Diplomacy, of any nature, is at the heart of the success or failure of any nation. American diplomacy, throughout the years, is national representatives striving to reach a goal for the common good of the country. “Diplomacy” is defined as “the art or practice of conducting international relations, as in negotiating alliances, treaties, and agreements; tact and skill in dealing with people.” Another definition, not often recognized, is “wisdom in the management in public affairs.” This definition is not always true of those representatives of the United States that act on the United State’s behalf of diplomacy. A nation uses diplomacy for five main purposes including: national self-interest, economy, access to resources, secure most favored nation status, and ideological reasons. President Theodore Roosevelt displayed every aspect of the definition of “diplomacy” and while in office touched on all five reasons that a nation would use diplomacy. President Roosevelt represents one of the greatest diplomats of the twentieth century. Robert Dallek summarizes President Roosevelt’s diplomacy well stating, “By policing the hemisphere, building the Panama Canal, restoring peace in Asia, and promoting it in Europe, Roosevelt helped renew the sense of mastery and self-confidence the social and economic upheavals of the late nineteenth century had largely dissolved in the United States.”

Theodore Roosevelt was born on October 27, 1858. Born and raised into a time of terrible strife in America, Theodore Roosevelt learned from his early life experiences. Roosevelt grew up during the Civil War and the years after, the rebuilding and reconstructing years. This time for Theodore Roosevelt did not disturb his life at home. Even though his father strongly supported the North, his mother’s family lived in the South and her thoughts were the South. Theodore Roosevelt, who looked greatly upon his father, supported the North as his father did. However, having his parents with these views gave young Roosevelt a balanced view at the war, which ultimately helped Roosevelt keep balanced opinions on diplomatic issues during his presidency. Theodore Roosevelt held sharp views against Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America. Roosevelt wrote a letter to George Harvey stating, “Jefferson Davis was an unhung traitor. He did not, like Benedict Arnold, receive money for his treachery, but he received office instead. The two men stand on an equal
eminence of infamy in our country.” Roosevelt obviously held his convictions strongly about Jefferson Davis and the South. Roosevelt learned from other life experiences that would influence him diplomatically during his presidency.

Other areas of Theodore Roosevelt’s younger years that influenced his presidency included traveling and education. Roosevelt first traveled to Europe at the age of ten; however, he did not look favorably on the trip stating, “I do not think I gained anything from this particular trip abroad.” However, Roosevelt’s second trip to Europe in 1872, became useful for his education. In his second trip abroad, Roosevelt received an intense study of history visiting historical places such as Egypt, Syria, Greece, Constantinople, Germany, and the Holy Land. Upon returning from this second trip, Roosevelt began his studies to gain entrance into Harvard. Roosevelt entered Harvard in the fall of 1876, and graduated in 1880. Speaking of his college experience Roosevelt states, “…there was very little in my actual studies which helped me in afterlife.” Even though Roosevelt states he found nothing that helped him afterlife; he came out of college understanding life more. As he stated his actual studies gave him nothing in terms of afterlife; however, Roosevelt established bonds and friendships with fellow students and professors that taught him about manhood. Commenting on life lessons he learned, Roosevelt states:

I grew into manhood thoroughly imbued with the feeling that a man must be respected for what he made of himself. But I had also, consciously or unconsciously, been taught that socially and industrially pretty much the whole duty of the man lay in thus making the best of himself; that he should be honest in his dealing with others and charitable in the old-fashioned way to the unfortunate; but that it was no part of his business to join with others in trying to make things better for the many by curbing the abnormal and excessive development of individualism in a few.

The synopsis that Roosevelt gives shows inevitably in his presidency through his conduction of United States diplomacy. Theodore Roosevelt became Vice-President of the United States in 1901, with President William McKinley. On September 6, 1901, Leon Czolgosz shot President William McKinley. On September 14, 1901, President William McKinley died, and Theodore Roosevelt became President. During his presidency, Roosevelt would become one of the greatest diplomats in the twentieth century and American history overall.

Theodore Roosevelt came to the presidency at the turn of the century, a very important time for the United States diplomatically. The United States moved from the old concept of isolation into a new era of expansion. Roosevelt’s presidency focuses on three aspects of foreign relations, including
relations with European nations, Asian nations, and Latin American nations. Though Theodore Roosevelt was not the sole person involved in these relations, his impact and influence helped shape the diplomatic relations among the various nations. His ability to succeed in this aspect credits him as a great diplomat.

Many of President Roosevelt’s diplomatic negotiations and sanctions dealt directly with Latin America. Three years before Roosevelt became president the War with Spain ended. With this war and a new treaty, Roosevelt knew his administration had to pay close attention to Latin American affairs. First and foremost, the greatest success in Latin American affairs for President Roosevelt centered on the Panama Canal.

