a few tens of millions of rubles will hardly have any State importance in an empire which has about half a billion annual income and expenditure and more than one and a half billions of debts." Osten-Saken concluded that "it would seem that the present generation had a

sacred obligation to preserve for future generations every clod of earth along with coast of an ocean which has world-wide importance."[93]

Gorchakov and Alexander rejected Osten-Saken's pleas and opted for a sale to the United States. However, they did not do so because they feared that Russian-America's value to the United States made the territories indefensible against the Americans. As Gorchakov concluded: "The means of defense are insufficient to protect them against American filibusters who swarm the Pacific." For Gorchakov the fall of Russian-America was the inevitable result of American expansion: "the Americans bought Louisiana and Florida from France and from Spain and quite recently Texas from Mexico" and now they will "do the same for our colonies." No doubt Gorchakov and Alexander understood the irony of American purchases in the past, for they must have realized that the United States had purchased Louisiana, Florida, Texas, and California by a combination of force and cash.[94]

As the debates within Russian policy-making circles demonstrate, Russian expansion to the Amur did figure significantly in the considerations which led to the sale. However, this was not so much because they made the Russian-American colonies less important, but rather because both those who advocated and opposed the cession feared American penetration of the Amur region would inevitably follow that of Russian-America.[95] Butovsky and Osten-Saken argued that retention of Russian-America was essential for the protection of Russia's Amur possessions, while Muraviev, Constantine, and others insisted that the only way to secure Eastern Siberia from U.S. expansion was to consolidate Russian power in Asia by no longer attempting to resist the United States' drive to acquire Russian-America.

This takes us to the third point, that Russia desired cordial relations with Washington and that "Russian-American rapprochement during the 1860s" led to the American willingness to buy Alaska. The possibility that Russia desired the United States as a make-weight against Great Britain does not contradict the reality that Russia was, nevertheless, forced to cede her possessions to the United States. In fact, it demonstrates how vulnerable Russian-America proved, even to minimal expansionist threats on the part of official and private American forces.

Actually, so far as relations in the Pacific Northwest are concerned, a stronger case can be made for Russia's attempting to use cooperation with the British to offset the American thrust. The 1839 agreement between the Russian-American Company and the Hudson's Bay Company provides one clear example of this policy.[96] More important than unspecified fears about Great Britain were Russian policies aimed at growing U.S. power in the Pacific. Increasingly after 1858, the Asiatic section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs worried that if the United States obtained Russian-America the result could be "various misunderstandings, disadvantages, further seizures, etc., to which we should be subject if we were to receive a new next-door neighbor in the power of the United States of North America." Osten-Saken warned that with such a cession "the distribution of the North American continent between the three great powers . . . will be disturbed," because "at the present time there is one important hindrance to a further movement of the Americans farther and farther to the west along the coast of the Pacific Ocean: the possessions of the strong naval power--England." But, Osten-Saken

predicted, "by purchasing our colonies the Americans will jump over this barrier with one step. Are we in a position to oppose them with any counter actions on the Eastern Siberian territories?" Clearly, for Osten-Saken the British supplied the make-weight against U.S. expansion. Remove British power and "the existing--and for us advantageous--equilibrium in the northwestern corner of America will be destroyed beyond repair."[97]

Notions of a rapprochement rest finally upon the belief that Americans were deceived into interpreting the visit of the Russian fleet to the United States in 1863 as an act of support for the Union cause. While Russia, fearful of a war over Poland, actually sent the fleet to avoid its being blocked up in Cronstadt harbor during the winter of 1863-64, the Union leaders were, the story goes, naively led to view the visit as an act of friendship.[98] Yet, as I have demonstrated elsewhere, American leaders, particularly Seward and Sumner, knew why the vessels had come and consciously used the fleet's appearance to persuade the French and the British that intervention or even recognition of the Confederacy, might bring about a European war with Russia in alliance with the United States.[99] Moreover, much of the American press remained hostile to Russia because of its suppression of the Polish Rebellion of 1863. In any case, it is the height of historical naiveté to believe that U.S. leaders would have purchased Alaska because they desired to show their appreciation to Russia for an act whose motives they understood.[100]

