

# The Partition of the Marianas: A Diplomatic History, 1898-1919

DON A. FARRELL

This article focuses on the partition of the Marianas by competing colonial powers between 1898 and 1919. It also discusses the "non-colonial" status of most of Micronesia, except for Guam, as a League of Nations Mandate under Japanese administration and the subsequent change of that status after World War II to the United States Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The United Nations mandate for the self-determination of dependent peoples ultimately lead to the creation of the US Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, which many believe institutionalized the partition.

O Dewey at Manila  
That fateful first of May  
When you sank the Spanish squadron  
In almost bloodless fray,  
And gave your name to deathless fame;  
O, glorious Dewey, say,  
Why didn't you weigh anchor  
and softly sail away. (Grunder & Livezey, 1951, p. 38)

**T**he answer to the question posed by this poetic lament is that Dewey was ordered to remain and begin the siege of Manila. Reinforcements would arrive from San Francisco after a brief stop at Guam. These events marked the beginning of America's colonial experiment (Pratt, 1951) and the end of what was then the single geopolitical unit known as the Mariana Islands.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Marianas archipelago was first inhabited some 3,500 years ago by people who originally came from Southeast Asia. Today the indigenous inhabitants are known as Chamorros (see Carano & Sanchez, 1964; Farrell, 1991a; Joseph & Murray, 1951; Spoehr 1954; Thompson, 1947). In 1521 Ferdinand Magellan stumbled upon these islands in his attempt to discover a western route to the Spice Islands. At first he named the islands *Islas de las Velas Latinas* after the fast-sailing lateen-rigged Chamorro proas that so impressed him and his crew. But after a deadly misunderstanding with the indigenous people, he renamed the islands *Islas de los Ladrones*, the Islands of Thieves. The islands were colonized by Spain beginning in 1668 and renamed the Mariana Islands after Maria Ana de Austria, queen regent of Spain.<sup>1</sup> By the early 1700s the precontact population of 40,000 to 50,000 Chamorros had been reduced by war and disease to some 3,000 (see Hezel, 1982, 1989). Spanish colonialism provided a form of political unity for islands that already possessed a common cultural heritage but never before had been united under one government. From the end of the Manila galleon trade in 1815 until the end of the nineteenth century, the Marianas colony was left to languish as a corrupt outpost of Spain's Philippine colony.

## AMERICAN EXPANSIONISM AND THE NAVAL WAR PLANS OF 1896-1897

The key question this essay examines is why, when the entire Philippine and Hawaiian archipelagoes were taken by the United States in 1898, was Guam the only island taken of all the islands in the Marianas archipelago. That inquiry, however, must be prefaced by another: How did the United States become a Pacific colonial power in the first place?

Discussion among military strategists of US territorial acquisitions in the Pacific developed in connection with commercial interests in the China trade and its relation to the Hawaiian Islands. (For a general study of American expansion into the region, see Arthur Dudden, 1992). As early as 1842 the United States had announced its special interest in Hawai'i. In 1875 the United States signed a reciprocity treaty with the Hawaiian kingdom, and in 1887 the renewal of the treaty included the exclusive right of the United States to use the Pearl River harbor on the island of O'ahu (see Pratt, 1951). American business interests in Hawai'i invited American annexation of the

islands in 1893, which sparked the expansionist spirit of America (Pratt, 1955, p. 384). Theodore Roosevelt (Lodge, 1925, pp. 139, 243, 267), Henry Cabot Lodge (Lodge, 1925, p. 302; Nevins, 1930, p. 136), and naval historian Alfred Thayer Mahan (Seager & Maguire, 1975, pp. 506, 538), among others, wrote strongly in favor of annexing Hawai'i. Their reasons, openly stated, were to protect both the west coast of America and the proposed Panama canal from foreign forces. But they were also committed to propelling America from an isolated, fledgling nation to a great world power with a global economy and a first class navy to protect it. President Benjamin Harrison was in favor of annexation at the time, but as a lame duck president he was unable to act. His successor, Democrat Grover Cleveland, was an anti-expansionist, and so no action was taken on annexation during his term. The issue of annexing Hawai'i became a major plank in the Republic Party platform of 1896, and following William McKinley's inauguration as president, a new treaty of annexation was negotiated and signed on June 16, 1897 (Pratt, 1951, p. 37). However, the Senate was unable to garner enough support for annexation, and the issue remained in committee.

What brought about American colonial expansion in the Pacific was US opposition to the Spanish administration of Cuba. American expansionists and the yellow journalism of William Randolph Hearst's and Joseph Pulitzer's newspapers had been propounding the cause of American intervention because of what was portrayed as Spain's barbaric administration of that island. Tensions became so high between the United States and Spain over Cuba that in 1895 the US Navy Department began considering plans for war against Spain. Although most Americans thought of war with Spain only in terms of Spain's Caribbean islands, naval planners also took into consideration Spain's Asiatic Fleet based in the Philippine Islands. Thus the 1896 war plan written by Lieutenant William Warren Kimball, staff intelligence officer for the Naval War College, included an American attack on the Spanish fleet in the Philippines (Kimball, 1896).

When the McKinley administration took office in the spring of 1897, Secretary of the Navy John D. Long and Assistant Secretary Theodore Roosevelt, asked the Naval War Board to reconvene and reexamine the plan of the previous administration. The board deliberated the war plan again in June 1897 (Grenville, 1968, p. 36). Roosevelt was the ex officio head of the Office of Naval Intelligence at the time. The Naval War College therefore looked to Roosevelt for advice on executive policy upon which to base its plans (Braisted, 1958, p. 11). Roosevelt was a staunch advocate of a strong navy and worked diligently at preparing the US Navy for war with Spain.

He discussed his war plan with President McKinley on September 20, toward which the president was reportedly "most kind" (Millis, 1931, p. 81). In that discussion, Roosevelt outlined the necessity of defeating the Spanish fleet in the Philippines and possibly capturing Manila (Morison, E., 1951, p. 685; Morris, 1979, p. 586). That section of the war plan read as follows:

For the purpose, of further engaging the attention of the Spanish navy, and more particularly in order to improve our position, when the time [comes] for negotiations with a view to peace; the Board thinks it would be well to make an attempt, to assist the insurgents in the Philippine Islands. . . . [I]f the Asiatic Squadron should go down and show itself in that neighborhood, and arrange for an attack upon that city, in conjunction with the insurgents, the place might fall, and as a consequence, the insurgent cause in those islands might be successful; in which case, we could probably have a controlling voice, as to what should become of the islands, when the final settlement [is] made. For this purpose, certain reinforcements might be necessary from the Pacific Station. (Sicard, Crowninshield, Oneil, Goodrich, & Wainwright to the Secretary of the Navy, June 30, 1897, pp. 4-5)

Although no specific mention of Guam is made in the war plans, the board must have been aware that reinforcements leaving San Francisco for Hawai'i and then the Philippines would necessarily have to pass near the Spanish Marianas. Sound naval strategy would require the destruction of any Spanish warships in the harbor of San Luis de Apra, Guam.

