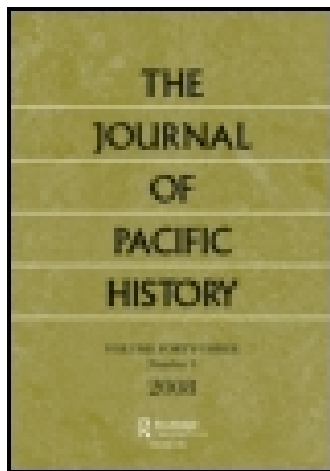


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The Yap Controversy and its Significance

SUMITRA RATTAN

AS THE 19TH CENTURY NEARED ITS CLOSE THE UNITED STATES WAS INVOLVED IN imperialist movements. The spirit of imperialism had been strengthened as a result of war with Spain. Through the acquisition of Alaska, Samoa, Hawaii, and the Philippines the United States had established a Pacific empire.

Among the many factors that are stressed by historians in recent interpretations of American imperialism are the influence of Darwinian theory, the impact of the domestic crisis of the 1890s,¹ and the effect of the ideas of such men as Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge, Whitelaw Reid, Albert Beveridge, and especially Capt. Alfred T. Mahan.² As a direct outcome of Mahan's gospel of navalism,³ acquisition of safe outposts and bases became one of the chief objectives of American foreign policy, and even up to the present continues to influence the thinking of its formula-tors.

Historians have written about the expansion of American influence in Hawaii, Samoa, the Philippines and Central America.⁴ But nothing has yet been written about American efforts to spread her influence in the north-western Pacific region in the 1920s. The problem of defending the Philippines and maintaining the security of the all-American route from Guam to Manila and other channels of communication was intimately linked with the political status of the myriad of islands which studded the Pacific Ocean. It is in this perspective that the importance of the Yap controversy is apparent. The purpose of this article is to briefly survey the character and achievements of American diplomacy, especially under the guidance of the Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, and demonstrate how the United States, while threatened by Japanese expansionist tendencies in the Pacific islands north of the equator, was able to obtain certain concessions through diplomacy. Those concessions helped her to expand her influence in the Pacific region and also to restrain Japan from upsetting the balance of power in eastern Asia.

¹ Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform, From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York 1955).

² Foster Rhea Dulles, *The Imperial Years* (New York 1956).

³ Alfred T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* (Boston 1890).

⁴ Garel A. Grunder and William E. Livezey, *The Philippines and the United States* (Norman 1951); Earl S. Pomeroy, *Pacific Outpost: American Strategy in Guam and Micronesia* (Stanford 1951); Gregory Mason, *Remember the Maine* (New York 1959); Frank Friedel, *The Splendid Little War* (Boston 1958).

THE United States had been slow to develop political interests in the Pacific region. Even after a victorious war in 1898 Washington failed to acquire the strategically located Caroline and Mariana groups of islands; and a year later all except Guam were purchased by Germany. In 1899 German possession of those islands did not seem to endanger American interests in the Far East. After World War I the 'C' mandate conferred on Japan by the League of Nations changed the situation to the detriment of the American national interest. Until this time the United States had done very little to fortify either Guam or the Philippines. As a result the American insular possessions remained virtually a hostage to Japan. And the assurance of all channels of communication with China as well as the Philippines became rather dubious. The cardinal issue facing Washington after World War I was how the security of insular possessions could be guaranteed and the line of communications with the Far East maintained intact in the face of Japanese menace and aggressive designs. This objective was achieved by the signing of the Yap Treaty in February 1922.

FROM 1898 to 1918 the Navy Department had never expressed any desire for American sovereignty over any Pacific islands except the Galapagos. After the seizure of these islands by Japan the General Board of the Navy changed its views entirely regarding strategy in the Pacific Ocean and recommended that 'the Marshall and Caroline Islands should be acquired by the United States'.⁵ In its report of 24 January 1918 the Board pointed out that excellent submarine and destroyer bases could be established both in the Marshalls and the Carolines, and analysed their use and importance. In the event of war the Marianas in the continued possession of Japan would be a perpetual menace to Guam and would also jeopardize any fleet operation undertaken for the relief of the Philippines.⁶ So the Board concluded that the Marianas should either be acquired by the United States or remain under neutral protection, undefended. If undefended it made little difference to which power the islands belonged. In case of war they would fall at once to the power controlling the sea, as all the German islands fell to Great Britain and Japan during the World War.⁷

If Japan should fortify these prospective mandated areas it would possess a most powerful projection of naval and air bases and communication

⁵ George H. Blakeslee, 'The Islands of the Pacific Ocean' (Washington D.C. 1921), Conf. Inf. Memo. No. (23), Washington D.C., National Archives, Record Group (hereinafter NA, RG) 43(93), p. 29; Report of the General Board of the Navy, 24 Jan. 1918, File 811.014/28, NA, RG 59, P. 5.