Finally the suggestion that Washington purchased Alaska only because Seward wanted it fails for several reasons. What is astounding about the 1867 purchase was not the fact that there was some minimal opposition to

it, but rather given the domestic political situation; that it so easily passed through the Congress. Those who controlled the Senate were in the midst of a bitter and protracted battle with the Johnson Administration over Reconstruction policy. Secretary of State Seward's continued support of Johnson's positions earned him the lasting enmity of Congressional opponents of the Administration. For as Stoeckl realized, the opposition to the purchase treaty "is not aimed at the 'transaction' itself as from a passionate animosity which reigns in the Congress against the President and even more against the Secretary of State."[101] Even so, on April 9, 1967, only ten days after Seward submitted it, the Treaty of Cession was ratified overwhelmingly by the Senate.[102] And while Seward must certainly be credited with orchestrating the campaign in its favor, the treaty found wide national support among influential newspapers. Many of those newspapers which ridiculed the purchase of "Walrussia," nevertheless urged Senate approval in their editorial columns. Even a cursory reading of articles and editorials in March and April would demonstrate that the press believed Alaska would prove a valuable asset to the United States because of its important fishing and whaling areas, its natural resources, its geographic position which would surround British Columbia, and its location as a natural bridge to the commerce of the Pacific and Asia.[103] Aside from Horace Greeley's rabidly anti-Administration New York Tribune, no substantial press opposition appeared. Also, the treaty had other important supporters inside and outside the government including former Assistant Navy Secretary Gustavus Fox, quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs, Julius Hilgard of the Coastal Survey, Professor Spencer Baird of the Smithsonian Institute, Commander

John Rogers, Congressman Thaddeus Stephens, Perry M. Collins, and Hiram Sibley of Western Union. The most important advocate was Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Charles Sumner, whose initial opposition turned to enthusiastic support thanks to Seward's efforts. Sumner guided the treaty through the Senate, delivering a remarkable three hour speech which reviewed American commercial and political dealings with Russian-America. For Sumner there was no question of the economic and strategic advantages that the treaty offered to the United States.[105]

It is true that the House of Representatives did not approve the appropriation of the money for the purchase for over a year. However, this was due less to opposition to the purchase than to several other factors. First, the House could not have approved the bill prior to December 1867, since it was not in session when the Senate ratified the treaty and was not scheduled to convene until December. Second, as a money bill, the appropriation would, as a matter or routine, have to go through committee--not generally a speedy process. Third, there was no sense of urgency (although Stoeckl was somewhat anxious) because the United States had taken actual possession of Alaska on October 18, 1867. Finally, the Congress had suspended all business in the Spring of 1868 for President Johnson's impeachment trial. Even so, on May 18, while the impeachment proceeding was in progress, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs approved the appropriation of $7,200,000 and in July the House passed it by a large majority.[106] While much has been written about Stoeckl's use of William Walker allegedly to bribe unsympathetic congressmen, even Richard Jensen agrees that the appropriation really was never in doubt.[107] More important, those in the House who spoke in favor of the

purchase urged acquisition for the same reasons that Seward and Sumner had--its value to the United States.[108]

It would be foolish, of course, to deny that Seward was an ardent expansionist, but it is crucial to recall the fact that while during this period he pushed for the annexation of British Columbia, the purchase of the Danish West Indies, and the abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty limiting the U.S. right to construct an isthmian canal, Seward succeeded only in Russian-America.[109] The reason for this one success rests upon the fact that it was the culmination of seventy years of American-Russian competition along the Northwest Coast. Perhaps the story was best summed up by Edward de Stoeckl who in 1867, concluded that in the final analysis Russia had been forced out of its North American territory: "Menaced by American neighbors our possessions would entangle us in serious disputes with the Federal Government and finish by becoming American property."[110]

