

The Monroe Doctrine was honored by those Presidents who clung to the American System. Presidents Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt were the most notable ones to rise to this standard—not to mention John Quincy Adams’s Presidency (1824-28). During the rest of the nineteenth century, the “American System” Presidents also pursued the spread of economic development projects internationally, as an indispensable spur to building republican nations.

But the breaches of these principles became increasingly numerous—from the Mexican-American War, to the Spanish-American War, to the (Teddy) Roosevelt corollary to the Doctrine (calling for intervention to collect debt), to the invasions of Mexico under Woodrow Wilson’s administration. In 1982, when the United States supported Great Britain’s war against Argentina in the Malvinas, the violation of the Monroe Doctrine was complete.

That said, the John Quincy Adams approach to foreign policy remains the standard that must be readopted today.

Secretary Blaine and Manifest Destiny

by Anton Chaitkin

America’s mission, to uplift mankind, was described by the statesman James G. Blaine in an 1892 volume commemorating the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus’s great achievement. Blaine, then Secretary of State under President Benjamin Harrison, wrote:

“The distinctive trait of modern times is that the achievement of the highest is brought down to the service of the lowliest, and thus the impress of value is stamped upon the individual human being.

“The development of the modern world is towards all men, and not towards one man. To build up the marvels of Antiquity the few led, the many followed; the few ruled, the many were driven. The toiler was not considered. He was a beast of burden. He was used and he was sacrificed. He had no voice in affairs. He was built into the walls of cities, his blood outlined the boundary of nations, his labor wrought the luxury of kings, but himself had no civic existence. As a man to be considered or consulted, a man whose happiness or health or wish was to be taken into the account, he was not.

“Through the turbulent centuries the individual man has forged to the front. He is still in the heat of struggle, but he has tasted power, he has tested his strength, he knows that the world is his. . . .

“After the long trance of the Dark Ages, when poetry and art and learning and thought were reawakened by the light

touch of Antiquity, and faced the sun of a new day whose meridian we have not yet reached, there awoke . . . a giant . . . —‘Triumphant Democracy.’ . . . No man knew of its coming. But the world all unconscious was presently astir with preparation of the paths for its victorious feet. The Renaissance, the revival of painting, of art, of letters, is a revival . . . of the old. But the reawakened mind was not to be content with following the paths of the ancients. . . . New paths were struck out, of which the ancient never dreamed, in which the modern world has no rival, whose [scientific and technological] miracles eclipse the mysteries of the past only to unfold greater mysteries in the future; whose end lies even now beyond the utmost stretch of imagination. And every shining path leads to the fireside of the humblest home, to the weal of the smallest child, to the health and the happiness, the purity and the strength, of Triumphant Democracy.”¹

The national power to accomplish this mission grew astonishingly after the Civil War, when the policies of the martyred Abraham Lincoln were applied by a population and government freed of wartime burdens. An ardent Lincoln apostle, James Blaine helped shape the country’s greatest achievements as a Congressman (1863-76), House Speaker (1869-76), Senator (1876-81), Secretary of State (1881 and 1889-92), Presidential candidate, and party leader.

