Scant Patience, Stupendous Mendacity

Theodore Roosevelt and Diplomacy in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905)

Dr. William J. Hansard
Outreach Coordinator
Public Historian

Theodore Roosevelt Center
At Dickinson State University
WHITE HOUSE,
WASHINGTON.

Personal.

Tacoma, Washington,
May 22, 1909.

Dear John:

I think that the Dickey outcome is entirely satisfactory. I have notified Frye, sending to him your official letter.

As for China, I do not see that there is anything we can say, even by way of suggestion. The mendacity of the Russians is something appalling. The bad feature of the situation from our standpoint is that Japan as yet seems to think we cannot fight to keep Manchuria open. I hate being in the position of seeming to bluster without backing it up. When I get back I shall have to go over the whole China situation with you. That you have handled it in a most masterly manner I need hardly say; now I would like to try to get some idea of what we are to do in the future.

I have suggested to Moody that we send a first-class battleship from our squadron from the Azores to go up with the old cruisers of the European squadron to Kiel. As you say, the attitude of the German government is peculiar, but if
Personal: - Be very careful that no one gets a chance to see this.

June 19, 1905.

Dear [name]:

Like everyone else, I, of course, continue to be immensely interested in the war in the East. Do you recall some of the letters I have written you in the past about Russia? I never anticipated in the least such a rise as this of Japan's, but I have never been able to make myself afraid of Russia in the present. I like the Russian people and believe in them. I earnestly hope that after the fiery ordeal through which they are now passing they will come forth found in the right way for doing well in the future. But I see nothing of permanent good that can come to Russia, either for herself or for the rest of the world, until her people begin to throw off the yoke of despotism, of civil liberty, and of a sense of self-government. There may be the observational advantages of a captive, they are indispensable to the progress of intelligence and individuality in a civilized people. Either there must be stagnation in the people, or there must be that I should hope would be a gradual but a very real growth of governmental institutions to meet the growth and the capacity and need for liberty.

The other day the Japanese Minister here met Harlan, a Harvard graduate, lcendel with me and I had a most interesting talk. I told him that I thought their side of danger was less Japan might...
My dear Sir: Stimson:

Unfortunately, Japan has notified us that she would regard any attempt at mediation as unfriendly because she insists that Russia is simply striking for delay and intends to take advantage of every delay to perfect her preparations, so that Japan's interests imperatively demand either an immediate agreement or else war. Russia, meanwhile, has given us to understand that if we have anything to propose it must be to Japan and not to her. We consulted France and found she would not help in any way toward mediation. At present we have been endeavoring to secure the neutrality of China's neutrality. I think it is of utmost importance that we have to be accessible at this time would render it dangerous. Secretary Hay strongly thinks so too. I am informed you will be at Baltimore. I should like to see you before long.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

[Address]

[Name]
GENERAL ORDER
No. 184

WASHINGTON, March 11, 1904.

The following Executive Order is published for the information and guidance of the naval service:

WHITE HOUSE, March 10, 1904.

All officials of the Government, civil, military, and naval, are hereby
renewed to impress upon the officers of their respective services the
necessity of maintaining the highest of discipline and decorum in all
persons on board their respective ships or vessels. The Government of
the United States represents the people of the United States in its
international relations, and the officers of the service are repre
sented by their conduct. The Government is not only bound to the
people who elected it but is responsible to the people through its
representatives, and when it possesses, it is the duty of the
people to protect it as a public trust. The people and the
Government are one, and the conduct of their representatives
must be such as to inspire confidence in their integrity and
decency. Such a lawfulness of conduct and balance of sentiment
is desirable in the officers of the service, and it should be
remembered that the highest of discipline and decorum are
in the performance of official duty. There must not be added
any presumption or element of excuse to the misbehavior of
officials. If it is always understood in the United States
that our life of or by our conduct is to bind us together and
conduce to our well-being and strength as a nation, that our
courtesy and deportment are not only a reflection on our
people, but a cause to be taken in the highest of consideration,
and that the military and naval officers are to be held
in the highest of respect and are to be held responsible to
the Government and the people, it will tend to the
maintenance of our dignity and honor. All the
officials of the Government, civil, military, and naval, are
enjoined to hold in their behalf to the fullest extent in the
people of the United States the confidence and respect
which we are now in receipt.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

CHARLES H. DOLLING,
Acting Secretary.
March 29, 1905

Dear Mr. Roosevelt

Please send the President a copy of this letter. Our official in Washington is the same; and I repeat the request to be included in the next dispatch.