III. Tentative Conclusions:

As an historian of the United States I remain most concerned with what this persistent interest in Russian-America tells us about United States expansion. While for many traders, whalers, and commercial schemers, Russian-America offered actual financial gain, for many others the idea of the potential of the Russian colony--be it economic, political, or strategic--served as a driving force. Thus, I would argue that ideology played at least as important a role in the purchase of Alaska as material interest. By this I mean several things. First, like all nineteenth century expansionist visions, the latent rather than the actual value of

Russian-America sustained a seventy year private and Federal drive. Second, like other expansionist perceptions, a good deal of Russian-America's potential value lay in the fact that it led to other expansionist projects--in this case the markets of China and Asia.

At a very minimum scholars must no longer view the cession of Russian-America as a curiosity, but rather as an integral part of nineteenth century expansion. Yet, since the annexation of Alaska took place after the Civil War, historians must revise, as well, worn out notions of a "Civil War Synthesis" that have assumed that landed expansion virtually disappeared from American life and thought after 1848.[111] They must revise as well their conclusions that because of the Civil War, American expansionism turned from continentalism toward commercial, insular expansion. For continentalism did not die with the Civil War, and if a transition took place from landed expansion toward commercial expansion, the turning point was more likely the Alaska Purchase and not the Civil War.

Since the history of American-Russian relations in the Pacific Northwest is almost always examined piecemeal, if at all, the Alaska Purchase is almost always explained exceptionally, and thus, ahistorically. Yet when viewed from the perspective of those who sustained actual profits or retained visions of the potential of Russian-America, one should not be surprised that the annexation of the Russian colony may prove more important to our understanding of the history of the United States than usually is imagined. While the interests which traditionally concerned themselves with Russian-America--supply, fur trade, whaling, fisheries, ice, coal, timber, etc.--were pre-modern in many ways, they were also, in

much more important ways, transitional enterprises that underlay American industrial capitalism. First of all, they tended to be corporate rather than individual undertakings. Shipping and whaling required large capital outlays, and investors, reluctant to risk large sums on any one voyage, limited their liabilities and maximized their profits by share-holding. Moreover, the men who invested directly and indirectly in Northwest Coast enterprises diversified their investments in many projects and thus simultaneously risked capital not only in shipping, fishing, fur trading, and whaling, but also in cotton textile factories, banking, and insurance companies.[112] These were the men who laid the foundations for Northeastern corporate capitalism. Thus, while some of their financial enterprises seemed pre-modern, they pursued them in modernizing ways.[113]

The political and strategic visions aimed at Russian-America were modern as well, in that they were aimed at the requirements of a modern American empire--natural resources and markets in underdeveloped areas for an expansive American economy.[114] Thus, it is not strange that the purchase of Alaska, more than any other expansionist event of the nineteenth century, was an attempt to resolve the contradictions which had divided landed and maritime expansionists since the 1780s, if not before. Of course, this resolution led to new contradictions. Yet, Columbus had stumbled on the New World in his voyage for Asia markets and, with the purchase of Alaska, America's Columbian paradox took another giant step.

NOTES

1. The fullest formulation of my view appears in Conflict on the Northwest Coast: American-Russian Rivalry in the Pacific Northwest, 1790-1867 (Westport, Conn. & London, England, 1975).

2. See for instance, Frank A. Golder, "The Purchase of Alaska," American Historical Review, 25 (April, 1920), 411-425; Thomas A. Bailey, "Why the United States Purchased Alaska," Pacific Historical Review, 3 (March, 1934), 34-49; Victor J. Farrar, Purchase of Alaska (Washington, 1935), p. 19; A.G. Mazour, "The Prelude to Russia's Departure from America," Pacific Historical Reivew, 10 (September, 1941), 316.

3. Thomas A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People (New York, 1969), p. 365.

4. The most recent presentation of this view appears in Ronald J. Jensen, The Alaska Purchase and Russian-American Relations (Seattle, 1975), pp. 63-67.