Blaine and the Whigs

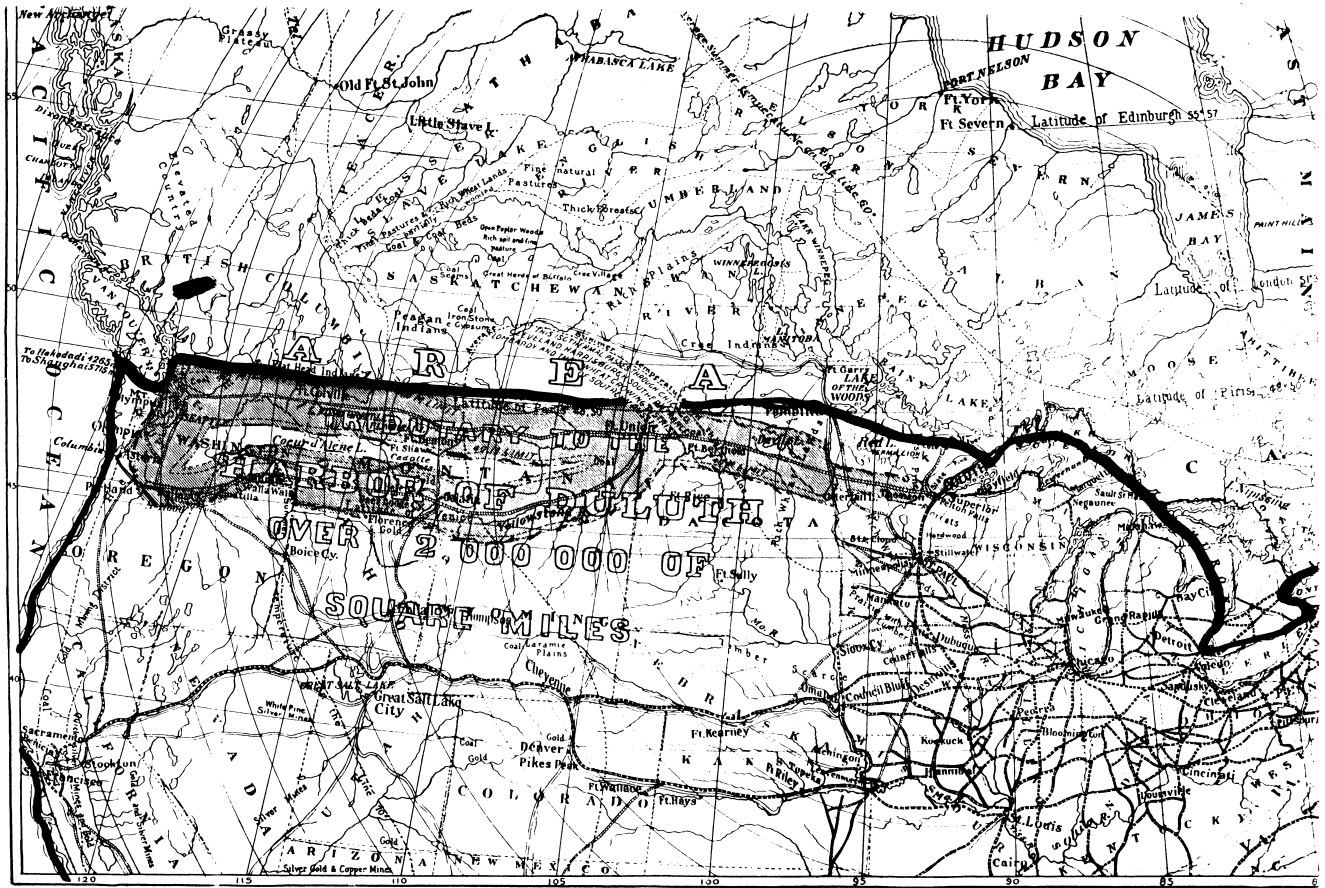
Blaine is perhaps best known to posterity as the foreign-policy successor to Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams, in that he aided South and Central America to resist British-directed military and financial aggression, and fostered mutually beneficial economic development. President Theodore Roosevelt reversed Blaine’s hemispheric policy; President Franklin Roosevelt revived it.

To introduce the perspective of that era’s American “Manifest Destiny,” let us look at a huge Federal government-sponsored railroad project, the Northern Pacific, for which Blaine was the political manager. As will be seen, this and other transcontinental railway lines had immediate global implications, and were the economic pivot upon which the United States was turned into the world’s biggest economy.

The Northern Pacific (NP) was to stretch 2,000 miles, from Lake Superior to Puget Sound. It was the first single railroad to link the Pacific Ocean with the water system of the Atlantic (through the Great Lakes and the Erie Canal or the St. Lawrence River). The NP construction created its two terminus cities, Duluth, Minnesota and Tacoma, Washington.

Its objects were to bring in waves of European immigrants, to transform the Far Northwest with coal mining and wheat farming; to make possible the transport of soldiers and military supplies; to help in annexing British Canada’s west-

1. James G. Blaine, “Progress and Development of the Western World,” Book I of *Columbus and Columbia: A Pictorial History of the Man and the Nation* (Philadelphia: Historical Publishing Co., 1892).



