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CHINESE EXCLUSION
VERSUS THE
OPEN DOOR
POLICY, 1900-1906

CLASHES OVER CHINA POLICY
IN THE ROOSEVELT ERA

DELBER L. MCKEE
Westminster College

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The Two Policies: The Conflict

As a people we have talked much of the open door in China, and we expect, and quite rightly intend to insist upon, justice being shown us by the Chinese. But we cannot ask the Chinese to do to us what we are unwilling to do to them.


"An Open Door for our merchants, our railway projectors, our mine operators, our missionaries," we cry, and at the same moment we slam the door in the face of the Chinese merchants, travelers, and students — the best classes who seek our shores.


From every point of view this discrimination is a loss to the American people, diplomatically and from the point of view of the extension of American trade.

Wilbur T. Gracey (consul) to Herbert H. D. Peirce, Nov. 29, 1904, National Archives, Record Group 59, Consular Dispatches, Nanking.

After contending so vigorously all these years for the open door in China, it would be the crassest of folly for us to shut the door against ourselves by our own act.


The Two China Policies of the United States

Can a merchant insult a man and sell goods to him at the same time? In 1900 Americans seemed to think the answer was yes as their government announced the open door policy for China. The new policy — new at least on paper — contained in the open door notes of 1899 and 1900, signified the desire of the United States to preserve and expand the China market for American businessmen. But this was not the only policy held by the United States, even though President William McKinley and his secretary of state, John Hay, acted as if it were. In the background the exclusion policy, which had by treaty and legislation singled out and barred Chinese laborers as early as the 1880s, constituted a major policy too and one that reflected a distinctly different approach to China from that offered in the open door notes. For reasons peculiar to the situation, only a few perceptive Americans grasped that the United States had come to have two markedly different policies. Even fewer suspected that the earlier trend would seriously interfere with the later one. Yet the six years after 1900 saw much evidence that the first was indeed a formidable handicap. Offending a potential customer, as exclusion obviously did, was simply not good business.

Nevertheless, the two policies seemed unrelated on the surface; the contradiction between them tended to be obscured. The confusion was compounded because the open door policy applied to China but was not really a policy which had been made with that country. Since it was directed mainly at nations with spheres of interest in the Middle Kingdom, China was not even notified at the time the policy was instituted. Nor did these developments in the heady arena of international politics appear to have anything to do with the exclusion laws.
which followed soon after the 1880 treaty with China. It is possible, of course, that no conflict would have arisen if the original exclusion arrangement had not evolved subsequently into something different — a point for our consideration later.

As for the open door policy, its basic provisions are well known. Within the spheres of interest of the various nations, the United States was requesting that harbor dues, railroad rates, and tariff duties remain the same for all foreign nationals. After the sending of the notes in 1899 to the great powers, the United States took a more forward position in 1900, when the Boxer Rebellion created a new set of circumstances, by insisting also that China's territorial and administrative integrity be preserved.

A survey of the interest groups behind the open door policy helps to explain its nature. By far the most prominent and powerful was surely the American Asiatic Association. Some scholars have gone so far as to give this organization most of the credit for persuading the nation to adopt the policy. Charles S. Campbell, Jr., for example, contends that the first set of notes was based on a memorandum that "reflected faithfully the propaganda of the American Asiatic Association." Organized on January 6, 1898, with James McGee of Standard Oil Company presiding at the meeting, this group started out with 38 members who wished to promote trade and closer ties with China. By 1900 it had grown to 100 members and counted among them outstanding names in the business community. Diplomats, scholars, and clergymen were also included in its membership. It inspired the formation of the American Association of China and maintained close ties with the American Asiatic Association of Japan and the China Association of London. At its annual meetings, it made a special effort to secure the attendance of the secretary of state, the ministers of China and Japan, and House and Senate members of the committees on foreign relations. Its secretary, John Foor, was able and forceful, and its monthly *Journal* was well edited and influential.