⁶ Ibid., 5-6.

⁷ Ibid., 5; Recommendations of the General Board of the Navy, An extract of the Report of 2 Dec. 1918, NA, RG 43(103), p. 46.

centres in the Far East. The extensions would also bring Japan 1,500 miles nearer Hawaii.⁸ In view of this, the General Board of the Navy positively stated in its report of 12 September 1921 that the mandated islands should neither be neutralized nor fortified.⁹

Despite her uncertainty regarding concrete Pacific policies, the United States challenged the legality of the Japanese mandate and was determined to alter it in such a way as to safeguard American interests in the Pacific Islands and in the Far East. The struggle for the control of those islands converged on a tiny unknown speck of land known as Yap which happened to be a centre for the German cable system connecting the United States with the Philippines and the Far East.¹⁰

DURING the course of the Versailles Peace Conference the Supreme Council discussed the question of the island of Yap several times during the latter part of April and first part of May 1919. In those discussions President Wilson stressed that Yap be excepted from the mandate system and be internationalized.¹¹ The upshot of decisions about the islands was supposed to be recorded in the frequently cited minutes of 7 May 1919. Unfortunately, the minutes did not spell out the reservations made by President Wilson; they also omitted the qualifying word 'all' in referring to the islands. On the other hand the fateful minutes stated: 'The following decisions were reached:—as for the . . . German Islands north of the equator. The mandate shall be held by Japan.'¹² Later President Wilson could only assert that Yap was not intended to be included in the mandate conferred on Japan, while Tokyo could assert that the decision regarding the mandate comprised all the ex-German islands in the Pacific north of the equator, including Yap. The wording of the Supreme Council's minutes of 7 May 1919 was unfortunate. Even President Wilson later admitted that 'the minutes of May 7, 1919, if read alone and without reference to previous discussions and understanding, may be interpreted as including Yap in the mandate to be allotted to Japan'.¹³ But the President was of the firm opinion that in

⁸ Blakeslee, 'The Mandate of the Pacific', *Foreign Affairs*, I (1921), 103; idem, 'The Islands of the Pacific Ocean', 50-2.

⁹ The Recommendations of the General Board of the Navy, 12 Sept. 1921, NA, RG 43(103), p. 28.

¹⁰ Clarence H. Mackey to the Secretary of State (B. Colby), 19 Aug. 1920, File 574.DI/148, NA, RG 59.

¹¹ The Acting Secretary of State (Norman H. Davis) to the American Chargé d'Affaires at Tokyo (Edward Bell), 6 Dec. 1920, Washington, Library of Congress, L. Harrison Papers (hereinafter Harrison Papers).

¹² Ibid.; The American Ambassador in Paris (H. C. Wallace) to the Secretary of State, 19 July 1920, File 8621.01/19, NA, RG 59; *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of U.S.A. 1921* (Washington D.C. 1936), II, 263, fn.

¹³ Woodrow Wilson to Lloyd George, 3 Nov. 1920, Washington, Library of Congress, Davis Papers.

the context of previous discussions Yap was not included in the Supreme Council's decision.¹⁴

The lack of clarity about the final intentions of the Supreme Council over the disposition of Yap created one of the most serious controversies among the major world powers; and it pitted the United States against Great Britain, France, and Japan as London and Paris were committed to support the Japanese claims by their earlier secret commitments. At the start Yap was viewed as a centre of cables.¹⁵ Its importance in post-war American security arrangements in the Pacific had not yet emerged.