To ensure that he had an aggressive admiral in charge of the Asiatic Squadron, Roosevelt conspired with Commodore George Dewey to have the latter appointed to that post (Millis, 1931, p. 85).<sup>2</sup> On October 21, 1897, Dewey arrived at Nagasaki, took command, and was briefed on the role he was to play should war develop between the United States and Spain (Olcott, 1916, vol. 2, p. 39).

At this same time Whitelaw Reid, publisher of the New York *Tribune* and a staunch McKinley Republican, was sent to London to represent the president at the celebration of the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne. McKinley also charged Reid with the task of quietly determining whether Spain might be willing to sell Cuba to America. The answer he received from Reid was unequivocal: "Spain would never sell the brightest jewel in her crown" (Cortissoz, 1921, vol.2, p. 220).

McKinley had not developed a cohesive foreign policy when he entered office. He had built his political base on business interests and wanted to be a businessman's president. He did not want to have a war during his presidency, hence his business-minded effort to avoid war by attempting to buy

America's way out of the Cuban problem. But McKinley's hopes to avoid war were dashed when the American battleship *Maine* exploded at anchor in Havana Harbor on February 15, 1898. Some 260 American servicemen died. "Remember the Maine, to Hell with Spain!" became the war cry (Millis, 1931, p. 157; Morris, 1979, p. 608).<sup>3</sup> America's naval leadership, especially its assistant secretary, immediately began preparations to put Kimball's war plan, as modified by Roosevelt, into effect. On February 25, 1898, a day when Secretary Long had decided to rest at home, Roosevelt cabled Dewey at Hong Kong: "In the event of declaration of war with Spain, your duty will be to see that the Spanish squadron does not leave the Asiatic coast, and then [begin] offensive operations in the Philippines" (*Annual Reports*, 1899, p. 65; Braisted, 1958, p. 24; Millis, 1931, p. 112).

On April 11 President McKinley asked Congress for authority to use the military and naval forces of the United States to expel Spain from Cuba. Congress adopted the war resolution early on the morning of the 20th, although officially it was the 19th. The president signed it the same day (Leech, 1959, p. 188; Morris, 1979, p. 612; Olcott, 1916, vol. 2, p. 34; Pratt, 1951, p. 53). On April 24 the president "endorsed the recommendation of the navy bureau chiefs that Dewey should attack the Philippines" (Grenville & Young, 1966, p. 281).

Dewey sailed into Manila Bay on May 1, 1898, and destroyed the Spanish fleet. On May 4, after fully assessing his victory, he advised the president of the situation and requested further orders. This message did not reach Washington until May 7.

#### GUAM'S ROLE IN THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

Unofficial news of Dewey's victory reached the United States on May 2. The message was wired from Hong Kong to British Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain, who passed it on to John Hay, the US ambassador to England, who immediately passed it on to McKinley (Griswold, 1938, p. 19). On May 4, before official word had been received from Dewey, President McKinley approved the recommendation to send troops to begin the attack on the Spanish garrison holding Manila and to "[carry] out verbal instructions heretofore given" (Millis, 1931, p. 174). This epochal decision altered the American republic fundamentally. It created the empire that exists to this day in both the western Pacific and the Caribbean.

Incredibly, McKinley did not even know where he was sending his troops. Journalist H. H. Kohlsaas visited the president at about this time and recorded McKinley's comments: "When we received the cable from Admiral Dewey telling of the taking of the Philippines I looked up their location on the globe. I could not have told where those darned islands were within 2,000 miles!" (Kohlsaas, 1923, p. 68).

The Naval War Board wrote to Secretary of the Navy Long on May 9 to induce him to secure Dewey's lines of communication to Manila by capturing Spanish Guam. Long wrote these orders to the commanding officer of the USS *Charleston* on May 10, but they were sent much later (Braisted, 1954, p. 21; Grenville, 1960, p. 5). Four ships, the *Charleston* and three transports, left Honolulu on June 4 bound for Manila to reinforce Dewey's position in the Philippines. Captain Henry Glass, commander of the squadron, opened the orders of May 10 while under way. They instructed a stop at Guam where he was to "use such force as may be necessary to capture the port of Guam, making prisoners of the governor and other officials and any armed force that may be there" (*Annual Reports*, 1899, p. 151).

By June 3, the day before Glass's squadron left Honolulu and more than 2 weeks before the capture of Guam, President McKinley had decided on the minimum concessions Spain would have to make to end the war. Spain would have to evacuate Cuba and cede to the United States Puerto Rico, a port in the Philippines, and an island in the Marianas (Dennis, 1928, p. 99; Leech, 1959, p. 238; Trask, 1981, p. 425). So the decision was made then that the spoils of war would include at least one island in the Marianas, and the United States never wavered from this position, which ultimately came to pass. It is probable, then, that the United States would have taken Guam even if it had decided not to take the Philippines.

On June 20 Captain Glass captured the undefended Spanish outpost of Guam. The next day he ordered the American flag to be flown and the national anthem to be played. The flag raising was probably the first public demonstration of America's intention to acquire territory in the Pacific as a result of its attacks on Spanish holdings (Dulles, 1932, pp. 215-216).

Leaving no troops behind as an occupying force, Glass's squadron departed Guam for Manila on June 22. According to the Berlin Treaty, which had been in effect since June 14, 1889 (Pratt, 1951, p. 16), a colonial power could not lay claim to territory it did not occupy. Therefore, on June 23, Jose Sisto, the treasurer of Guam and the only government official to escape capture by Glass, claimed the right to act as governor of the Marianas and declared that under the Berlin Treaty the Marianas still belonged to Spain.

THE PEACE PROTOCOL, THE CEDING OF GUAM,  
AND THE ANNEXATION OF HAWAII

By July 18 the Spanish government recognized that its cause was lost and asked France to help arrange for a termination of hostilities. Consequently, on July 26 a message requesting a cease-fire was delivered to the president by the French ambassador to the United States.

Meanwhile, Admiral Mahan, who had joined McKinley's Naval War Board upon the departure of Roosevelt, wrote to Senator Henry Cabot Lodge on July 27 that he was not comfortable with annexing the Philippines. "Might it not be a wise compromise to take only the Ladrones & Luzon; yielding to the 'honor' & exigencies of Spain the Carolines and the rest of the Philippines" (Seager & Maguire, 1975, p. 569).

On July 30 the president's response to Spain's request for a cease-fire was delivered to Jules Cambon, the French ambassador in Washington. Although stated more eloquently, the terms were almost the same as those in his June 3 note to Ambassador Hay (*Treaty of Peace*, 1899, p. 143). Ceding Puerto Rico and the other Spanish islands in the West Indies and one of the Marianas "was to be compensation for the losses and expenses of the United States during the war, and of the damages suffered by their citizens during the last insurrection in Cuba" (*Treaty of Peace*, 1899, p. 218). The armistice protocol incorporating this language was signed on August 12, 1898.