Confronting the enthusiasm and drive of this group, one is amazed at the small economic stake of the American businessman in China in 1900. Present in that country were 81 American firms and only 1,908 American residents of all types. The investment figure stood at a modest $17,500,000. Sales to China in 1900 were valued at only $23,745,000 ($60,598,000 for all of Asia) in contrast to sales to Europe of $1,111,456,000. It was evident that dreams about the future, not present reality, supplied the motivation for American businessmen. Former minister to China Charles Denby made that point clear in his remarks at the annual meeting of the Association in 1900. "The Eldorado of commerce," he proclaimed, "lies before us in the Far East." Wu T'ing-fang, minister from China, at the same meeting, added his bit to the optimism of the hour. China was a great potential market, he agreed. "With your Pacific a fine highway and the Philippines at our door, you have great opportunities. If you don't come up, it is your fault." Hopes were high among businessmen that the sale to China of cotton goods, kerosene, flour, machinery, and even railroads would grow in volume at a rapid rate.

Next in importance to the businessmen as an interest group were the missionaries whose connection with the open door policy was less obvious but significant nonetheless. By 1898, 23 American Protestant societies were represented in China by 276 ordained missionaries, 155 stations, and even more out-stations. American missionary properties in 1900 were valued at $5,000,000. Measured in both spiritual and material terms, the investment in China was substantial. With such a vested interest, Protestant churches and their missions could not be indifferent that their beachhead in Asia rested upon specific treaty terms. Preachers, missionaries, and church publications aroused a lively regard for China among church members. This special fascination with China, in turn, encouraged the government of the United States to take action on behalf of missions. Nothing in the open door notes pertained directly to religious bodies, but the churches and missions could read into the notes a restraining hand placed upon pro-Catholic European countries and a general endorsement of the status quo which worked to their own advantage.

Another interest group is often overlooked. Educational institutions in China, founded by missionaries, were growing so rapidly that they were taking on a distinct identity by 1900. The figures for 1898 showed 1,032 schools and 74 higher educational institutions which altogether embraced approximately 20,000 Chinese students enrolled in American schools. Therefore, American educators should also be counted as a force on the China scene. And they benefited too from the open door policy.

Other interest groups, some non-American, might be added to the list. The Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs Service, for example, had its own bureaucratic motives in lobbying for the open door policy. The American navy, which would have preferred a base on the China coast, was definitely not in favor of the open door. American policymakers, from McKinley and Hay to William W. Rockhill, State
Department authority on China, had to sense and respond to many domestic and international considerations in structuring a policy that would best serve the national interest. At that time, they had to be especially sensitive to the fulminations against imperialism of an articulate anti-expansionist minority.

Thus, the open door policy emerged as a compromise. It fitted admirably, however, the temper of the times with its incredible mixture of both idealistic crusading and self-seeking imperialism. The policy represented expansion without territorial acquisition or, as one scholar has described it, "a most interesting hybrid of anti-colonialism and economic imperialism." The Boxer Rebellion crisis, a brief but ugly encounter in the summer of 1900, was a severe test of the will of Americans to hold to their goals of commercial and cultural penetration, but they held firm. Despite the discouraging outlook, missionaries preserved an air of grim optimism. In June 1900, while the outcome of the uprising was still in doubt, the Reverend D.Z. Sheffield prepared to return to his station, even though, he wrote, "I know that my own work is wiped out." Thirty-two members of the American missionary community had lost their lives. Yet it was certain, the Missionary Review of the World declared in September, "that the glorious Gospel will not suffer defeat or expulsion, but, instead, the day of its complete victory will be marvelously hastened." The Progressive Era was dawning in the United States, and the reform spirit of the day saw a challenge in China. Education would be the key; by exposing Chinese to American schools that country could be induced to adopt the American model. High hopes were held for the future relationship between the two countries.

Various aspects of the open door policy were manifestly important to China. Rockhill, writing in Forum in May 1900, contended that his first set of notes had "put a stop to the grab policy" and had "rendered a vast service to China." Unrealistically, he envisioned future collaboration between the United States and China; together, they might even the odds in the balance of power in Asia. In any case, he assumed that China would welcome the policy.

Public reactions of Chinese officials in the United States were indeed favorable. Ho Yow, consul general at San Francisco, writing in Forum in June 1900, hailed the new posture as "the most important diplomatic event" since the treaty of 1842 which had opened five ports to trade. He held that the merchant class at the trade centers would especially favor the United States for its stand.