President Wilson made an effort to determine the status of ex-German cables by convening a Preliminary Conference on 8 October 1920.¹⁶ In the sessions of the conference the question of Yap assumed a serious shape. Unmindful of the American efforts the Council of the League of Nations approved the granting of the 'C' mandate to Japan on 17 December 1920. As a result of this decision the then Secretary of State, Bainbridge Colby, sent his protest note of 21 February 1921. Colby emphasized that the United States had an equal concern and interest in the disposition of the ex-German overseas possessions, and that no mandate conferred without her assent could claim to be valid. As Washington had not consented to the Japanese mandate it did not consider itself bound by its terms and provisions.¹⁷

In an authoritative statement prepared a day before relinquishing his office, President Wilson stated that the assent of Washington was essential for the validity of any mandate both as to its assignments and its terms and provisions. The United States government had never given its consent on either point regarding the mandate of Yap and so the Japanese mandate could not be considered valid.¹⁸

WHEN the new Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes, surveyed the situation he was confronted with the question of accuracy with respect to what President Wilson had agreed to at the Paris Peace Conference. London and Tokyo emphatically asserted that Wilson had given his consent to the Japanese mandate. But President Wilson firmly disagreed. In time Hughes cut under the whole unpleasant question of veracity. He plunged deeper and based the American demands for an equal voice in the

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ The Secretary of State (Colby) to the Council of the League of Nations, 21 Feb. 1921, Washington, Library of Congress, Bainbridge Colby Papers (hereinafter Colby Papers).

¹⁶ The Secretary of State (Lansing) to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs (Pichon), 4 June 1919, *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations . . . 1920*, I (Washington D.C. 1935), 107-8.

¹⁷ The Secretary of State (B. Colby) to the President and the members of the Council of the League of Nations, 21 Feb. 1921, Colby Papers.

¹⁸ President Woodrow Wilson to Secretary of State Colby, 3 Mar. 1921, Davis Papers.

disposition of former German possessions on a new ground: that the right of disposition could only be exercised by means of a treaty, but Washington had not concluded any treaty to bind it.¹⁹ The Allied Powers were bound by the Versailles treaties but the United States had not ratified those treaties.

In order to resolve the controversy Hughes dispatched identical notes on 2 April 1921 to Tokyo, London, Paris and Rome. Hughes's note was a clear indication of the fresh approach inaugurated by the new Secretary of State. It conveyed the definite refusal of the United States government to recognize either the allocation of the island of Yap or the validity of the Japanese mandate over the other former German Pacific islands. Hughes stated that the right to dispose of Germany's overseas possessions was shared by the United States equally, and that the Minutes of 7 May 1919 were not binding on the United States government as Washington had concluded no treaty expressing its consent to the mandate and there could be no valid disposition of German Pacific islands without the assent of Washington. Thus Washington enunciated fundamental principles which were important factors in determining its views.²⁰ Regarding the island of Yap, Hughes succinctly stated that no treaty had been concluded with the United States relating to the islands; and the American government had never renounced her right or interest in the ex-German islands; so it 'can not recognise the allocation of the Island or the validity of the mandate'.²¹

Nor could the failure of the United States to ratify the Treaty of Versailles detract from the rights it had acquired.

It made no difference, then, what the Supreme Council had decided on May 7, 1919. It made no difference whether President Wilson had reiterated his reservations as to Yap. Under no circumstances would the allocation of the Pacific islands to Japan be final until confirmed by a treaty with the United States.²²

Hughes simply refused to abide by the decision of the Council as he stressed the American right to be consulted.

By 7 April both the French and Italian Foreign Offices had promised co-operation and support on the Yap issue.²³ So far London had not answered. In an informal interview with Geddes, the British ambassador, Hughes discussed the question of the Japanese mandate as well as the

¹⁹ Beerits's Memo., 'The Mandate Controversy', pp. 2a-2b, Washington, Library of Congress, Hughes Papers.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²¹ The Secretary of State to the American Chargé d'Affaires (Edward Bell) in Tokyo, 2 Apr. 1921, Harrison Papers.

²² M. J. Pusey, *Charles Evans Hughes* (New York 1951), II, 447.

²³ Beerits's Memo., 'The Mandate Controversy', p. 4; *New York Times*, 15, 30 Apr. 1921.

Minutes of 7 May 1919.²⁴ Geddes explained that because of a prior agreement of 1916 regarding the German held islands of the Pacific the British government was committed to the awarding of the islands in the north Pacific to Japan.

Following up Geddes's explanation Hughes applied his sharp arguments to undermining the British position on Yap. He asked if the issue of the islands was not an open one, why any reliance was placed upon the Minutes of 7 May 1919? And if the question was open, how it could be regarded as decided by reason of a prior agreement?