Interestingly, Manila was captured the day after the armistice was signed. This was not the breach of protocol that Spain made it out to be. The cease-fire message was sent from Washington at 4:30 p.m., Friday, August 12, which in Manila was 5:30 a.m., Saturday, August 13. It was received in Manila on the afternoon of 16th, 3 days after leaving Washington (Chadwick, 1911, vol. 2, pp. 424-425).

Although the peace treaty left the political status of the newly gained islands to Congress, Whitelaw Reid made clear his position on political status for the territories. In a letter to Ambassador Hay on August 11 he warned: "If we don't insist strenuously that the territorial government is for all time, we shall be in worse danger than ever in our whole history from the demagogue who will want to make new states" (Cortissoz, 1921, vol. 2, p. 225). Whitelaw Reid's position has been maintained for nearly a century.

With America enthusiastic over the prospect of a military defeat of Spain, the resolution to annex Hawaii that had been languishing in Congress since the spring of 1897 was revived. On May 4, 1898, Congress introduced

a new resolution that passed in the House on June 15 and in the Senate on July 6. Hawai'i came under American control on August 12, ironically the same day that the armistice protocol to end the war with Spain was signed.

The Naval Committee of the Senate then asked the Naval War Board to advise what coaling stations should be acquired by the United States. Mahan sent a 32-point response to Secretary Long. He said:

[I]t will be always desirable that the station ceded be an island, whose boundaries are defined by the surrounding water. . . . [The Naval War Board] is also of the opinion that, if at all possible, any stations that may be acquired should become wholly the property of the United States, with so much of the surrounding land and water as may be needed to establish adequate protection against an enemy. . . . The Island of Guam, before mentioned, one of the Ladrone Islands, is comparatively small, being about thirty miles in length, with an excellent harbor, a little less than 1,500 miles from Manila, and 3,500 miles from Hawaii. . . . As it is observed that by the protocol lately signed between the United States and Spain, the former is to "select" one of the Ladrone Islands, and as the Board is not fully informed as to the precise character of the harbors in the other islands of the group, it is recommended that before a "selection" is made, one of our cruisers should be sent to the Ladrone Islands to examine the different harbors and to recommend the most suitable one. (Seager & Maguire, 1975, pp. 582-583; Sicard, Crowninshield, & Mahan to Long, August 24, 1898, pp. 335-354)

Mahan said that a coaling station at Guam, with others at Samoa, Luzon, and Hawai'i, "would largely meet the needs of the United States for naval stations, both for transit to China and for operations of war . . . ; for naval stations, being points for attack and defense, should not be multiplied beyond the strictly necessary" (quoted in Pomeroy, 1951, p. 9). Here it seems that the man who had become famous for his 1890 treatise on the influence of sea power, the need for a big navy, and the larger policy for America (see Mahan, 1890) was becoming fainthearted. Reluctant at first to take all of the Philippines and willing to settle for Luzon and the Marianas, a month later Mahan was willing to settle for just one island in the Marianas. Mahan contradicted himself by initially holding that the surrounding land and water should be taken to provide adequate protection from an enemy and then suggesting that only one island should be taken. It is impossible for one island in the Marianas to be protected from an enemy dwelling on another island a mere 64 kilometers (40 mi) away. By not advising that the United States should take all of the Marianas, if it was going to take any, Mahan cost America dearly in 1941.



Part of the answer to why only Guam was taken, therefore, is that there was no pressing military need for the rest of the Marianas. Mahan, America's leading naval historian of the time and supposedly America's leading naval strategist, advised against taking any more islands than were absolutely necessary. In his opinion only Guam was needed, and in the end only Guam was taken.

### WAS ONLY GUAM CAPTURED OR WERE THE MARIANAS CAPTURED?

When the treaty ending the Spanish-American War was finally signed on December 10, 1898, the United States had gained Guam, Puerto Rico, and all of the Philippine Islands. Thus, the United States became a colonial power in the Pacific. But the key question remains: Why only Guam—why not all of the Marianas? The answer is not necessarily that this was the recommendation of Mahan and the Naval War Board because, as events developed, there were several opportunities for the acquisition of the Marianas between the time of the Naval War Board's recommendation and the signing of the Treaty of Peace. The answer entails other questions: Did the United States have the option to take all of the Mariana islands? And did the United States capture all of the Marianas or only the island of Guam?

Capt. Glass's orders of May 10, as they appear in the 1898 congressional documents, are not titled Seizure of Guam, but "Seizure of the Ladrone Islands" (*Annual Reports*, 1899, p. 151). But Glass's orders specified the capture only of Guam, and Glass's letter to Governor Marina demanded the surrender only of Guam.

Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce advised Senator Lodge, also on May 10, that the islands should be taken in their entirety. He said that arbitration between Spain and Germany had already determined that the Carolines were part of the Philippines. Therefore, the Carolines would go to the United States if the Philippines did, and the same would hold true for the Marianas. Lodge responded in agreement on May 12 (Gleaves, 1925, pp. 279–280).

Journalist William M. Laffan of the New York *Sun* visited President McKinley in July and subsequently advised Lodge that the president was considering pursuing a policy of gaining control of the Philippines, Marianas, and Carolines first and deciding later what should be kept (Grenville & Young, 1966, p. 285; Trask, 1981, p. 440). Similarly, Lodge wrote to Roosevelt on

July 12, pleased that the president had taken the initiative to acquire the Marianas (Lodge, 1925, vol. 1, p. 323).

Lodge advised against taking only one island in the Marianas group, which he said "would open the door to many troubles" (Garraty, 1953, p. 198). Because Germany, the European power most critical of American foreign policy, was casting longing looks at the Marianas, Lodge held that "We want no German neighbors there" (Garraty, p. 198). When Lodge wrote his account of the Spanish-American War, and specifically about the capture of Guam in the Marianas, he spoke of the conquest of "those remote islands which were henceforth to know new masters" (Lodge, 1899, p. 204).

During his interview with French Ambassador Cambon on August 3, which eventually led to the signing of the peace protocol, President McKinley suggested that all of the Marianas might be taken. The president said that "the question of Cuba, Porto Rico [*sic*] and the other West India islands and the Ladrones, admitted of no negotiation" (*Treaty of Peace*, 1899, p. 132).

While the negotiations were going on, the peace commission conducted several hearings in Paris. Major General F. V. Greene reminded the peace commissioners of the political status of the islands:

The government of the Philippine Islands, including the Ladrones, Carolines, and Palaos [Palau], is vested in the Governor-General, who, in the language of the Spanish Official Guide or Blue Book, "is the sole and legitimate representative in these islands of the supreme power of the Government of the King of Spain." (*Treaty of Peace*, 1899, p. 414)

Others also thought the entire Marianas chain had been taken. Representative E. D. Crumpacker told the House of Representatives on January 25, 1899, "We have added to the national domain the Hawaiian Islands, Porto Rico [*sic*], the Philippines, and the Ladrones" (Pomeroy, 1951, p. 17).