Minister Wu, in June, urged the United States to resist additional colonization in Asia. Since America now had the Philippines, he argued, it should not want other nations to encroach further upon the Asian mainland: "No man can tell how long the 'open door' can be maintained . . . unless further aggressions are prevented." In early July Hay's second set of notes, which stressed the need to preserve the territorial integrity of China, seemed to be in accord with Wu's thinking. In July Wu also elaborated on the theme of "mutual helpfulness." China could be the market; the United States could supply capital and build railroads; both sides would benefit. Moreover, China "was well disposed toward Americans." However, contradictory currents prevailed. On the one hand, on July 13, 1900, only two weeks after the Hay circular came out, the Chinese officially extended the right to build the Canton-Hankow railroad to the American China Development Company. On the other hand, at this same time the Boxers were attempting to destroy all foreigners or drive them out of China.

To a western mind certain features of the open door policy should have seemed especially appealing to China, which, presumably, was desperately eager to preserve its territorial integrity and should thus have been gratified to have the United States uphold the cause. As for the principle of an even-handed treatment of merchants, since China for years had pursued a deliberate course of treating all foreigners alike, it should have welcomed the stand of the United States on this point also. But China had its ancient tradition of encouraging barbarians to fight barbarians, and the empire was not noted for allowing traditions to die quickly. For China to adopt a long-range policy of cooperating with one foreign power against others would have been a radical and improbable shift in strategy. Moreover, while the self-interest of the two countries in some areas may have occasionally coincided, in others it did not. As the Chinese officials in America viewed the situation, the United States should pay a price for China's trade; America might even go so far as to give up its unequal treaties. Reciprocity, wrote Wu, "must be the key-note of every arrangement." By inference, he challenged the foundations of the American position in China.

In more concrete terms, however, the price demanded by the Chinese was the abandonment of the exclusion policy. Both Ho and Wu seized every opportunity to point out the improbability of future American trade advances so long as exclusion remained in effect. Ho, insisting that the exclusion laws harmed trade and industrial growth, predicted in one article that these laws, unless repealed, would de-
stroy “the very thing which the President and his advisers are trying so hard to establish; namely, commercial preeminence for the United States in the East.” Wu complained that, while China’s door was open to Americans, the American door was “slammed in the face” of the Chinese. The New Orleans Times-Picayune had reason to express reservations about the new open door policy in that it might undercut the exclusion policy. China certainly wanted it to do just that. Wu in January 1900 had announced that exclusion would have to give way to the open door. “It will not do,” he informed the American Asiatic Association, “for you to expect China to keep her door open all of the time if you shut the door on Chinese merchants who come to your gate.” Not only would trade not increase, he warned; it might even drop off altogether and there might be a large scale boycott of American goods. The Association should work for juster laws, and should “instruct the people here as to what we need and what is fair treatment.”

China’s position as presented by Wu posed a major challenge to the open door policy. Trade would not grow — the open door policy would fail — unless the exclusion policy was eliminated. Wu insisted that a merchant could not sell goods to a man he was insulting. But in that imperialistic era, western nations took for granted that they could override opposition and impose their control and trade upon the peoples of other lands. For this as well as other reasons, many Americans were inclined to take lightly these angry Chinese warnings. By looking into the origins and characteristics of the policy, the full import of the exclusion issue can be grasped.

“It is the only question between us,” wrote Minister Rockhill in 1905 to the Chinese Foreign Office, as he discussed a new immigration treaty in the final days before the Chinese instituted their threatened boycott, a remark which many American diplomats on relations with China from the 1870s on might have made. From its inception, the exclusion policy had been a constant irritant. “I don’t ask any privileges for my people; I only ask equality,” asserted Wu to a reporter in 1901. His wish was a forlorn one. Special treatment, not equality, was the lot of the Chinese from the time of their first arrival in America. The treaties, the laws, the court decisions, and the reactions of localities were all evidence of this exceptional treatment. It is officially recorded that the first Chinese to arrive in California were two men and a woman from Hong Kong who landed in San Francisco in February 1848. As more arrived, some worked as laborers in San Francisco; others soon found their way into the gold mining areas. In 1852 alone 30,000 Chinese left Hong Kong for San Francisco. Opposition did not commence immediately, but discriminatory taxes were levied by 1852. Nevertheless, California in the 1850s needed cheap labor; Chinese were welcomed in certain occupations such as servants and laundrymen. Then in the 1860s, when the federal government sponsored the building of a transcontinental railroad, the promoters looked to China for large numbers of unskilled labor and found them.