Hughes failed to see how the proceedings taken under the Treaty of Versailles recognized that Japan had a prior title to the island of Yap. The whole discussion ultimately converged on the vital point of whether Washington had consented to the Japanese mandate or not. Geddes admitted that London had no alternative to recognizing the Japanese claims until and unless Japan could be persuaded to admit the contention of the United States.²⁵

Late in May 1921 Japan sent a reply to the dispatch of 2 April 1921, which was inconclusive but phrased in courteous language, leaving the door open for further negotiations.²⁶ Quietly and tactfully Hughes surveyed the ground before opening official direct negotiations with Japan. On 3 June 1921 the Japanese ambassador, Baron Shidehara, and Hughes discussed the question of Yap informally. Hughes explained that the principle advanced by Washington was of general application to all the German possessions. The United States was in no way interested in increasing her territory; but it was anxious to see that no other power made exclusive use of the ex-German Pacific possessions. Washington was only interested in the fate of Yap because of its strategic location; it was determined to have the same rights and privileges as the other powers enjoyed there.

Baron Shidehara stated that Japan had exclusive jurisdiction over the ex-German Pacific islands north of the equator, but that they could be internationalized for cable purposes. If the United States demanded anything more than internationalization of cables, it would be difficult for Tokyo to agree. Hughes differed from this view and maintained that the administration of the islands should be carried on in a way that would assure the maintenance of privileges in which all the powers were entitled to share.²⁷

²⁴ Memo. of Interview with the British Ambassador (Geddes) 12 Apr. 1921, Hughes Papers; File 862i. 01/117½, NA, RG 59.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Beerits's Memo., 'The Mandate Controversy', p. 5.

²⁷ Memo. of Interview with the Japanese Ambassador (Baron Shidehara) 3 June 1921, Hughes Papers.

On 18 June 1921 Shidehara presented to Hughes two memoranda—the first discussing the general question of Yap and the other dealing with the problem of the ex-German Pacific cables. The tentative draft pertaining to the island of Yap indicated that Japan was willing to grant to the United States free access to Yap as well as equal rights 'with regard to the landing and operation of the existing Yap-Guam cable or any cable which may hereafter be laid by the United States or its nationals'.²⁸ The draft did not make any mention of radio communication. Hughes objected to the exclusion and stressed that the island should be available for all kinds of communication whether by cable or radio.²⁹

On 21 July 1921 Baron Shidehara suggested that it would help if problems like those of Shantung, the status of Yap, and the Pacific Islands could be settled before the Washington Conference was convened. In accordance with that request Hughes began direct negotiations between Japan and the United States to resolve the Yap controversy on 19 August 1921.

AFTER the advent of the new Republican Administration the views of the State Department regarding Yap and the cables had undergone a gradual change. The Interdepartmental Communications Committee recommended at its meeting held at the State Department on 7 April 1921 that American owned and operated cables and radio services should be encouraged to meet strategic, commercial and political needs. There should be provision for ample cable and radio services at low rates for the transmission of press news and for maintaining communications with ships at sea, with aircraft, and with out of the way places.³⁰

By June 1921 the army seemed to visualize the changing balance of power in the Pacific differently. With the development of aircraft the ex-German islands could be used both as aviation and submarine bases by Japan. The control of Yap by Japan would strengthen her hold in the Far East. In view of that, it appeared urgent to arrive at some arrangement which would stem the increasing influence of Japan over the ex-German Pacific islands without disturbing the peace of the Pacific.³¹

Hughes assigned to John Van MacMurray the task of ascertaining the views of the Navy Department regarding the maintenance of a wireless

²⁸ Memo. handed over by the Japanese Ambassador (Baron Shidehara), to the Secretary of State, 18 June 1921, File 862i.01/144½, NA, RG 59.

²⁹ Memo. of Interview with the Japanese Ambassador (Baron Shidehara), 18 June 1921, Hughes Papers.

³⁰ Diplomatic Secretary (Leland Harrison) to the President in a Memo. on cables, 7 Apr. 1921, Harrison Papers.