A Northern Pacific publicity map, showing the entire northwestern United States as a “Tributary to the Harbor of Duluth.” At left are shipping distances to Asian ports, where link-ups were planned to new Asian railroads.

ern territories to the United States (for economics, and security — Indian raids were still then sponsored by British forces across the northern border); to increase U.S. government revenue; and to promote world civilization generally.

The Federal government gave enormous land grants to a Federally chartered private railroad company. Plots of land from these grants would then be sold by the railroad company to settlers, and in anticipation of such sales, the company could secure construction credit advances from an array of sources without having the political endorsement of British or Wall Street bankers.

The NP was the second U.S. national railroad. The first had been President Lincoln’s Union Pacific-Central Pacific (UP), from Nebraska to San Francisco.

Lincoln signed the original Northern Pacific bill on July 2, 1864, but track-laying did not actually begin until after the UP was completed in 1869, when Gen. Ulysses S. Grant became President.

The government assigned construction management to Philadelphia banker Jay Cooke, the Federal government’s private banker (no national or central bank existed then). Cooke was in a position similar to that of the old Bank of New

York, which Alexander Hamilton had controlled and used to counter British finance.

Gen. William T. Sherman had previously led the Army forces guarding and supervising the Union Pacific construction. Sherman, now U.S. Army Commanding General, assigned troops under Gen. David Stanley and Col. George Custer to protect Northern Pacific engineering teams.

In 1870, a bill went to Congress that was to increase the land grants up to an area equal to the states of Ohio and Indiana combined.

James Blaine, then Speaker of the House, was the Congressional manager of the new Northern Pacific bill. Blaine’s relationship to the NP’s builders, and to the military, helps explain how politics worked in that era.

James Gillespie Blaine was born Jan. 31, 1830, in West Brownsville, Pennsylvania. (As an adult he would move from Pennsylvania to Maine, to become Maine’s most famous statesman.)

Around 1840-41, at age 10 or 11, Blaine was sent to Ohio for a few years to live with his uncle, Thomas Ewing, who became U.S. Treasury Secretary in 1841. Ewing, together with Sen. Henry Clay, led the Whig Party, the predecessor

to Lincoln's Republicans. The Ewing household seemed a permanent mini-convention of the country's nationalist political leaders, the protectionists, opponents of the British Empire's free-trade doctrine. In young James's presence, these men strategized over the Whig banking, protectionist tariff, and government-backed infrastructure programs which Lincoln and his successors would later fight to implement.

One member of that household, William Tecumseh Sherman, graduated from West Point about that time. As a little boy, Sherman had been adopted by Blaine's uncle Thomas Ewing; Sherman was called "Cump" by Blaine and the other Ewing youngsters. In 1850, Sherman married his step-sister, Ellen Ewing, Blaine's cousin. Sherman, as an Army commander, was to have the most intimate political and social relations with Blaine; he lived near him in Washington and often worked in Blaine's home.

Railroads, the national development fulcrum

British spokesmen and British allies in U.S. public life furiously objected, but the final Northern Pacific bill passed Congress, pushed through by House Speaker Blaine, and President Grant signed it on May 30, 1870.

The bill stipulated that the railroad could use only American iron and steel, made from American iron ores. These provisions typify the role which railroads and westward settlement were designed to play in sharply upgrading U.S. industrial capability and world influence.

America's population doubled between 1860 and 1890, going from 31,443,321 to 63,069,756. With new settlers pouring in, the population of the Midwestern, Mountain, and Pacific states accounted for almost *one-half of the national increase*, growing from 9,096,716 to 22,410,417.

To move the settlers and their goods, U.S. railroads added 79,592 track-miles from 1865 through 1882, growing from 35,085 total miles to 114,677. The demand for rails fuelled the growth of the new American steel industry: fully modern mills—investments protected by 90 or 100% tariffs against competition from imported British steel²—suddenly sprang into being in the 1860s and 1870s.