With the depression of the 1870s, however, opposition to Chinese immigration arose in California and reached a high pitch. Scholars are not in agreement as to the reasons for this rising hostility. Some writers have stressed racial prejudice and have pointed to the large number of people in California from southern states. Others have emphasized cultural differences, noting that the Chinese clung to their traditional attire, language, and exotic “Chinatowns.” Others have given special attention to economic factors: the willingness of Chinese to work for low wages; the fact that they were usually bound by contract to a Chinese broker in a manner reminiscent of slavery; the discovery that they could be employed as strikebreakers against unions and were so used in eastern states; and the tensions built up by a depression in California in the 1870s. One scholar has also emphasized that Chinese, unlike other immigrants, were planning to live in the United States for a limited time only and would then return with their earnings to their families in China; therefore, their goals were markedly dissimilar from those of the people around them. All of these factors were doubtless important, but there is no simple explanation for the rise of extreme anti-Chinese sentiments. Furthermore, this hostility, although most dramatically expressed in California, proved to be a national phenomenon.

How this anti-Chinese feeling developed can be traced by reviewing the immigration treaties from 1868 to the end of the century and examining the exclusion laws that evolved in the 1880s and 1890s. Article V of the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 was an open invitation to Chinese to come to America. Although condemning involuntary immigration, it recognized “the inherent and inalienable right of man to change his home and allegiance, and also the mutual advantage” of the movement of people “from one country to the other, for purposes of curiosity, of trade, or as permanent residents.” In the same cordial tones, article VI supported the right to travel and reside in the two countries, as accorded to “the most favored nation,” and article VII extended educational privileges.
But in spite of the benign spirit of the 1868 treaty, there was a peculiar quality about it in that immigration had become a subject for diplomacy. Article VI also stipulated that “nothing herein contained shall be held to confer naturalization upon citizens of the United States in China, nor upon the subjects of China in the United States.” Were nationals to be only temporary sojourners in the other’s land? What about citizenship if they decided to be permanent residents? Whether the arriving Chinese intended to make the United States their permanent home or not, the increasing numbers coming to California seemed to point in that direction. In the 1850s over 40,000 arrived, and in the 1860s over 60,000 more had come. In the 1870s, in the era of the Burlingame Treaty, the number of Chinese residents attained the peak figure of 123,201. Conditions in China during and after the Taiping Rebellion of 1850-1864 were bad enough to drive more Chinese away from their homeland; the news of the gold rush of 1849 in California added further incentive; and then the need for workers on the Central Pacific railroad in the 1860s continued the trend. William H. Seward, secretary of state at the time of the negotiation of the Burlingame Treaty, was especially interested in the railroad labor factor. Nine out of ten of the 10,000 laborers on the Pacific railroads in 1869 were Chinese.

With the completion of the Pacific railroads in 1869, the troubles of the Chinese in California mounted. There was no other work for them to take up this slack quickly, so they drifted, over 9,000 strong, into San Francisco, desperate for jobs of any kind — and at any wage. To add to this already existing labor glut, workers from the east migrated to the west over the new Union Pacific railroad. New economic calamity struck the west coast with the nationwide panic of 1873. Since about one third of the white population of California was from the south, racial antipathies were already present. Added to the race factor were the explosive economic pressures of the 1870s.

Dennis Kearney, an Irish Catholic, became the leader of the Workingman’s Party, which was organized in 1877. Although this party lasted only five years, it significantly advanced union organizing efforts in the state. The unions found that their most useful rallying device was opposition to the Chinese; ties with the national labor movement of the day, the Knights of Labor, “carried across the land their slogan The Chinese Must Go.”

As the Chinese issue rose to prominence in California, both Democrats and Republicans in the state embraced it and secured discriminatory legislation. Racially oriented court decisions also came out of California, and legislative action on the national level was earnestly sought. A California memorial to Congress stated that California if necessary would forego the benefits of trade with China in return for an end to Chinese immigration. The alarm expressed by the memorial and implied by a referendum on the issue was undoubtedly heightened as the number of Chinese residents in California increased to 100,000 by 1875; moreover, by the late 1870s the “male adults almost equaled the voting population of the state.” By 1882 the Chinese population had risen to 132,000 and seemed to be accelerating at an alarming rate.