³¹ Tompkin McIlvaine, Editor of *National Service*, to the Secretary of State (Charles Evans Hughes), 17 June 1921, File 862i.01/176, NA, RG 59.

station on Yap. Having made a careful study of the question, the Navy Department concluded that the existing wireless station in Guam was sufficient for communication purposes in the Pacific.³²

Nevertheless, MacMurray made his personal suggestion that any agreement which Washington might conclude with Tokyo relating to Yap should provide for a right of free participation in all electrical communications whatsoever without any specific exception of wireless. While insisting upon this right, the United States might at the same time assure Japan that Washington would not exercise her right so long as the Japanese maintained on the island an adequate wireless station which could co-operate effectively with ships and with other radio stations as well as the cables. Finally, MacMurray's suggestions were incorporated in Hughes's comments on the Japanese ambassador's tentative draft. Hughes discussed these new possibilities in his talks with the Japanese ambassador on 19 August 1921.³³

In conducting the bilateral negotiations with the Japanese ambassador, Hughes had two objectives in view. Clearly the American national interest demanded that ample communication facilities should be made available to keep the United States in close touch with the Far East. Secondly, Hughes was to watch carefully that Japan did not strengthen its hold on the Pacific Islands to the detriment of the United States.

The meeting between Hughes and Shidehara to discuss the Yap problem was held on 19 August 1921. A memorandum embodying the demands of the United States government regarding Yap was handed over to Baron Shidehara. The memorandum contained the provisions which Hughes thought should be included in a formal agreement to settle the controversy.³⁴

Two points pertaining to the American demands were especially discussed in the interview. Hughes clearly stated that no unnecessary restrictions regarding the rights, privileges, and exemptions to be enjoyed by the United States and its nationals should be imposed by Japan. He was certain that there would not be any influx of Americans to Yap. He especially desired to safeguard against duties upon the operation and use of the cables. In addition, there should be no discriminatory exactions of any sort.³⁵ Regarding radiographic service on Yap the American requirements included right of free participation in all electrical communications.

³² Memo. prepared by J. V. A. MacMurray, Chief of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs, for the Secretary of State, 23 July 1921, Harrison Papers.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Beerits's Memo., 'The Mandate Controversy', p. 8.

³⁵ Memo. of Interview with the Japanese Ambassador, 19 Aug. 1921, File 862i.01/1544, NA, RG 59.

In the Japanese memorandum of 18 June 1921 it was proposed that the Principal Allied and Associated governments should conclude a convention, embodying the arrangement which those parties came to regarding cables.³⁶ With respect to the administration of the islands the convention should include suitable provisions similar to those found in Articles 3, 4, and 5 of the mandate purporting to have been granted to Japan on behalf of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, but not recognized by the United States. The proposed convention should also contain provisions of extradition and expropriation of property.³⁷

In its note of 8 September 1921 Tokyo accepted substantially the American demands relating to the rights, privileges, and exemptions to be enjoyed by the United States and its nationals in Yap. The demands pertaining to radio telegraphic services were also accepted. Tokyo also suggested that an agreement based on the suggestions made in the Japanese memorandum of 18 June be concluded. The Japanese government was hopeful that with the recognition of American demands, Washington would not object to the assignment of a 'C' mandate to Japan. Regarding cables, Tokyo wanted a convention to be concluded among the Five Powers. It preferred to omit the question of extradition and expropriation from the proposed convention.³⁸

DURING the course of the negotiations the Department of State was confronted with new demands by the War Department. Some time prior to 1 September 1921 the representatives of the War Department on the Interdepartmental Communication Committee had displayed interest in securing an island in the northern Pacific suitably located within a certain radius to be used as a relay station for a trans-Pacific cable via the northern route. The War Department held that such an island might be of more importance to the United States than the rights demanded by Washington from Japan pertaining to Yap and the cables centring therein. At that time Hughes did not accept the suggestion as he thought that the information submitted did not warrant such a radical change in the conduct of negotiations on Yap.³⁹

The suggestion assumed more concrete form in a letter handed over to the Diplomatic Secretary, Leland Harrison, by Col. E. Russell, Acting Chief Signal Officer. Russell suggested that Washington should take advantage of

³⁶ The Japanese Embassy to the Dept of State, 18 June 1921, File 862i.73/38, NA, RG 59.

³⁷ Memo. as to Island of Yap, Dept of State, File 862i.01/1547, NA, RG 59.

³⁸ Japanese Embassy Memo., 8 Sept. 1921, Hughes Papers; File 862i.01/173, NA, RG 59.