5. William A. Williams, American-Russian Relations, 1781-1947 (New York, 1952), pp. 20-22.

6. A.V. Efimov, Ocherki istorii SShA: ot otkrytii Ameriki do okonchaniia grazhdanskoi voiny [Essays on the history of the United States: from the discovery of America to the conclusion of the Civil War] 2nd. edition (Moscow, 1958), 1: 382-402, 503-575, 670-690; and"Diplomatiia SShA v 40-60-kh godakh 19 v. i v period grazhdanskoi voiny," [U.S. diplomacy in the 1840s through the 1860s and during the Civil War], Istoriia diplomatii, 2nd edition (Moscow, 1959), 1: 670-690.

7. T.M. Batueva, Amerikanskaia ekspansiia v russkokh Vladeniakh na severe Tikhogo okeana v seredine 19 v. i pokupka Aliaski SShA v 1867 [The American expansion in the Russian possessions in the North Pacific in the middle of the 19th century and the purchase of Alaska by the USA in 1867], (Moscow, 1953); also see her "Prokhozhdenie dogovora o pukupka Aliaski v kongresse SShA v 1867-1868," [Passing the treaty on the purchase of Alaska in the U.S. Congress in 1867-1868] Novaia i noveishaia istoriia, 4 (1971), 117-124.

8. A.L. Narochnitskii, Kolonial'nia politika kapitalisticheskikh derzhav na Dal'nem Vostoke, 1860-1895 [Colonial policy of the capitalist countries in the Far East], (Moscow, 1956), pp.

9. M. Belov, "O prodazha Aliaski," [The selling of Alaska], Nauka i zhizn', (no. 1, 1967), 69-73; Belov's article was translated into English and published as "Sale of Alaska," Alaska Review, (Spring/Summer, 1967), 8-19.

10. N.N. Bolkhovitinov, Stanovlenie russko-amerikanskikh otnoshenii, 1775-1815, (Moscow, 1966) [published in English as The Beginnings of Russian-American Relations, 1775-1815, (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), transl. by Elana Levin] and Russko-amerikanskie otneshenii, 1815-1832 [Russian-American relations, 1815-1832], (Moscow, 1975). I will discuss Bolkhovitinov's other works which related to Russian-American relations later on in this essay.

11. For instance see Henry R. Huttenbach's reply to Belov's essay [Alaska Review, (Spring/Summer, 1970), 33-45 . Huttenbach concludes that "the Russian government, freely, without pressure from the United States, disengaged itself from Alaska." Only Peter Buzanski "Alaska and

Nineteenth Century Diplomacy," Journal of the West, 6 (1967), 451-467] argues that Americans desired the acquisition of Russian-America prior to 1867.

12. See note 4.

13. See my review of Jensen's book in The Journal of American History, 63 (June, 1976), 139-140.

14. James R. Gibson, Imperial Russia in Frontier America: The Changing Geography of Supply of Russian America, 1784-1867 (New York, 1976), pp. 216-217, 172.

15. The most recent and most sensible argument in favor of amicable relations appears in John Lewis Gaddis, Russia, The Soviet Union, and The United States: An Interpretive History (New York, 1978), pp. 1-26.

16. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, p. xi.

17. N.N. Bolkhovitinov, "Russia and the Declaration of the Non-Colonization Principle: New Archival Evidence," Oregon Historical Review, 72 (June, 1971), 101-102.

18. Bolkhovitinov, Beginnings of Russian-American Relations, pp. 357-359; My own work has recently been criticized in the Soviet Union for over-emphasizing conflict, see V.N. Ponomarev, Voprosy istorii (4), 1978, 185-187.

19. Richard A. Pierce, "Review," Slavic Review, 35 (December, 1976), 734.

20. Basil Dmytryshyn, "Review," Russian Review (April, 1976), 192.

21. C. Bickford O'Brien, "Review," California Historical Quarterly, ( ), 88-89.

22. Thomas A. Bailey, America Faces Russia: Russian-American Relations from Early Times to Our Day (Ithaca, 1950), pp. 47, 50; see especially Chapter 5,

"The Calm of Despotism," pp. 45-56.