Although Californians believed their civilization was being threatened, the rest of the country was not convinced. The tradition of open and free immigration was not easy to reverse, and the resort to violence in California against the Chinese was especially difficult to understand elsewhere. In Congress, however, the even balance between the two parties helped the California cause. Although President Rutherford Hayes vetoed a bill in 1879 that would have restricted the number of Chinese immigrants to 15 per vessel, he realized that it would be advisable to seek a new treaty with China to modify the immigration provisions of the Burlingame Treaty. Since China was reluctant to agree to a new treaty, the outcome was a compromise that only partially satisfied the Californians and other anti-Chinese elements. The treaty concluded on November 17, 1880, allowed the United States to legislate against Chinese laborers: the United States could “regulate, limit, or suspend such coming or residence, but may not absolutely prohibit.” Fair treatment of other Chinese was promised in the treaty, which contained no time limit and was presented as a supplement to the 1868 treaty.

More obstacles developed as exclusionists pressed for restrictive legislation under the new treaty. Through the use of petitions and memorials, the pro-Chinese fought hard against new laws. Centered in the northeast, especially New York and Massachusetts, business interests and missionary-minded Protestants stood for the status quo. The anti-Chinese, however, overcame the opposition, but with difficulty, and obtained a bill suspending Chinese immigration for 25 years. Among the anti-Chinese forces labor unions were especially active; throughout the country they joined with California to secure the new bill. Which were more desirable: racial homogeneity and labor progress within the United States or trade with China and Christianizing activity in a foreign country? Although the issue was perhaps not quite that simple, Congress in approving exclusion appeared to be subordinating trade and missionary interests.

But the matter was not yet settled. Another hurdle loomed.
President Chester Arthur sided with the pro-Chinese groups in vetoing the new bill on the grounds that 25 years went beyond anything authorized by the treaty. He did, nevertheless, accept the law of May 6, 1882, which suspended the immigration of Chinese laborers for ten years and prohibited states from granting citizenship to Chinese. Other legislation followed in the 1880s that further broadened the incredibly elastic definition of laborer which appeared in the 1882 law. Special certificates also had to be obtained by those who went to China and then returned; they also had to be processed by consular officers and treasury officials. Although the number of immigrants dropped to 61,711 for the decade, back where it had been in the 1860s, violence broke out in Rock Springs, Wyoming, in 1885 and resulted in the death of over 20 Chinese.

The most controversial legislation of the 1880s was that of September 13, 1888, which was signed by Grover Cleveland. This act made no pretense of excluding laborers only; it prohibited the entry of all Chinese persons except "teachers, students, merchants, or travelers for pleasure or curiosity." These special classes of Chinese, as named in the law, had to be approved by the Chinese government in certificate form, and by an American consul. Another provision barred laborers returning unless they had a family in the United States or property worth one thousand dollars.

In less than a month the Scott Act of October 1, 1888, voided certificates which had already been issued and denied entrance immediately to returning laborers. "By it," charged a Californian in the North American Review in 1900, "twenty thousand certificates were declared null and void, twenty thousand promises, on the honor of the United States, that the holders should be allowed to return, were ruthlessly broken." This act, he maintained, "completely demoralized the Chinese in this country, which was the intention."

While the Scott Act was enacted without reservations, the act just preceding it, on September 13, 1888, stipulated that the law was to go into effect after a pending treaty with China had been ratified; China, however, infuriated by the earlier actions of Congress, failed to ratify the treaty. The legality of the September 13 legislation could then be challenged, but on July 7, 1899, the solicitor of the treasury ruled that sections five to eleven, which dealt with this matter, were not dependent upon treaty ratification. In spite of the growing number of restrictions on Chinese immigration, the exclusionists were never satisfied. In the early 1890s bills introduced in Congress called for the exclusion of all Chinese except officials. Although these bills did not get far, they revealed the long-range goal of the exclusionists.

Since 1892 was an election year, it was not surprising that a new law, the Geary Act of May 5, 1892, should pass. This law, in contrast to the Scott Act, allowed Chinese laborers to travel to China and re-enter the United States, but its provisions were, in general, more restrictive than anything preceding it. The new law, although perhaps designed primarily to apprehend violators of the exclusion laws, had the effect of bearing heavily upon Chinese-Americans in general. For example, the Geary Act, in addition to continuing all Chinese immigration laws for another ten years, required Chinese to register, secure a certificate, and use this as proof of their right to be in the United States; in certain circumstances bail was not allowed. The law also "authorized arrest without warrant or oath . . . and shifted the burden of proof to the defendant." Imprisonment and deportation were the penalty for those who failed to have a certificate.