³⁹ Diplomatic Secretary L. Harrison to the Under Secretary of State (Henry P. Fletcher), 1 Sept. 1921, Hughes Papers; File 862i.01/178, NA, RG 59.

the negotiations over the disputed claims for cable control of Yap and should try to secure some other island more favourably situated than Yap in lieu of the United States' rights in Yap.⁴⁰ The suggestion was forwarded to the Secretary of State with the request that the right for the United States to land and operate in any or all of these islands cables which would be laid in future be included in the treaty which Washington would conclude with Japan recognizing the 'C' mandate.⁴¹

This was a clear departure from the previous stand maintained by the Department of State with regard to Yap. The island seemed to be losing its importance. Yap alone could not be enough to serve the American national interests, and so it was suggested that the United States government might change its demand of landing cables in Yap to that of having rights in all the ex-German islands in exchange for her consent to the Japanese mandate. An attempt was thus made to alter the decision of the Supreme Council concerning not only Yap but all the islands which the Council had handed to Japan under the 'C' mandate.

In its report of 12 September 1921 the General Board of the Navy made the radical suggestion that the strategy of the Pacific so far as the United States was concerned 'demands that the mandated islands remain as at present assigned, non-neutralized, with the "open-door policy" for trade applied'.⁴² The Board was particularly anxious to secure the right of free entrance for both naval and commercial ships in all the ports and waters of the islands. The suggestion was made that the existing treaties between the United States and Japan should be extended to the mandated islands and the United States should also insist upon the guarantee of the most favoured nation treatment.⁴³

Clearly the State Department was being persuaded to shift from its original stand. And Japan's hopes of obtaining American recognition of the mandate were soon belied. The State Department in its memorandum of 15 September 1921 clarified that the Japanese assumption regarding the mandate held good 'in a qualified sense, that there will be no objection in case an agreement is reached with respect to the additions to, or qualification of, the mandate, which are deemed necessary to give suitable protection to the interests of the United States'.⁴⁴ The memorandum continued to

⁴⁰ Acting Chief Signal Officer (E. Russell) to L. Harrison, 29 Aug. 1921, File 8621.01/178, NA, RG 59.

⁴¹ The Diplomatic Secretary (L. Harrison) to the Under Secretary of State (Henry P. Fletcher), 1 Sept. 1921, Harrison Papers.

⁴² Report of the General Board of the Navy, 12 Sept. 1921, NA, RG 43(103), p. 28.

⁴³ G. Blakeslee, Technical Adviser to the American Delegation, to the Secretary of State, 13 Sept. 1921, Harrison Papers; File 8621.01/175 NA, RG 59.

⁴⁴ The United States Memorandum dated 15 Sept. 1921, in reply to the Japanese Memorandum of 9 Sept. 1921, File 8621.01/175, NA, RG 59.

describe the points which the State Department considered important; it also suggested that the appropriate provisions could be embodied in the same convention to be concluded regarding Yap.

The details of the new American demands were discussed in the interviews held between the Japanese ambassador and Secretary Hughes on 12 and 22 September. On 17 October 1921 Baron Shidehara handed in a memorandum relating to the problems under discussion. Tokyo expressed her unwillingness to accept the American demand to extend the existing treaties to the mandated islands as well. Tokyo asserted that an extension of the existing treaties to the mandated territory combined with the rights desired for American citizens and vessels to have free access to all waters of the mandated territory would practically mean the recognition of the principle of equal opportunity for all nations. Japan was willing to recognize this principle provided other powers holding a 'C' mandate concluded a similar agreement.⁴⁵ But Hughes pointed out that the sole issue involved in the controversy was whether the treaty obligations of the Japanese government were deemed less binding in the mandated islands than in the territories which it possessed in full sovereignty. Regarding the annual report to be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations, Hughes insisted that Washington was entitled to no less consideration than the members of the League of Nations, and a copy of the report made by Japan should be sent to the United States.⁴⁶

On 10 December 1921 Tokyo consented to the application of existing treaties to the mandated islands, free entry to the waters of mandated territories for all American vessels and citizens, and the submission of a copy of the annual report to the United States.⁴⁷ The other Allied delegations participating in the Washington Conference agreed to the changes. On 12 December Hughes announced to the press that the United States and Japan had reached an accord on Yap and the other mandated islands north of the equator.⁴⁸

Hughes's persistence and skill had won for the United States every substantial advantage for which he had contended. By this agreement the United States was to enjoy full and free access and opportunity for the laying of cables and radiographic services in Yap. The rights of residence and acquisition of property were guaranteed against restriction. Cable messages were to be free from censorship, and persons would have free entry and exit.