23. See Frank A. Golder, "The Russian Fleet and the American Civil War," American Historical Review, 20 (July, 1915), 801-812; Bailey, America Faces Russia, pp. 81-94. For a critical review of the historiography surrounding the fleet visit see Howard I. Kushner, "The Russian Fleet and the American Civil War: Another View," The Historian, 34 (August, 1972), esp., 633-635. Also see I. Ia. Levitas, "Russkie eskadry v Amerike," [Squadrons of the Russian navy in America] Istoriia SSSR, 12 (September/October, 1958), 135-141.

24. Later in this paper I will discuss the implications of the fleet visit more fully.

25. Bolkhovitinov, "Russia and the Non-Colonization Principle," p. 102; Also see his Doktrina Monro: prosikozhdenie i kharakteer [The Monroe Doctrine: its origin and character], (Moscow, 1959), 186-209, 287-304; and his Russko-amerikanskie otnoshenii, 1815-1834, pp. 183-243.

26. The relationship between expansion and projection is best illustrated in Michael Paul Rogin, Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian (New York, 1975), esp. pp. 113-248.

27. William Nesbet Chambers, Old Bullion Benton: Senator from the West Coast (Boston, 1956), pp. 883-884; Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, p. 28.

28. Annals of Congress, 16 Cong., 2 sess., January, 1821, pp. 946-959 (see pp. 955-956 on Russia); Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 29-30.

29. Poletica to Nesselrode, January 21/February 2, 1821, in S.B. Okun, The Russian-American Company, transl. by Carl Ginsburg (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), pp. 78-80; Frank A. Golder, ed., Guide to Materials for American History in Russian Archives (Washington, D.C., 1917, 1937) 2 vols., 1: 37.

30. Vasilli Golovnin, "Letters of Captain Golovnin on the Condition of Russian-America in the Year 1818," mss., Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; Ukase of September 4/16, 1821, American State Papers, Foreign Relations (hereafter cited as ASP:FR) 4:857-867; Proceedings of the Alaska Boundary Tribunal (hereafter cited as Alaska Tribunal) 2 vols., (Washington, 1904) 2: appendix, 26-28.

31. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 35-39.

32. William Sturgis, "Examinations of the Russian Claims to the Pacific Northwest Coast of America," North American Review, 15 (October, 1822), 370-401; Also see Boston Daily Advertiser, January 28, 31, February 6, 20, 1822.

33. See Adams to Middleton, July 22, 1823, ASP:FR, 5: 436-437; Ivanov to Nesselrode, November, 1822, January, 1823, Guide to Russian Archives, 1: 77.

34. For instance see Niles Weekly Register, December 29, 1821, pp. 278-279, July 17, 1822, p. 239, November 9, 1822, p. 157; National Intelligencer, December 22, 1821, February 12, 13, 1822; Newburyport Herald, quoted in Niles Weekly Register, June 8, 1822, p. 226-227; Baltimore Chronicle, quoted in ibid., May 10, 1823, p. 146.

35. Adams to Abigal Adams, The Writings of John Quincy Adams, ed. Worthington Ford (New York, 1913-1917), 4: 129; Bolkhovitinov, "Russian and the Non-Colonization Principle," pp. 105-106.

36. For instance see Howard I. Kushner, "The Russian-American Diplomatic Contest for the Pacific Basin and the Monroe Doctrine," Journal of the West, 15 (April, 1976), 73-78.

37. Middleton to Adams, August 8/21, 1822, Alaska Tribunal, 2: appendix,

42-45, which includes "inclosure #1": Middleton to Nesselrode, July 24/August 5, 1822, "note verbale" (prepared, but not delivered), ibid., pp. 44-45. See also, Kushner, "Russian-American Diplomatic Contest," pp. 72-75.