Another act further increasing the already tight restrictions quickly followed in 1893. Chinese-Americans, thoroughly aroused by this time, hired able lawyers and tried to get favorable decisions from the courts, especially on the registration requirement, but their efforts ended in failure. From then on, the burden of proof lay with any Chinese in the United States to demonstrate his right to reside in the country.

In the 1890s the Chinese government, for the third time in the nineteenth century, agreed to an immigration treaty. Although by this time all Chinese were excluded except "officials, teachers, students, merchants or travelers for curiosity or pleasure," the new treaty of March 17, 1894, still referred to the original purpose of "regulating, limiting, or suspending the coming of Chinese laborers." It extended the prohibition of laborers for ten years, and authorized laborers in the United States to return to China and then come back to the United States; it also allowed Chinese the right of transit, and provided for the reciprocal registration of laborers. The designated classes, as indicated above, were still allowed entry.

A review of the laws and treaties pertaining to Chinese immigration cannot ignore the conflict between them. Many court cases dealt with the position of the Chinese in the United States and with the lack of consistency between treaty and law. In one instance, the Supreme Court frankly conceded that a conflict existed between a treaty and a recently passed law. Nevertheless, the Court took the view that the morals of another branch of the government were its own affair and that if Congress wanted to violate a treaty it had the
power to do so. An article on the Scott Act in Arena stated, “there was no question but that the act was a violation of treaty stipulations; no one denied it.”

The reaction of Chinese in America to the trend of events is easily surmised. One missionary to the Chinese in California spoke at a Senate hearing of the hostility toward Christianity among the Chinese. When he tried to bring the Christian message to the Chinese, stated the Reverend Nathan R. Johnson, they would reply with finality, “Kearney is a Christian.” In California, the plight of the Chinese saddened and alarmed a segment of the Protestant clergy, who were convinced that such treatment would “provoke retaliatory Chinese exclusion and persecution of the American missionaries in China.”

In China the reverberations began to spread also. In 1903 Lee Chew told of his experiences as a boy in a village in the Canton area. He said that he learned from his grandfather “about the American foreign devils, that they were false, having made a treaty by which it was agreed that they could freely come to China and the Chinese as freely go to their country. After this treaty was made China opened its doors to them and then they broke the treaty that they had asked for by shutting the Chinese out of their country.” Some parts of Lee Chew’s story raise questions about the factual authenticity of his grandfather’s teachings, but his statements about what was probably beginning to happen in the Canton area in the 1880s and 1890s have a plausible ring.

Minister Wu argued that trade relations between the two countries began to suffer when the United States turned against the Chinese immigrants. He presented statistics on trade between 1871 and 1901 to support his argument, and insisted that trade had dropped sharply after the passage of each new law. “The frustration of the Chinese government was acute because it could not block the trend or show its resentment convincingly.” After 1884, diplomatic relations grew steadily worse. By the time of the Harrison administration of 1889-1893, according to Tyler Dennett, “a condition amounting practically to non-intercourse existed between the Chinese legation and the Department of State.” When the United States proposed Senator Henry W. Blair as a new minister to China in 1891, his nomination was rejected by China because of statements that he had made in the Senate on immigration. Americans in China, however, were not singled out for retaliatory treatment.

Although Chinese reactions, both officially and unofficially, had become more hostile by the 1890s, the exclusionists seemed unconcerned. Their momentum had acquired enough strength to override the protests of China-oriented business and religious groups who expressed growing alarm over retaliatory steps which China might take against them. In Congress, the exclusion policy was clearly receiving priority. In this arena at least, trade and missionary interests were fighting a losing battle.

Another policy toward China, however, had seized the center of the stage as the nineteenth century came to a close. An exciting war with Spain had just been fought. Expansion had caught the popular imagination. Hawaii and the Philippines represented new links with Asia. An Isthmian canal, which was a frequent subject of discussion, would open a shorter highway into the Pacific. And beyond the horizon lay the “Eldorado of commerce,” in matchless splendor, the world of East Asia! In the open door policy, the McKinley administration staked out its claim to a voice in the politics of Asia and identified the national interest of the United States with the promotion of trade with China and the protection of missionary interests.