Most of the explosive growth came from railroad orders. American production of steel rails started from zero in 1865, growing to 1.3 million tons in 1882, while overall steel production grew from only 14,000 tons to 1.7 million tons. Rails alone accounted for 44.2% of total steel output in 1870, and 76.2% of the total by 1881.

The most prominent of Jay Cooke's fellow Northern Pacific stock subscribers were the leaders of the Pennsylvania Railroad (PR), a corporate group whose projects included

Andrew Carnegie's steel mills, the greatest machine works, Thomas Edison's invention organization, and Mexico's national railway construction.

This Philadelphia industrial and political grouping was the surviving heart of the old Whig machine which had brought Blaine into politics. He was on the closest terms with Pennsylvania Railroad president Thomas Scott. Northern Pacific manager Jay Cooke was the PR's banker, and Blaine's friend and personal banker.³

Another shareholder in the Northern Pacific project was Baron Friedrich Gerolt, the Prussian, and later the German, ambassador to the United States. Baron Gerolt had spoken enthusiastically about the "thousands and tens of thousands of our emigrants . . . [who] arrive annually to establish a new home and to unite their capacities with American industry and enterprise in developing the unbounded resources and promoting the welfare of new and rising states."

Germany, Russia, and then-independent Hawaii, were among those countries well represented at the American nationalists' 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. Germans allied to Henry Carey soon afterwards prevailed upon Chancellor Otto von Bismarck to adopt American-style protectionism and the most vigorous state-sponsored industrial projects.⁴ Tsar Alexander II simultaneously engaged Philadelphia planners for Russian industrialization.

President Grant directed U.S. legations abroad to encourage emigration to America. The immigrants were welcomed at the New York wharves by Northern Pacific reception teams, including translators, and were housed in Northern Pacific-owned hostels in several cities, until arrangements were completed for them out West.

Japanese Prince Iwakura and 29 other Japanese officials stayed at Jay Cooke's house in 1872 (and were hosted by Speaker Blaine and others in Washington) while preparing a treaty with the United States and a loan of \$15 million for Japanese development. Cooke was negotiating with Japan for Asian connections with the Northern Pacific system. A global belt of railways, canals, and shipping operations was envisioned, to vastly enhance the economy and power of the sovereign nations. Japan had just commenced a new government (the Meiji Restoration) inspired by Henry Carey's students, and U.S. engineers, agronomists, geologists, and protectionist economists were accelerating Japanese industrialization.

As Secretary of State in 1881, Blaine helped clear the path to Asia for this U.S. policy. Blaine laid down a tough policy of interdicting British plans for a protectorate and coolie-labor base in Hawaii. He instructed U.S. diplomats that the

2. The average of the tariffs on *all* dutiable goods had jumped from the old free trade level of 18.84% in 1861, to 36.19% in 1862, to 47.56% in 1865, and stayed above 40% for the next 50 years. These and other statistics are from Guetter and McKinley, *Statistical Table Relating to the Economic Growth of the United States* (Philadelphia: McKinley Publishing Co., 1924).

3. When the Philadelphia partners wanted to make their protégé Edison famous, Blaine staged Edison's demonstration of his new phonograph in the home of Blaine's political aide and niece, Mary Abigail Dodge.

4. The Northern Pacific created a terminus city on the Missouri River and named it "Bismarck" in honor of the German Chancellor. Bismarck is now the capital of North Dakota.

islands were the “key to the maritime dominion of the United States,” and that the Hawaii-U.S. 1875 reciprocity treaty had made them “practically members of an American Zollverein in an outlying district of the state of California.”⁵ Blaine maintained warm relations with the American Whig nationalists, many of them his friends from Maine, who were in Hawaii shaping its transformation into America’s bridge to the Orient.

Real politics after the Civil War

To maintain the momentum of nation-building at home and abroad, the nationalists had to fend off attacks from the British Empire’s friends in the oligarchy of New York, Boston, and the Southern states. That combination kept up a continuous fire against all railroad builders, under the pretext of corruption scandals. As a top American strategist, Blaine was a particular target of venom from “reformers,” Northern aristocrats, and those other racists, the Southern Democrats. Although Blaine had flaws, as do all professional politicians, he was never personally corrupt. The issue was always whether the U.S. would build and lead a world of sovereign republics to end oligarchism.