38. On August 12, 1822, the Russian Government secretly instructed the Russian-American Company that new negotiations were in progress and that the Ukase was suspended pending further instructions. See Guriev to Chief Manager of the Russian-American Company, July 18/30, 1822 "secret", Alaska Tribunal, 2: appendix, 40-41; Board of Administration of Russian-American Company to Chief Manager, July 31/August 12, 1822, ibid.; See also, Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 51-52, 58-62.

39. Adams to Lloyd, January 15, 1823, in Samuel Flagg Bemis, John Quincy Adams and the Foundation of American Foreign Policy, (New York, 1949), p. 515; John Quincy Adams, Memoirs, ed. C.F. Adams, (Philadelphia, 1874-1877), 6: 163.

40. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 55-56.

41. Adams, Memoirs, 6: 200-203, 208.

42. Ernest May also has argued that the Monroe Doctrine was framed by domestic political considerations, but, in so doing, he had neglected the distinction between the Doctrine and the Message. See Ernest R. May, The Making of the Monroe Doctrine (Cambridge, Mass., 1975). For a critical analysis of May's thesis see my review essay in the Naval War College Review, 29 (Spring, 1977), 116-119.

43. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, p. 57.

44. Ibid., pp. 7-8; Bolkhovitinov, Beginnings of Russian-American Relations, pp. 181-186; Gibson, Imperial Russian in Frontier America, p. 157;

K.T. Khlebnikov, Baranov, Chief Manager of the Russian Colonies in America, transl. by C. Bearne, ed. R.A. Pierce, (Kingston, Ontario, 1973), pp. 41-42.

45. Nikolai Petrovich Rezanov, The Rezanov Boyage to Neuva California in 1806 (San Frnacisco, 1926), pp. 69-72.

46. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, p. 9.

47. Rumiantsev to Harris, May 17, 1808, ASP:FR, 5: 349.

48. Dashkov to Smith, January 4, April 24, 1810, ASP:FR, 5: 438-439, 441; Smith to Dashkov, May 5, 1810, ibid., pp. 441-442; Smith to Adams, May 5, 1810, NA RG59, "Diplomatic Instructions, Russia"; Adams to Smith, October 5, 30, 1810, ASP:FR, 5: 442-443. See also, Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 12-14; Bolkhovitinov, Beginnings of Russian-American Relations, pp. 255-258.

49. Adams to Smith, October 12, 1810, ASP:FR 5: 443.

50. "Memorandum of the Governing Board to the Tsar," December 18, 1811, in Okun, Russian-American Company, p. 75; Guide to Russian Archives, 1: 139.

51. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 16-17; See also, Gibson, Imperial Russia in Frontier America, pp. 73-89, for a discussion of around-the-world voyages to supply the colony.

52. "Memorandum of the Governing Board to the Tsar," December 18, 1811, in Okun, Russian-American Company, p. 75.

53. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 59-62.

54. Nesselrode to Mordinov, 1824 in Okun, Russian-American Company, p. 89.

55. Middleton to Adams, April 7/19, 1824, ASP:FR, 5: 457-462; Adams to Rush, July 22, 1823, in Bemis, Adams and Foreign Policy, pp. 446-448.

56. Ryleyev to Kankrin, March, 1824, in Okun, Russian-American Company, pp. 90-91.

57. Ibid., pp. 91-92.

58. P.A. Tikhmenev, The Historical Review of the Russian-American Company, (St. Petersburg, 1861-1863) mss. transl. by D. Krenov, University of Washington Library, Seattle, 1: 398-399; Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 65-66.

59. "Correspondence with Russia, 1835-1838," House Executive Document, 2, 25 Cong. 3 sess., p. 53; Wilkins to Forsyth, November 23, 1835, ibid., p. 61; Wilkins to Nesselrode, November 1/13, 1835, ibid., pp. 63-65.

60. Wilkins to Forsyth, December 11, 1835, ibid., pp. 66-70.

61. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 76-77.