⁴⁵ Beerits's Memo., 'The Mandate Controversy', p. 10; Memo., on the Proposal of the Japanese Delegation, 31 Dec. 1921, File 862i.01/170, NA, RG 59.

⁴⁶ Memo. of the Dept of State, 5 Dec. 1921, File 862i.01/1581, NA, RG 59.

⁴⁷ Japanese Embassy's Memo., 10 Dec. 1921, File 862i.01/179, NA, RG 59.

⁴⁸ *New York Times*, 13 Dec. 1921; Beerits's Memo., 'The Mandate Controversy', p. 13.

In other mandated Pacific islands north of the equator the United States was to have the benefits of the engagements of Japan set forth in the mandate and vested American property rights were to be maintained. The existing treaties between the United States and Japan were to apply to the mandated islands.⁴⁹ This provisional agreement between Tokyo and Washington regarding the ex-German cables was presented to the Principal Allied Powers and the Netherlands for approval.⁵⁰ Later on, the agreement about cables assumed the form of the Six Powers Treaty which was duly signed and ratified.

The American-Japanese Treaty concerning the Pacific mandated islands north of the equator, especially the island of Yap, was signed on 11 February 1922. It was approved for ratification by the Senate on 1 March, signed by President Harding on 2 June and proclaimed on 13 July 1922.

Thus came to an end the long-drawn-out controversy over the Pacific mandated islands and the ex-German Pacific cables. It had begun over the status of the island of Yap. But in the course of the dispute the State Department shifted its original stand and expressed interest in all the mandated islands. Hughes, through his tactics and patience, succeeded in reversing the decision of the Supreme Council of the League of Nations. Japan was to have a mandate over the islands but Tokyo agreed to share the facilities of communications and trade with the United States equally. There was also a tacit understanding that Japan was not to fortify and develop bases in the mandated islands. American citizens and vessels could move freely in and out of the mandated territorial waters, enabling the United States to keep watch over Japanese activities in the mandated islands. The solution arrived at was in consonance with American national interests. Facilities to maintain direct contact with the Far East were made available to the United States, and it appeared that the United States had succeeded in stemming the increasing influence and power of Japan in the western Pacific. The happy ending of the controversy helped remove mistrust and suspicion prevailing among the Pacific powers and ultimately contributed towards the agreement to maintain the *status quo* in the Pacific by the Four-Power Treaty and the Limitation of Armaments Treaty.

The Yap Treaty worked well for almost a decade. The situation began to deteriorate when militarists came into power in Japan during the early 1930s, and lack of vigilance on the part of the United States provided them with an opportunity to develop air and submarine bases in the mandated islands. During World War II American forces had to fight hard for

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 14.

⁵⁰ The Secretary of State Hughes's Press Conference, 31 Dec. 1921, pp. 3-4, Hughes Papers.

control of the islands. After the war Washington was very anxious to retain the strategic Japanese mandated islands in the Pacific—the Marianas, Marshalls, and Carolines. These were the only territorial gains the American people wanted, and Washington desired to hold them under the trusteeship of the United Nations. The Security Council finally awarded them to the United States in April 1947, but this decision was made after President Truman's blunt announcement that the islands would be kept by the United States.

Even in today's context the retention of those islands appears to be necessary for the protection of American national interests in the Far East. Hughes's achievement appears more significant when it is kept in mind that he was able to secure most of the advantages which the United States enjoys today in time of peace by signing a treaty while those islands were administered by Japan under a 'C' mandate. Therein lay the shrewdness of his diplomacy.

Australia and Papua New Guinea

W. J. Hudson (editor)

In this collection of essays, historians trace the origins of Australians' interest in New Guinea and the way in which Australian governments have approached the administration of Papua. The story of Australia's dependency-administration is not altogether happy reading, but it comprises an essential prerequisite to understanding the problems faced by Australia and Papua New Guinea as the Territory moves towards independence.

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National Defence and National Development

Ian Bellamy

During 1970 Australia took two steps of importance for its nuclear future. She signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and decided in principle on the construction of a nuclear power station on the coast of New South Wales. In this book, the only recent substantive writing on the subject, Dr Bellamy describes the workings of the modern instruments of the nuclear trade and examines the commercial side of nuclear energy; looks at the nuclear environment, particularly in the Asian-Pacific region; considers the particular case of a nuclear force in Australia; and discusses Australia's connection with, and attitudes to, attempts at nuclear limitation.

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