At least certain German observers also expected the Americans to take all of the Marianas. According to the *Deutsche Warte*, August 20, 1898, "The United States has annexed Hawaii, and as spoils of the war, the Ladrone Islands, with a coaling station on Guam Island, have fallen to her share" (*Treaty of Peace*, 1899, p. 549).

Peace Commissioner William P. Frye thought all of the Marianas were in American control. He said during a commission meeting: "We hold Porto Rico [*sic*] and the other islands in the West Indies and the Ladrones as an indemnity in lieu of money" (*Treaty of Peace*, 1899, p. 484). Commissioner Frye questioned Commander Royal B. Bradford, chief of the Bureau of Equipment and US Navy advisor to the commission, about the navy's con-

tention that all of Luzon was in the military possession of the United States when only Manila had actually been captured. Bradford responded: "Simply because we have captured the seat of government and practically all of the Spanish forces" (*Treaty of Peace*, 1899, p. 485). Commissioners Frye, Cushman K. Davis, and Whitelaw Reid came to agree with Bradford. They wrote to the secretary of state on October 25:

Spain governed these Islands [the Philippines] from Manila; and with the destruction of her fleet and the surrender of her army we became as complete masters of the whole group as she had been. . . . The Ladrones and Carolines were also governed from the same capital by the same Governor-General. (Pomeroy, 1951, p. 12)

This line of reasoning regarding the extent of the captured territory proved sufficient for America to gain ownership of the entire Philippine archipelago. It would have also been sufficient for America to gain ownership of the rest of the Marianas and the Carolines.

#### TREATY NEGOTIATIONS AND THE GERMANS: AT THE TABLE AND BEHIND THE SCENES

Records of the negotiations that resulted in the Treaty of Paris and the end of the Spanish-American War indicate that one of the reasons all of the Mariana Islands were not taken by the United States was that in 1898 America was still a neophyte at international diplomacy. But Germany had a vested interest in the Philippines and Asia, and German diplomats developed and maintained a firm and unified position and achieved their desired goals.

The negotiations began in Paris on October 1, 1898, with the introduction of American and Spanish commissioners. President McKinley chose his five commissioners expertly. Whitelaw Reid, a Republican and an avowed expansionist, was the owner and editor of the New York *Tribune*. Senator Cushman K. Davis, chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, and Senator William P. Frye, both Republicans, were also expansionists. Senator George Gray, the only Democrat among the five, was an anti-expansionist. William R. Day, who stepped down from his post as secretary of state to head the delegation, favored taking only the island of Luzon and a string of smaller islands, including Guam, that would provide the United States with stepping stones to the Asian marketplace. (Ambassador John Hay returned to Wash-

ington from his post in London to assume the position of secretary of state vacated by William Day.)

At the second conference it was agreed that the protocol of August 12 would be the basis of negotiation. Significantly, the protocol did not call for the cession of the Philippines to the United States; instead, it stipulated only that "the United States is entitled to occupy and will hold the city, bay, and harbor of Manila pending the conclusion of a treaty of peace" (*Treaty of Peace*, 1899, p. 130). Similarly, the protocol identified only "an island in the Ladrones, to be selected by the United States" (*Treaty of Peace*, p. 130). This language did not preclude the United States from taking all of the Marianas or all of the Philippines.

On October 14 Commander Bradford emphatically expressed his opinion regarding the acquisition of all of the Marianas. He recommended taking not only all of the Marianas but also all of the Carolines. He used the annexation of Hawai'i as an example: "Suppose we had but one, and the others were possessed of excellent harbors . . . [S]uppose also the others were in the hands of a commercial rival, with a different form of government and not over[ly] friendly. Under these circumstances we should lose all the advantages of isolation" (*Treaty of Peace*, 1899, p. 477).

After an extensive tour of the United States, McKinley reached a decision: He would demand all of the Philippines. On October 26, 3 days after Frye, Reid, and Davis recommended taking all of the Spanish holdings in the western Pacific, including the Philippines, the Eastern and Western Carolines, and the Marianas, McKinley had Secretary of State John Hay send a two-paragraph message to the peace commissioners in Paris.<sup>4</sup> The first reiterated America's claim to conquest of the islands. The second paragraph said, "Consequently, grave as are the responsibilities and unforeseen as are the difficulties which are before us, the President can see but one plain path of duty—the acceptance of the Philippine archipelago" (*Foreign Relations*, 1898, pp. 937–938).

What happened to the Marianas? Almost every expert who had been asked had said that the Marianas were part of the Philippines and had recommended that they be taken. All of the Philippines were taken, purportedly because separating them "could not be justified on political, commercial, or humanitarian grounds" (*Foreign Relations*, 1898, p. 935; Morgan, 1965, p. 127). Apparently then, either the president was merely biding his time on the issue of the Carolines and the Marianas, as he had done on the Philippines, or somewhere within the political, commercial, or human-

itarian arenas, partitioning the Marianas could be justified. But where? The answer comes from the files of the German foreign office.

Historically, Germany had become an imperialist power in 1884 with its annexation of New Guinea. In that same year the German-Spanish rivalry over the Carolines began. Spain put forward a claim on the basis of discovery. Germany's Bismarck government thought that the Carolines were not worth a conflict. To save face Bismarck suggested arbitration by Pope Leo XIII, who predictably adjudicated the Carolines to Spain in 1885 (Hardach, 1990, pp. 7-8). Spain was to obtain (or maintain) sovereignty over the Carolines, but German traders would have free access to the islands. Germany was given control of the Marshall Islands.

In 1889 the United States and Germany nearly came to blows over the question of the partition of Samoa (Pratt, 1951, p. 15). In 1897 the German parliament approved a 5-year building program that would give Germany a fleet of 19 battleships (Braisted, 1958, p. 14). In November 1897 Germany occupied Kiaochow Bay in Shantung, China, and subsequently received a 99-year lease on the bay in addition to military and railway privileges (Braisted, 1958, p. 18). By the time of the outbreak of hostilities between America and Spain, Germany was also in control of the Bismarck Archipelago to the northeast of New Guinea.

On May 11, 1898, 10 days after Dewey had sunk the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay, Prince Henry of Prussia, brother of Kaiser Wilhelm II, telegraphed from Hong Kong to Bernhard von Bulow, German foreign affairs secretary: "A German merchant from Manila has stated in a way most worthy of credence that a rebellion has justified itself in the Philippines and will succeed; that the natives would gladly place themselves under the protection of a European power, especially Germany" (Bailey, 1939, p. 61; Bemis, 1963, p. 98). He said there were three possibilities for Germany in the Philippines: "(1) a protectorate, possibly under Germany; (2) the division of the island group between European powers, in which case Germany would naturally acquire her share; or (3) the neutralization of the Philippines under the guarantee of the powers" (Dennis, 1928, p. 76). Most European leaders did not believe that the United States would ever assume control over all of the Philippines and were shocked when it did. It is not surprising, therefore, that Germany showed interest in the Philippines when it became apparent that they might be available for acquisition.

On June 2 the German kaiser ordered a large naval squadron to Manila "in order to form personally an opinion on the Spanish situation, mood of natives, and foreign influence upon the political changes" (Bailey, 1939, p.