62. Forsyth to Dallas, November 3, 1837, House Executive Document, 2, pp. 58-59.

63. Dallas to Nesselrode, March 5/17, 1838, ibid., pp. 82-83.

64. Nesselrode to Kankrin, January 4, 1839, Alaska Tribunal, 2: appendix, 312.

65. Bodisco to Nesselrode, August 10/22, 1829, May, 1840, Guide to Russian Archives, 1: 65-66. For terms of the elase see Tikhmenev, Russian-American Company, 1:411-412, appendix, 323-325; See also Gibson, Imperial Russia in Frontier America, pp. 202-208.

66. Tikhmenev, Russian-American Company, 2: 152; For a fuller discussion of this subject see Howard I. Kushner, " 'Hellships': Yankee Whaling Along the Coasts of Russian-America, 1835-1852," New England Quarterly, 45 (March, 1972), 81-95.

67. Tikhmenev, Russian-American Company, 2: 153-157, 164; See also Gibson, Imperial Russia in Frontier America, p. 72.

68. For instance see Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 122-124.

69. Hallie M. McPherson, "The Interest of William McKendree Gwin in the Purchase of Alaska," Pacific Historical Review, 3 (March, 1934), 29-30.

70. Howard I. Kushner, " 'The Oregon Question Is . . . A Massachusetts Question'," Oregon Historical Quarterly, 75 (December, 1974), 316-335.

71. Howard I. Kushner, " 'Seward's Folly?': American Commerce in Russian-America and the Alaska Purchase," California Historical Quarterly, 54 (Spring, 1975), 5-26.

72. William H. Seward, Works, ed. G. E. Baker (Boston, 1884-1885), 4: 422. See also Howard I. Kushner, "Visions of the Northwest Coast: Gwin and Seward in the 1850s," Western Historical Quarterly, 4 (July, 1973), 295-306.

73. See Wrangell to Tsar, April 9, 1857, NA RG59, "Cession of Alaska," annex 2; Memorandum of the Tsar, April 29, 1857, ibid., annex 3; Tikhmenev, Russian-American Company, 2: 195.

74. Kushner, "Seward's Folly," pp. 5-26.

75. Stoeckl to Gorchakov, July 12/24, 1867, "Cession of Alaska," annex 43. Upon reading this memorandum Gorchakov wrote "très remarquable" on the top and sent it on to Tsar Alexander who wrote under Gorchakov's comment, "Yes, and we must make an extract and publish it."

76. This was especially true during the Crimean War. See Tikhmenev, Russian-American Company, 2: 195: Wrangell to Tsar, April 9, 1857, "Cession of Alaska," annex 2; Memorandum of the Tsar, April 29, 1857, ibid., annex 3.

77. Popov, "Memorandum," February 7, 1860, "Cession of Alaska," annex 9.

78. Pierce, "Review," p. 734; Jensen, The Alaska Purchase, pp. 39-61; Gibson, Imperial Russia in Frontier America, pp. 28-29.

79. The most persuasive presentation of this view appears in Gibson, Imperial Russia in Frontier America, pp. 28-29, 216-217.

80. Mary E. Wheeler, "Review," Western Historical Quarterly, 7 (July, 1976), 313.

81. Jensen, The Alaska Purchase, p. 34; O'Brien, "Review," pp. 88-89; Morgan Sherwood, "Review," Pacific Historical Review, 48 (February, 1977), 121.

82. Jensen, The Alaska Purchase, pp. 58, 69, 72-73.

83. However, it is one thing to demonstrate that the monopolistic Russian-American Company failed to sustain high profits and quite another to conclude that Russian-America was of little economic value to Russia--either actually or potentially. Also, as Gibson admits, by the mid 1850s Russian-America's food supply was no longer a problem since abundant provisions were available from California. Gibson, Imperial Russia in Frontier America, pp. 196-197.

84. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 133-134.