These things go their course. My views are not unimportant, and the balance of the situation is not stable. It would be difficult to put an end to all the excitement that is taking place. It is like a great storm that threatens to break over the country. The people are coming round in bands to express their sympathy and sometimes their sympathy. "I would let my wife go to the country this year, if she were in all others.

The former landlord, characteristic, and much esteemed by the neighbors, is now coming on his own accord, and my correspondents are urging him to come on. He is disposed to be cautious, and is not likely to come on until after the second time. He is willing to use his influence to prevent any disturbance. The people are now in arms, and the present government is in a state of suspense. The balance of the situation is not stable. It is like a great storm that threatens to break over the country. The people are coming round in bands to express their sympathy and sometimes their sympathy. "I would let my wife go to the country this year, if she were in all others.

As for the police, they are trying to persuade the workmen and presenters that the conspiracy is real and present. Indeed, both sides are afraid.
On June 8th the following dispatch was sent by the President, through diplomatic channels, to the Japanese and Russian Governments:

"The President feels that the time has come when in the interest of all mankind he must endeavor to see if it is not possible to bring to an end the terrible and inescapable conflict now being waged. With both Russia and Japan the United States has cherished ties of friendship and good will. It hopes for the prosperity and welfare of each, and it feels that the progress of the world is not hurt by the war between these two great nations. The President accordingly urges the Russian and Japanese governments not only for their own sake, but in the interest of the whole civilized world, to open direct negotiations for peace with one another. The President suggests that these peace negotiations be conducted directly and exclusively between the belligerents in other words that there may be a meeting of Russian and Japanese plenipotentiaries or delegates without any intermediary, in order to see if it is not possible for those representatives of the two powers to agree to terms of peace. The President earnestly asks that the Japanese government do not agree to such meeting, and is asking the Russian government likewise to agree. While the President does not feel that any intermediary should be called for in respect to the peace negotiations themselves be he is entirely willing to do what he properly can if the two powers concerned feel that his services will be of any in arranging the preliminaries as to the time and place of meeting. But if even these preliminaries can be arranged directly between the two powers, or in any other way, the President will be glad, as his sole purpose is to bring about a meeting which the whole civilized world will pray may result in peace."

TELEGRAM.

White House,
Washington.

SIR: (Received June 18, 1894, 2:13 p.m.)
Secretary of State,
Washington.

The following note is just received from the foreign office, which I transmit in full:

I did not fail to place before my august Majesty the telegraphic communication which your excellency has been pleased to transmit to me under instructions of your government. His Majesty, much moved by the sentiments expressed by the President, is glad to find in it a new proof of the traditional friendship which unites Russia to the United States of America, as well as an evidence of the high value which Mr. Roosevelt attaches even as His Imperial Majesty does to that universal peace so essential to the welfare and progress of all humanity.

With regard to the eventual meeting of Russian and Japanese plenipotentiaries—

"In order to see if it is not possible for the two powers to agree to terms of peace", the Imperial Government has no objection in principle to this endeavor. If the Japanese Government expresses a like desire—

Sincerely,

[Signature]

(End)
You told me to the President that the Japanese Government desired the ultimate object to be the definitive conclusion of peace and with a view to attain that object the Japanese Government intend to close their plenipotentiaries with full powers to negotiate and conclude terms of peace. Read the further wording of the Russian note justifies suspending this Russian offer until a grant of the plenipotentiaries without to receive Japan's conditions of peace or in other words that the German to take advantage of both and continue in much closer to renew Japan's efforts. The meeting of the two sides is expected.