61). Its commander, Vice-Admiral Otto von Diederichs, the German naval officer who had successfully forced German interests into Kiaochow the year before, made things unpleasant for Dewey by steaming around the bay in apparent disregard of the American siege. News of von Diederichs' actions generated considerable anti-German sentiment in the United States (Pratt, 1955, p. 387).

On July 9 (Quinn, 1945, p. 293) American Ambassador to Berlin Andrew Dickson White, a Democrat and anti-imperialist, met with German Under-secretary of State Oswald von Richthofen, who told Ambassador White that "the acquisition of Samoa [as compensation for Hawai'i] and of the Carolines [as satisfaction of national pride after the papal adjudication of 1885] would be desired for Germany; furthermore one or two positions in the Philippine group and the Sulu Archipelago would be wanted" (Dulles, 1932, p. 225). White, in turn, dropped an unauthorized hint that the United States would most likely not want to keep any of the western Pacific islands. He told von Richthofen that, in his opinion, the United States would want to keep no more than a coaling station or two in the East Indies (Bemis, 1963, p. 100; Shippee, 1925, p. 770).

Ambassador White cabled Secretary of State Day on July 12 that the United States should be "friendly to German aspirations" to assure Germany's "friendly cooperation" (Braisted, 1958, p. 40). On the 13th, White telegraphed Day that he had again met with a representative of the German government (presumably von Richthofen) to discuss the Philippine situation. White said he (White)

also referred to the Ladrone Islands and to the reports of their capture by our transports, as an incident in their voyage to Manilla [*sic*], and asked [von Richthofen] in a jocose sort of way whether Germany would have any use for them. [Von Richthofen] seemed to think the matter well worthy of consideration. (White to Day, July 13, 1898, entry 494)

White also telegraphed Day that "assurances as far as our government can see its way to give them may save the United States later troublesome complications" (Quinn, 1945, p. 294; White to Day, July 13, 1898, entry 494). Thus Ambassador White, without any direction from Washington, was willing to give to Germany practically everything America had captured. When these messages were relayed to President McKinley, he expressed surprise and warned White to be more reserved in his conversations. Nevertheless, no doubt could have been left either in the president's mind that Germany was seriously interested in the fate of Spain's Pacific colonies or

in the kaiser's mind that America had yet to formulate a unified position on what to do with its newly captured territories.

Ambassador Hay in London was also approached by German representatives. On July 14 he telegraphed to Secretary Day that Germany desired "very little. They wanted a 'few coaling stations,' and hoped that in the final disposition of the Philippines, it might be arranged" (Dennis, 1928, p. 93). On July 27, after a personal visit from Count Paul von Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg, the German ambassador in London, Hay expressed his true sentiments to Lodge:

[T]he Vaterland [Germany] is all on fire with greed, and terror of us. They want the Philippines, the Carolines, and Samoa—they want to get into our markets and keep us out of theirs. . . . There is to the German mind, something monstrous in the thought that a war should take place anywhere and they not profit by it. (Dennis, 1928, p. 98)

When the peace protocol was signed on August 12, Germany realized that attempting to deal directly with the United States would be fruitless. The next day the German foreign office in Madrid was asked to find out what Spain would accept for the purchase of Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap. Although no price was settled on, a secret agreement was reached on September 10, 1898, whereby Spain promised Germany preemptive rights to Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap upon the conclusion of peace. Arrangements could also be made for whatever else the United States did not take and Germany might want (Braisted, 1958, p. 55; Trask, 1981, p. 463). Germany's covetousness was suspected by the United States—as previously noted Bradford had predicted that Germany would purchase any Spanish islands not obtained by the United States.

Three of the five American peace commissioners, Reid, Davis, and Frye, advised President McKinley by telegram that any territory not taken by the United States would fall into the hands of hostile competitors (Braisted, 1958, p. 55; Davis, Frye, & Reid to Hay, October 25, 1898, p. 32). The president had already prepared a telegram, dated October 26, that advised the American commissioners of his decision to take all of the Philippines. Probably as a result of the commissioners' October 25 telegram, however, the president hesitated, reconsidered, and then telegraphed his decision to the commissioners on October 28. In it the president reiterated his decision to acquire the Philippines, but he made no mention of the Carolines or the Marianas, leaving the question open in the minds of the peace commissioners.

On November 10 Whitelaw Reid said the United States would be willing to give Spain \$12 million to \$15 million for all of the Philippines, Carolines,

and Marianas (Morgan, 1965, pp. 143–146). The response to the possible acquisition of the Carolines, Marianas, and Philippines arrived from Washington on November 14. The president still insisted on the retention of all of the Philippines and wanted an effort made to acquire the most eastern of the Carolines, meaning Kosrae. American business interests wanted a cable station there to link Hawai'i to Guam and Asia, and American Protestant missionaries based in Boston wanted to maintain their half-century-old mission on the island. Again, neither the Marianas nor the rest of the Carolines were mentioned. It is clear, then, that there were neither economic nor religious reasons strong enough to compel the president to show interest in the rest of the Marianas.

The message from the secretary of state also suggested that either Commissioner Day or the secretary of the commission, John Basset Moore, had made some sort of commitment to the German ambassador in Washington that might interfere with the acquisition of Kosrae (Morgan, 1965, p. 149). This was to be only the first mention of possible collusion between the American peace commissioners and representatives of the German government.

On November 15 the American commissioners prepared an ultimatum to be presented to the Spanish commissioners: either accept the cession of the Philippines or move for adjournment and return to war. The Americans offered the full \$20 million authorized by the president but did not demand any islands other than the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico. Although Davis, Frye, and Reid argued for the inclusion of Kosrae, they finally agreed to a phrase suggested by Day that left that island's future open to discussion after Spain agreed to relinquish the Philippines.

A key figure in the negotiations was George Herbert Munster, Germany's ambassador to France. He had been living in Paris for 13 years prior to the Spanish-American War and was well known in diplomatic circles. When the American commissioners arrived in Paris for the peace negotiations, the kaiser telegraphed Munster to make a point of seeing Whitelaw Reid every day. Munster and Reid had known each other since 1889, and "when their friendship was renewed they had frequent opportunities for talk" (Cortissoz, 1921, vol. 2, p. 243). On November 15, the same day that the Americans had prepared their ultimatum for the acquisition of all of the Philippines, Munster dined with the American peace commissioners, and afterwards they discussed their positions. The Americans said they were going to ask only for Kosrae in the Carolines. That night Munster informed the foreign office in Berlin that the Americans had agreed, "as far as the other islands [Pohnpei



and Yap] are concerned, to respect the arrangements between Spain and Germany" (Quinn, 1945, p. 299). This statement is significant because it implies that Munster had revealed the secret Spanish-German agreement and had received some commitment from the peace commissioners. Munster probably did not reveal too much, though, as indicated by later developments.