Here were two policies toward China, each backed by powerful vested interests. Congress gave priority to exclusion; the executive branch appeared more sensitive to trade and missions. Could the two policies be maintained simultaneously? In one sense, the new policy of the open door signaled a counter attack against the exclusion policy. Was it possible that the exclusion policy, after dominating the scene since the 1870s, might be uprooted?
votes in Congress and a powerful voice in the Republican party. In addition, racist attitudes prevailed in the south, and race prejudice against Chinese, which was present to some extent in the north, further helped the exclusionist side. In the early 1900s a movement to restrict immigrants in general was also acquiring impressive strength. Thus, social, cultural, and political elements combined to give exclusion the edge over the open door.

The open door policy was, therefore, undermined by the exclusion policy, which served as a barrier to the extension of trade and cultural ties. Some historians have attributed the modest level of trade to the lack of capital investment in China and the failure of American businessmen to adjust to the peculiar features of the China market; but even if these problems had been overcome, the exclusion policy would have remained a handicap of some consequence.

In a broader sense, events during the years from 1900 to 1906 demonstrated that a policy of discrimination could produce an international crisis of serious proportions. At the same time, within the United States the policy induced political and social strains of considerable magnitude. Exclusion, both as an irritant to China and as a divisive factor internally — to say nothing of its incompatibility with the open door policy — exacted a high price that later generations would continue to pay until Americans decided at last to slough off the racial myths of the early 1900s and the lingering subconscious predilections derived from them.

Notes

CHAPTER 1.


3. Further information is found in American Asiatic Association, 1900 (n.p., n.d.), National Archives, Record Group 46, HR57A-F13.2. Hereafter National Archives will be cited as NA, and Record Group as RG.


6. Ibid., p. 73.

7. Missionary Review of the World 13 o.s. (Aug. 1900): statistics on back of map fold-out, next to p. 657. Including European societies, 54 societies were represented altogether with 527 ordained missionaries. These figures do not include Roman Catholic missionary activity. The American branch of the Roman Catholic Church was not involved in the China missions, but European Catholics were active. Hereafter cited as MRW.


10. MRW 13 o.s.: next to p. 657 (statistics on back of map foldout).


15. Jerry Israel, Progressivism and the Open Door: America and China, 1905-1921 (Pittsburgh, 1971), pp. 3-30. See also Werner Leib, Modern China's Foreign Policy (Minneapolis, 1955), pp. 53-54.


17. Ibid., p. 2.


22. Ibid., p. 2.


Notes


27. Ibid.

28. William W. Rockhill to Na-t'ung, June 22, 1905, NA, RG 59, Feking Legation Archives. Hereafter cited as PLA.


31. Ibid., p. 62.

32. Ibid., pp. 30, 212-13.


34. Clyde, United States Policy toward China, p. 85.

35. Ibid.


41. Ibid., pp. 63-64.

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53. Ibid.

Notes

63. Lee Chew, "The Biography of a Chinaman," *Independent* 55 (Feb. 19, 1903): 419. This article implies that this man arrived in America as a young man before the first exclusion act was passed.
64. U.S. Congress, Enclosure 6, *Exclusion of Chinese Laborers*, Sen. Doc. 162, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 1902, p. 41. Such an argument is hard to prove or disprove. It is likely, however, that Wu was exaggerating the impact of the exclusion policy.
65. See, for example, Enc. 3 in Rockhill to Elihu Root, Aug. 26, 1905, NA, RG 59, China Dispatches. Hereafter cited as CD.
67. Ibid., p. 547.
68. See footnote in ibid., p. 548.
69. General background information on Chinese history for this and later chapters has been drawn from John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer, and Albert M. Craig, *East Asia: The Modern Transformation* (Boston, 1963).

Chapter 2

1. Mrs. S. L. Baldwin to Roosevelt, Nov. 25, 1901, NA, RG 85, Segregated Chinese Records, File Box 25. Hereafter, these records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service will be cited as SCR, and File Box as FB.
5. Maldwyn A. Jones, for example, in *American Immigration* (Chicago, 1960), p. 263, observes that "the anti-Chinese movement had virtually run its course by the beginning of the twentieth century."
7. Ibid.