Plenipotentiaries of Japan will meet the plenipotentiaries in some one place and the result will be the absolute fault and will not be the death of Russia. The decision of the President regards Japanese Government wishes to have the Russian to assist in knowing what to do and it is a matter of Russia to confer on the plenipotentiaries full powers to negotiate and conclude terms of peace. The question is not difficult if it is thought in conclusion the question of Russia in so disposed.

Regarding the place of meeting you will inform the President that the Japanese Government would be willing to go to Europe. The reason is due to the good offices of the President that the meeting was made possible. The meeting of plenipotentiaries of Japan and Russia more than help will confirm Russian plenipotentiaries and certainly nothing more than that can be gained or selected if the want or need other place in United States may be selected.
Dear George:

Your letter of the 16th of June, and also your exceedingly interesting note concerning your interview with the Czar have just come. It is admirable in every way. You may be interested in knowing that one of the last things poor John Hay said to me was to express his pleasure at how well you were doing. Eddy has been writing him a letter of wild enthusiasm contrasting you with McCormick. Hay’s death is to me a severe personal loss, and no one in America can quite fill the gap he makes, because of his extraordinary literary and personal charm as well as his abilities as a public man. Root, however, will make in my judgment at least as good a Secretary of State as we have ever had.

I did my best to get the Japanese to consent to an armistice, but they have refused, as I feared they would. Lansdowne’s trickiness has recoiled upon the Russian Government. The Japanese are entirely confident that they can win whatever they wish by force of arms, whereas they are deeply distrustful of Russia’s sincerity of purpose in these peace negotiations. Russia cannot expect peace unless she makes substantial concessions, for the Japanese triumph is absolute and Russia’s position critical in the extreme. I earnestly hope the Czar will see that he must at all hazards and all cost make peace with Japan now and turn his attention to internal affairs. If he does not I believe that the disaster to Russia will be so great that she will cease to count among the great powers for a generation to come — unless indeed, as foreshadowed in your last letter, there is a revolution which makes her count as the French did after their revolution.

Always yours,

Theodore Roosevelt

Hon. George W. H. Meyer,
American Ambassador,
St. Petersburg, Russia.
WHY NOT SETTLE IT SOCIALLY AT OYSTER BAY?
PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT UNDER WATER THREE HOURS IN PLUNGER

In Submarine Boat He Tests Its Marvelous Performances.

SENSATIONS ENJOYABLE.

Clad like one of the crew, the President worked levers of wonderful craft.

SUBMARINE SENSATIONS ENJOYED BY ROOSEVELT:

Here are some of the "triumph" lines Nelson performed with the Plunger for the edification of his distinguished guests:

Dived forty feet to the bottom of Long Island Sound and remained there half an hour while President Roosevelt examined the boat's mechanism.

Exhibition of "purposes diving," consisting of dashing through the water at high speed, alternately appearing and disappearing along the surface after the manner of a porpoise.

Dive of twenty feet below surface at an angle of forty-five degrees stopped, engines reversed and craft shot back to the surface.

Boat sinks to bottom of the sea, turns completely around and reverses her course in one minute.

Craft sinks to depth of twenty feet, rests motionless with heavy storm raging at the surface.

"All lights in Plunger extinguished and crew of nine men work the boat perfectly in total darkness."

President Roosevelt witnessed the official trial of the experimental underboat Plunger off Groton on the morning of July 8. Through the periscope, he saw the submersible in full view. Later in the day, he left Groton on a trip to Washington, D.C., with the understanding that he would personally take charge of the project and keep a strict watch on the progress.
Det Norske Stortings Nobelkomite
har i Hensyn til Reglerne i det af
ALFRED NOBEL
den 27. November 1895 oprettede Testamente tildelet
Nobels Fredspris for 1916
Kristiania den 18. December 1896

[Signature]

Hans Hedlund
Sjef, Direktør
The Peacemaker

March

Frank Steptevane

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THANK YOU!

Dr. William J. Hansard
Outreach Coordinator
&
Public Historian

Direct Phone Number: 701-502-4366

www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org

www.dickinsonstate.edu

william.hansard@dickinsonstate.edu