On November 21 and 22 Munster was directed to dissuade the Americans from taking any other islands and to inform them that Kosrae in particular lay within Germany's sphere of influence. To accomplish this Munster turned his attention to his friend Whitelaw Reid. When Munster repeated Germany's claim that Kosrae was within the sphere of influence of the German Marshall Islands, Reid pulled out a map and showed Munster that Kosrae was far to the southwest of the Marshalls and was rightly part of the Carolines. It appeared that Munster was now renewing Germany's 1885 claim to the Carolines. Reid then told Munster that he thought Germany was interested not only in Kosrae but also in all of the Caroline Islands. Munster parried:

I agree with you precisely; and I tell you these Colonial Department people are all alike—all savages, who can't eat without gorging—not civilized sufficiently to know when they have had enough, and unable to resist the sight of raw meat! They are tiresome, these colonials. (Cortissoz, 1921, vol. 2, p. 245)

Munster informed Reid that if America did not interfere with Germany's acquisition of the Carolines, the Palau Islands, and the Marianas with the exception of Guam, then Germany would waive any claim to the Sulus in return for a coaling station on one of them. Munster spoke with Reid again on November 25, continuing his effort to sway the American away from Kosrae. But Reid stood his ground and told him that if the Spaniards accepted the ultimatum for the Philippines, the Americans would proceed with attempting to gain control of Kosrae. Munster then told Reid that it would be best if he telegraphed Reid's position to Berlin and left the problem for the German foreign office to settle in Madrid or Washington (Morgan, 1965, p. 163).

If Whitelaw Reid's diary can be believed, as of November 25 Reid still did not know the nature of the secret agreement between Germany and Spain because he wrote after that November 25 meeting with Munster: "The impression left distinctly upon my mind . . . was that his government was jealous of our proposed acquisition . . . and was probably anxious of . . . in some way laying claim to the Carolines" (Morgan, 1965, p. 164).

On Sunday, November 27, John B. Jackson, the American chargé d'affaires in Berlin, was asked to call at the German foreign office and was met by Baron von Richthofen (Jackson to Hay, November 28, 1898, entry 630). There Jackson was presented with a copy of Munster's telegram stating what Reid had told Munster of the American demand for Kosrae. Jackson was also shown instructions that had been sent to Baron Speck von Sternburg, the German chargé d'affaires in Washington, regarding Munster's report of his conversation with Reid. In addition von Richthofen referred to his own conversations with Ambassador White in the previous July. Baron von Richthofen pressed the points that the German public felt that Kosrae lay within its sphere of influence and that if the United States took it, Germany would probably do nothing untoward, but that lasting friction would develop between the two countries.

Jackson then asked von Richthofen if Germany was negotiating with Spain for the Carolines. Von Richthofen replied that he knew Germany was ready to acquire them at any time, but that no negotiations were taking place. Strictly speaking, no formal negotiations were going on at that time. What von Richthofen omitted saying was that Germany had already made a deal and was trying not only to protect it but also to enhance it.

Von Richthofen then suggested that if the United States would forget about Kosrae, Germany would not oppose an American taking of another island in the Marianas. The door to the Marianas was opened again but quickly shut. In his telegram to Washington reporting on the conversation, Jackson advised that "Germany would not in any way oppose the taking by the United States of another of the Ladrões in the place of one of the Carolines" (Jackson to Hay, November 28, 1898, entry 630). But at the end he added: "My personal opinion is that German public opinion is so sensitive about the Carolines that the German Government might be willing to negotiate exchanging the most northern of the Marshall Islands as a cable station if we persist in taking Kusaie [Kosrae] from Spain." This long telegram from Jackson to Secretary of State Hay was received and translated for the president at 3:00 p.m. on November 27.

As Jackson suspected, this same diplomatic scenario was being repeated in Washington between Speck von Sternburg and Secretary of State Hay. On Monday morning, November 28, von Sternburg told Hay that the American possession of Kosrae would be "for America without importance, but for Germany a thorn in the flesh" (Quinn, 1945, p. 300). Hay took it to the president, who must have already seen the message from Jackson. On November 30 Hay reported to von Sternburg that the United States had no

desire to disturb its friendly relations with Germany and would consider another island for a cable station, possibly in the Marshalls.

On November 28 in Paris, Spain had reluctantly accepted the ultimatum regarding the Philippines. The American commissioners, unaware of the president's decision, proceeded with their plan to acquire Kosrae. On November 30 the commissioners offered to pay \$1 million for Kosrae in addition to the \$20 million for the Philippines, should Spain agree to the sale. Spain declined.

The next day, December 1, the peace commissioners received a dispatch from Washington dated November 30 to the effect that the Germans were objecting strenuously to the US acquisition of Kosrae. This was in response to Jackson's message and von Sternburg's visit to Hay. According to Hay, the Germans claimed to have received assurances from the American commissioners that nothing would be done to interfere with German rights and interests. "The President is not aware of such assurances," said Hay, "but wishes you to be governed by them, if they have been given" (Morgan, 1965, p. 177). Bernhard von Bulow later reported that "the American peace delegates in Paris declared to our ambassador there [Munster] that, in accordance with special instructions from President McKinley, the American government had decided to respect the secret negotiations in September between Germany and Spain" (Quinn, 1945, p. 300). Again it seems that the American peace commissioners had been made aware of Germany's secret arrangement with Spain and that the American delegation agreed they would not interfere with that agreement. This contention is supported by reports from both Munster and von Bulow.

The Spaniards apparently believed that the ultimatum they had accepted on November 28 was binding: the United States would take only the Philippines and Guam in the Pacific, thereby allowing the Spanish government to be free to negotiate the disposition of the rest of its island holdings. On December 2 the Spanish minister of state's offer to sell to Germany the rest of the Carolines, besides Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap, was readily accepted. When Germany expressed interest in the Marianas (excluding Guam), Spain also offered the Palau Islands (Quinn, 1945, pp. 301-302).

That same day Spain offered a deal to the American peace commissioners. In return for an "open door" concession to Spain in Puerto Rico and Cuba, the same as had been provided for them in the Philippines, Spain would cede all of the Carolines and the Marianas to America (Morgan, 1965, p. 190). For the first time all five American commissioners agreed on the complete acquisition, as long as the open door was restricted to only 5 years,

and sent that suggestion to Washington. The response arrived on the morning of Sunday, December 4:

The President is still of the opinion that preferential privileges to Spain in Puerto Rico and Cuba are not desirable. He would even prefer that [a] treaty should be made on [the] basis of ultimatum rather than risk the embarrassments which might result from such concessions. (*Foreign Relations*, 1898, p. 964)

Historian Wayne Morgan (1965, p. 191) has expressed the opinion that this meant the president did not want to risk the embarrassment of a protest in Congress from "tariff protectionists and jingoes" during the treaty ratification hearings should such concessions be granted. This proved to be America's last chance to gain control of all of the Marianas as a result of the Spanish-American War. On December 10 the peace treaty between the United States and Spain was signed, with only Guam among the Marianas going to America.