85. Ibid.

86. Stoeckl, quoted in F. A. Golder, "The Purchase of Alaska," p. 412.

87. Constantine to Gorchakov, December 7, 1857 (o. s.), Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

88. Wrangell, "Concerning the Cession of the American Colonies to the Government of the United States," April 9, 1857," "Cession of Alaska," annex 2.

89. "Memorandum Concerning Cession to the U.S. of Our Possessions in North America," April 1857, (see Tsar's notation of April 29, 1857), ibid., annex 3.

90. "Report of the Commission on Organization of Russian-America," (St. Petersburg, 1863), 2 vols., 1: 233-237, mss. translation in English, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

91. Kushner, "Seward's Folly," pp. 5-117.

92. Gorchakov to Tsar, December 12, 1866 (o. s.), "Cession of Alaska," annex 12.

93. Osten-Saken to Gorchakov, December 16, 1866, (o. s.), ibid., annex 15.

94. Gorchakov to Alexander, December 1866, ibid., annex 12; also see item 5.

95. American commercial activity in Russian Asia began in Kamchatka in the mid-1830s with the trading company of William H. Boardman of Boston. This commerce continued and expanded to Okhotsk in the 1840s and to the Amur region in the 1850s. Increasing complaints about the behavior of Yankee traders in Russian Asia were lodged by the Russian Company which administered this area. See Tikhmenev, Russian-American Company, 1: 408; Todd to Webster, April 20/May 2, 1843; Todd to Upshur, August 7/19, 1843, NA RG59, "Despatches, Russia;" Cass to Stoeckl, December 8, 1860, ibid., "Notes to Russian Legation".

96. Nesselrode to Kankrin, Jan. 4, 1839, Alaska Tribunal, 2, Appendix, 312.

97. Osten-Saken to Gorchakov, December 16, 1866 (o. s.), "Cession of Alaska," annex 15.

98. see note 23.

99. Kushner, "Russian Fleet and Civil War," pp. 633-649.

100. Of course, politicians like Seward and Charles Sumner were not above using the fleet visit as one argument among many to persuade some Congressmen and the press to support the cession treaty. See Charles Sumner, Complete Works (Boston, 1900), 11: 228-230.

101. Stoeckl to Gorchakov, March 22/April 3, 1867, "Cession of Alaska," annex 26.

102. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 143-144, 152.

103. Ibid., pp. 146-147.

104. Ibid., p. 149.

105. Sumner, Works, 11: 181-349.

106. Kushner, Conflict on the Northwest Coast, pp. 152-153; Jensen, The Alaska Pruchase, p. 108.

107. Jensen, The Alaska Purchase, p. 119.

108. Ibid., pp. 113-120.

109. See Ernest Paolino, The Foundations of American Empire: William H. Seward and U.S. Foreign Policy (Ithaca, 1973), esp. pp. 105-144.

110. Stoeckl to Gorchakov, July 12/24, 1867, "Cession of Alaska," annex 43.

111. For more on this point see Joel Silbey, "The Civil War Synthesis in American Political History," Civil War History 10 (June, 1964), 13-140; A full discussion of this problem appears in an as yet unpublished paper by Frederick C. Drake, entitled "Southern Expansionism Reconsidered", presented at the 14th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of American Studies, Montréal, Québec, October 28, 1978; Also see Charles Vevier, "American Continentalism, An Idea of Expansion, 1845-1910", American Historical Review, 65 (January, 1960), 329-330.

112. See Peter Dobkin Hall, "Marital Selection and Business in Massachusetts Merchant Families, 1700-1900," in Michael Gordon, ed., The American Family in Social-Historical Perspective, 2nd edition (New York, 1978), pp. 101-114; Kushner, "Hellships," pp. 86-90.

113. For a discussion of this point in relation to the ice trade and other enterprises see Richard D. Brown, Modernization: The Transformation of American Life, 1600-1865 (New York, 1976), pp. 132-138.

114. See Walter LaFeber, The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898 (Ithaca, 1963), pp. 1-7.