The political problem then posed by the South is poorly understood today. Under the leadership of Grant and Blaine, the Force Acts were passed (1870-75) to correct outrages that threatened to undo the Union victory. Constitutional amendments had given the freed slaves full citizenship rights, but the former slaveowners were forcing blacks back into de facto slavery, using state laws called Black Codes, and Ku Klux Klan terror. While Southern blacks were prevented from voting, Southern representation in Congress was calculated on the total Southern population, white and black, thereby giving each white Southerner twice the voting power a Northerner had in Congress.

Blaine took an unequivocal stance against the attacks on the civil rights of the freed slaves, which, he argued, were attempts to reimpose slavery, and were totally unacceptable.⁶

War with Britain over South American freedom

Taking office in 1881, the administration of James Garfield, with Blaine as Secretary of State, fought to destroy the political power of the British-allied Wall Street financiers; worked for Russian industrialization, and sought a Russian-American military alliance against Britain; abetted Irish revolution; and aided South American nations to overcome Brit-

5. Correspondence in the 1894 *United States Foreign Relations* volume on diplomatic relations with Hawaii, quoted in David Saville Muzzey, *James G. Blaine: A Political Idol of Other Days* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennicott Press, 1963), p. 204.

6. See James G. Blaine, “Ought the Negro To Be Disfranchised?” in *Political Discussion: Legislative, Diplomatic, and Popular; 1856-1886* (Norwich, Conn.: The Henry Bill Publishing Co., 1887).

ain’s neo-colonial oppression and wars. *EIR* has previously presented an outline of this too-brief combat, which ended with Garfield’s assassination in his first year as President (see Anton Chaitkin, “President Garfield’s Total War on the British/Wall Street Axis,” *EIR*, Oct. 8, 1999).

Under the succeeding Chester Arthur Presidency, Blaine continued aid to the Peruvian nationalists, who resisted a British-organized invasion covertly run through Chilean forces (the War of the Pacific). And he prevailed upon President Arthur to issue an invitation, which Blaine had authored, to the independent nations of the Western Hemisphere to attend a Peace Congress that would inaugurate war prevention and economic cooperation among the American sister republics.

Blaine was soon forced to resign. His place was taken by Frederick T. Frelinghuysen, stooge of Democratic Party boss August Belmont (U.S. representative of the British Rothschilds) and law partner of Belmont’s son Perry. Frelinghuysen *rescinded* the invitations to the sister republics, on the grounds that European powers were not invited and might be offended! He also cancelled Blaine’s work in Peru, giving free rein to the invaders to dismember Peru and halt that country’s ambitious industrialization plans.

But Blaine was again Secretary of State in 1889. He successfully convened the Pan-American Congress, setting the stage for FDR’s “Good Neighbor” policy 44 years later.

Blaine let the world know that America was in a global contest with the British Empire over the fate of civilization. After he was forced out of office by Garfield’s assassination in 1881, Blaine defended his South American policy against Britain’s criminal covert tactics, at inquisitorial hearings called by Perry Belmont, then a Congressman. Blaine testified:

“The Chilean government has put up by advertisement 1,000,000 tons of guano, which I suppose is worth \$60,000,000 in Liverpool and they pledge themselves in the advertisement to pay one-half of it into the Bank of England for the benefit of the English bondholders who put up the job of this war on Peru. It was a put-up job; that is all there was to it; it was loot and booty. It had not as much excuse in this as Hastings and Clive had in India, and England sweeps it all in. . . . The iron-clads that destroyed the Peruvian navy were furnished by England. . . . It is a perfect mistake to speak of this as a Chilean war on Peru. It is an English war on Peru, with Chile as the instrument, and I take the responsibility of that assertion. Chile would never have gone into this war one inch but for her backing by English capital, and there was never anything played out so boldly in the world as when they came to divide the loot and the spoils.”⁷

The understanding that U.S. Manifest Destiny meant a war against British imperialism and looting, is a lasting legacy of patriot James G. Blaine.

7. Quoted in the article on William Russell Grace, *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1931).