Spain accepted in principle the German deal for the Carolines, the Palau Islands, and the Marianas (except Guam) on December 5. Negotiations continued until December 20 when an agreement amending the September 10 arrangement was reached. The treaty between Germany and Spain could not yet be completed, however, because the question of Kosrae remained unresolved. That issue came to rest after January 17, 1899, when Commander E. D. Taussig, captain of the US gunboat *Bennington*, laid claim to Wake Island (Pratt, 1951, p. 76). Germany decided not to contest the issue, and the American effort to gain control of Kosrae was dropped.

The question of the Marianas, however, was still not fully resolved. In January 1899 Germany, concerned about the high price Spain was asking, considered taking only the Carolines. Germany even asked Japanese Foreign Minister Aoki if Japan would be interested in buying the Marianas (Hardach, 1990, p. 16)! But then Spain compromised, and Germany, without ever having participated in the war, concluded its negotiations with Spain on February 10, 1899, agreeing to pay 25 million pesetas (16,750,000 marks or \$4,200,000) for the Carolines, the Palau Islands, and the Marianas (except Guam). The kaiser was so pleased with the successes of his foreign office that he rewarded von Bulow with the title of count. Munster received the title of prince for his efforts (Quinn, 1945, p. 302; Voigt, 1931, p. 336).

One last event had to occur before the American acquisition of the newly conquered territories could be completed. The treaty to end the Spanish-American War had to be ratified by the US Senate. Stiff opposition came from anti-expansionists, primarily Democrats, who argued that the

American republic had neither the right nor the authority to acquire lands that lacked any foreseeable chance of becoming fully integrated states. As the Senate vote loomed, the expansionists did not have the two-thirds majority necessary for ratification. At the last moment, William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic Party presidential hopeful, arrived on the scene and convinced several of his supporters, who were anti-expansionists, to vote for ratification and allow the expansionists to have their day. He said that during the next election they would then campaign against the Republicans and their imperialistic mode. On February 6, 1899, with these few extra votes in hand, the Senate voted 57 to 27 in favor of ratification of the Treaty of Peace to end the Spanish-American War. The margin was a mere one vote over a two-thirds majority. Thus, without the self-motivated political gamesmanship of William Jennings Bryan, the US Senate would have defeated the treaty and the United States would not have gained possession of the Philippines, Guam, or Puerto Rico. The Marianas would not have been partitioned. But the Rubicon had been crossed, and the United States of America became the last nation to join the family of imperialists. Bryan's hypocrisy was widely recognized. He lost the 1900 election to McKinley by an even larger margin than in their 1896 contest (Tompkins, 1970, pp. 183-195; Tuchman, 1967, pp. 185-186).

Germany eventually established district offices at Saipan, Yap, and Pohnpei. While the new American naval government taught the Chamorros on Guam the English language and the rudiments of American political principles (see Farrell, 1986), the Germans taught the Chamorros and Carolinians in the northern Mariana Islands the German language and work ethics (see Fritz, 1904/1986).

Professor Gerd Hardach, who has written extensively on the subject of the German Marianas, states:

The background for the acquisition was national prestige in the age of imperialism. Emperor Wilhelm took a personal interest in the navy and colonial expansion, and if any colonies were for sale, the German government would be a potential buyer. It is obvious from the German records that the German government, and possibly the Spanish government, always assumed that the armistice was final, and that the US [was] only interested in Guam. If the US government had changed [its] mind and claimed all of the Marianas, the German government would certainly have acquiesced, as they did not have a strong motive. (G. Hardach, personal communication, March 22, 1993)

Why then did the United States not take all of the Marianas instead of only Guam? The answer is complex: in part because there was no pressing

military need, in part because there were no perceived economic advantages, and in part because too often the right hand (the peace commission) did not know what the left hand (the president, his ambassadors, and the secretary of state) was doing. And most assuredly the United States did not take all of the Marianas because Germany wanted them and, being experienced in negotiating, maneuvered for them and was prepared to pay for them. To paraphrase McKinley's justification for acquiring all of the Philippines, there were neither military, economic, nor humanitarian reasons strong enough to compel America to acquire the Marianas in their entirety.

As with all national policy decisions, the responsibility for the decision on the partition of the Marianas rests ultimately with the president. Despite the blundering of Ambassador Andrew White in Germany, despite possible indiscretions by Day or Moore with the German ambassador in Washington, despite all the machinations of the German foreign ministry in Paris, the final decision was made by McKinley upon Spain's last desperate effort to regain some financial advantage from its lost colonies in the Caribbean and the Pacific. The president was more concerned about Senate ratification of the treaty than the effect the treaty would have on the island people. The debate between expansionists and anti-expansionists was fierce. It is probable that the president, in conference first with Secretary of State Day in June and then in October and December with Secretary of State Hay, was satisfied to take what had been gained in their "splendid little war" (Freidel, 1958, p. 3) with Spain and hoped their friends in the Senate could get the treaty ratified. In hindsight, however, had McKinley claimed the Marianas early on, perhaps as part of the armistice protocol, the treaty debate would have been no different and America would have stood on much firmer ground in 1919 and 1941. For with the Marianas in American hands, the United States could have given up the Eastern and Western Carolines to the Japanese in 1919 without jeopardizing the security of the strategic naval base at Guam in the Marianas. And with the Marianas fully fortified in 1941, Japan might instead have turned its martial spirit toward its traditional enemy, Russia.

### THE JAPANESE MANDATE

The Allied victory in World War I presented the United States with an opportunity to reunite the Marianas archipelago under its own flag. That did not happen because this time the Japanese proved to be the more astute diplomats than the Americans.

As a result of secret alliances between Great Britain and Japan in the early 1900s, Japan joined Great Britain in the war against Germany in August 1914 (see Peattie, 1988). Japan sent two war squadrons to German Micronesia and captured the islands, Saipan being occupied on October 14, 1914. Japan announced that its intentions were perfectly honorable and in keeping with its alliance with Great Britain. Count Okuma addressed a telegram to *The Independent* stating, as premier, that Japan had "no desire to secure more territory, no thought of depriving China or any other peoples of anything which they now possess" (Pomeroy, 1951, p. 45).

Nevertheless, in 1917 Japan gained pledges from Great Britain, France, Russia, and Italy to support Japan's claim to Micronesia after the war. This was in return for Japanese antisubmarine activities in the Mediterranean for the duration of the war. These were secret agreements to which the United States was not privy.

Just as during the Spanish-American War, the US Navy Department assessed America's postwar options long before the war ended. In January 1918 the General Board recommended acquisitions in the Marshalls, Carolines, and Marianas:

The Marianas were of outstanding importance, because of their proximity to Japan and to the American island [Guam]. Their position in the immediate vicinity of Guam is capable of development into submarine bases within supporting distance of Japan, and, in the event of war, this would make their continued possession by that country a perpetual menace to Guam, and to any fleet operation undertaken for the relief of the Philippines. (Pomeroy, 1951, p. 69)

Throughout World War I the Office of Naval Intelligence warned that Japanese acquisitions in Micronesia posed an immediate danger to American policies (Dorwart, 1980, p. 30). Shortly after the war ended, Breckinridge Long, third assistant secretary of state, advised Leland Harrison, assistant secretary of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace, that some of the Pacific Islands should be returned to Germany. Then, after the peace conference, the United States should acquire the Marianas, Carolines, and the German Samoan Islands from Germany. Assistant Secretary Long recognized that with the former German islands north of the equator under permanent Japanese occupation, "it would be impossible to send any military forces to the Philippines with any safety if the convoy were directed through the usual channels" (Fifield, 1946, pp. 473-474). America's naval leadership also agreed that Japan should not receive the Micronesian islands and suggested instead that Japan should be given a free hand in eastern Siberia.

The Japanese wanted the former German islands, but they were not unified on how far they would go to keep them. The Japanese plan for a southward expansion of the empire, *nanshin*, could be significantly advanced with the acquisition of Micronesia. Baron Makino, leader of the Japanese delegation to the peace conference, presented the Japanese claim for the "unconditional cession of . . . all of the Islands in German possession in the Pacific Ocean North of the Equator" (Fifield, 1946, p. 474). In a news release he said: "To place these islands under the control of any other nation would naturally constitute a reflection upon Japan which would be resented by the people of that country" (Fifield, p. 474). Earlier, Viscount Ishii had told Sir Edward Grey that "no Government in Japan could stand if they did not retain some of the South Sea Islands as 'souvenirs' of the war" (Fifield, p. 475).

Great Britain, France, Russia, and Italy kept their pledges to Japan at the Versailles peace conference in February 1919, over President Woodrow Wilson's objections, and Japan was awarded a Class C Mandate over German Micronesia. Because the US Senate did not ratify the peace treaty, the United States did not become a member of the League of Nations. Thus Wilson's later appeals to the league in opposition to the Japanese Mandate fell on deaf ears.

In 1919 the United States was in an excellent position to ignore the treaty. Japan was strong but certainly no match for the United States. Had Wilson pressed the issue, the other Allied powers probably would not have sided with Japan against the United States. The US representatives at the peace conference could have recommended reuniting the Marianas, where America already had a naval base, and letting the rest of German Micronesia go to Japan. Such an act certainly would have exacerbated the already strained relations between the United States and Japan, but it probably would have been no more irritating to the Japanese than was the blatantly racist Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924.<sup>5</sup> In the long run, forcing Japan to accept a reunited Marianas in 1919 might have helped prevent or deflect the events of 1941. Japanese war planners might have struck at Russia, their longtime foe, and proceeded with their plan for a northward advance, *hokushin*.

The failure of the US Senate to approve the Treaty of Versailles left the United States without a treaty of peace with its World War I adversaries. To resolve the problems, President Warren Harding convened a Naval Arms Limitation Conference in Washington, DC, in November 1921. At the same time a communications conference was called to resolve the disputes over the transoceanic cable connections at Yap in Micronesia and America's opposition to the Japanese Mandate. In the end, Japan agreed to American



access to the Yap cable connection (which the United States never utilized), nonfortification of the Japanese Mandate, and an American-British-Japanese capital ship ratio of 5:5:3. In turn the United States agreed to nonfortification of Guam and the Philippines and Japan's occupation of German Micronesia, including the Northern Marianas. The partition of the Marianas was reconfirmed. Most naval authorities, American and others, pronounced these agreements as great diplomatic victories for Japan and a needless loss for America. They were to be proved tragically correct just 20 years later (see Farrell, 1991b).

### FURTHER EFFORTS AT REUNIFICATION

After World War II the US Navy once again made a plea for the US acquisition of the Micronesian islands captured from Japan at such great expenditure of American blood and treasure (see Farrell, 1984; S. Morison, 1953). Because of the anticolonial stand taken by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the "noncolonial" status of the Japanese Mandate was transferred to the United Nations, and the Marianas became part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) in 1947 (see Wytttenbach, 1971).

Beginning in 1950 the people of the Marianas District of the TTPI began lobbying for a reunification with Guam. Because of the colonial partition of the Marianas and the incorporation of the northern Marianas as a district in the TTPI, these efforts were stifled. A joint plebiscite was finally held in 1969, whereby the people of both Guam and the Marianas District voted on the option of reunification. Although the vote in the Marianas District was strongly in favor of reunification, the people of Guam, in a weak showing, voted no (see Farrell, 1991a).

The people of the Marianas District went on to exercise their right of self-determination, establishing the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in January 1978. There has been no serious discussion of reunification since 1969.

### SUMMARY

America gained the opportunity to acquire the Philippines and Guam as a result of the Spanish-American War. If Dewey had sailed away from the Philippines after sinking the Spanish fleet, or if the American peace nego-

tiators had maintained their stance on annexing all of the Marianas, or if the anti-imperialists in the 1898 Senate had maintained their integrity, the Marianas today would be united as one political entity, although not necessarily an American one. So in the end it was colonial rivalry among turn-of-the-century world powers and the hypocrisy of some members of the US Senate that led to the partition of the Marianas into the US Territory of Guam and the German Marianas District.

The partition of the Marianas was maintained following World War I when the US Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles and the Mariana Islands north of Guam became part of the Japanese Mandate under the League of Nations. The partition was further reinforced when the United States accepted the concept of transferring the "noncolonial" status of the northern Marianas to the United Nations in 1947 without considering the ethnohistory of the archipelago. Efforts toward reunification were inhibited by diplomatic obstacles during the first two decades of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands administration. The partition became institutionalized after Guam voters rejected reunification in 1969. The Mariana Islands are now governed as the US Territory of Guam and the US Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands—both are self-governing internally and both have a full complement of federal agencies.

Correspondence about this article and requests for reprints may be addressed to Don A. Farrell, P. O. Box 5, Tinian, MP 96952.

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### Notes

1. Most maps continued to label the Marianas as the Ladrões until well into the twentieth century. The term Ladrões remains offensive to the people of the Marianas. Unless used as part of a quotation, this article refers to the islands as the Marianas.

2. Secretary of the Navy John D. Long, in his book *The New American Navy* (1904), claims that he arranged for Dewey to take the Asiatic Squadron and Howell the European. Long's claim is quoted twice in the *Journal of John D. Long* (1956, pp. 224-225, 228). Both Dewey and Roosevelt say Roosevelt told Dewey to go to Senator Proctor of Vermont and ask him to see President

McKinley on Dewey's behalf, which he did. Long may well have made the recommendation and either had not been aware of the political machinations going on behind his back or thought they were secondary to his personal recommendation to the president. It is clear, however, that Roosevelt did conspire to have Dewey get the Asiatic Squadron.

3. Morris (1979) cites it as "Remember the Maine! To hell with Spain!"

4. Leopold (1963) verifies that the October 26 message so often cited was never sent.

5. Since the 1870s, Americans—Californians in particular—had begun legislative action to limit Chinese and Japanese immigration to the United States. The National Origins Act of 1924, also known as the Oriental Exclusion Act, almost completely barred Japanese and Chinese immigration to the United States (see Dudden, 1992, p. 70).

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