The construction of the Panama Canal provided for a connection of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans for quicker access. “Nothing in his public career seems to have given Roosevelt more gratification or have been regarded by him as of greater importance than the construction of the Panama Canal.” The interest in creating a canal began before the Spanish-American War. Roosevelt, a strong believer in the Navy, believed that it was the nation’s duty to expand, and this would occur with a canal. Roosevelt viewed the importance of a canal by providing the Navy with equal facilitation of the eastern and western coasts of America. A few months after taking his oath of office, Roosevelt saw through the ratification of the Hay-Paunceforte Treaty. This treaty provided the United States to work around the Clayton-Bulwer treaty and enable the United States to construct an “interoceanic” canal. Movement on the United States taking over construction of the canal came to a head on January 22, 1903. On this day, the Hay-Herran Convention was signed. This allowed the New Panama Canal Company to sell properties to the United States and gave the United States “full control over a strip of land six miles wide across the isthmus for the construction of a ship canal.” In turn, the United States paid Colombia ten million plus an annuity. However, the Columbian government rejected the Hay-Herran Convention. Roosevelt saw it as the United States responsibility to protect their investment in the Panama Canal. Roosevelt declared, “that national interests and safety necessitated the policy which he adopted.” Roosevelt believed that the policy and interests in Panama were called upon by civilization itself. Great Britain approved Untied States actions in abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, because the canal benefited all hemispheres of the world. In directing the construction of the Panama Canal, ultimately the United States pushed the “New World” of the Western Hemisphere forward in congruence with the “Old World.” This placed the United States in direct working with Great Britain. The Panama incident became the first of several incidents that categorize with President Roosevelt’s “Big Stick” policy in international affairs. This policy continued to

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influence Latin-Americans and brought friendly relations eventually with United States and Latin-Americans. 13

President Roosevelt and the United States continued relations in Latin America with the Cuban intervention. The United States, by the Treaty with Spain, occupied Cuba until Spain evacuated. The United States promised Cuba to withdraw after Cuba’s government became instated. However, the United States “had no thought of withdrawing from the island without establishing a binding relationship between the two countries.”14 During this period, the Platt Amendment was created. “The Platt Amendment in effect made Cuba an American protectorate, should she ever become unable to govern herself, and thus invite the greedy interest of foreign powers.”15 The United States withdrew from Cuba in 1902, only to recenter in 1906. During this four-year period, the United States and Cuba shared friendly relations. The United States oversaw economic matters, encouraging Cuban trade relations to contribute to Cuba’s prosperity.16 However, in 1906, American occupation in Cuba began once again. This second period of occupation lasted over two years. The United States aided in elections in Cuba under Roosevelt’s eye in the fall of 1908. “With the inauguration of General Gomez as president (January 28, 1909), the American forces were withdrawn and the island was again placed in the hands of the Cubans.”17 European diplomats attacked the United States stating they would never leave Cuba. The United States, and President Roosevelt, proved these diplomats wrong. In a speech given in Norway in 1910, President Roosevelt stated, “We will stay in Cuba to help it on its feet, and then we will leave the island in better shape to maintain its permanent independent existence.”18 The United States involvement in Cuba contributed to the prosperity and order in Cuba. Under President Roosevelt, the United States displayed hemispheric power in assisting Cuba in controlling its own destiny.

Theodore Roosevelt provided a new aspect of United States policy in hemispheric relations. In 1904 and 1905, President Roosevelt developed his “Roosevelt Corollary” to the Monroe Doctrine. He developed this after his “experience in the Venezuela episode and the outbreak of disorder in Santo Domingo.”19 Roosevelt’s creation of this corollary primarily was directed for the Venezuelan situation. President Cipriano Castro of Venezuela placed a feeling of caution into the government of the United States. President Castro “repudiated previous arbitration awards, confiscated foreign property, and briefly imprisoned an American businessman.”20 Due to these actions, President Roosevelt took initiative to demonstrate the power the United States carried in hemispheric relations, essentially “Big Stick” policy. Certain Latin American leaders, like Castro, took advantage of the Monroe Doctrine. They used it as a protective

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device to act however they wished knowing that the United States stance discouraged European intervention. President Roosevelt’s corollary emphasized the responsibility the United States had in retaining intervention in Latin America. President Roosevelt stated:

We (United States) would interfere with them (Latin American nations) only in the last resort, and then only if it became evident that their inability or unwillingness to do justice at home and abroad had violated the rights of the United States or had invited foreign aggression to the detriment of the entire body of American nations.21

This statement is at the heart of the “Roosevelt Corollary.” President Roosevelt’s policy placed the United States as a power in the hemisphere and the world. It became the United States responsibility to preserve order and protect life and prosperity in Latin American nations.22

President Roosevelt led the United States to a diplomatic power in relations with Latin America. Diplomacy conducted with this area of the world displayed all five aspects on why a nation conducts diplomacy. The Panama Canal supported the aspects of the economy, providing for a quicker route from Atlantic Ocean to Pacific Ocean for commercial ships. The national self-interest, also, was at play in the Panama Canal event; the United States placed its strength and power to preserve and control hemispheric relations. In terms of access of resources, this is seen with the Panama Canal and the Roosevelt Corollary in that the United States could intervene with Latin American affairs including resources. The United States gained most favored nation status with several Latin American nations by ways of Roosevelt Corollary by providing protection for these nations. Ideological reasons for diplomacy are seen in every aspect of President Roosevelt’s dealings with Latin America; he stressed his “Big Stick” policy on the entire hemisphere. The United States, under President Roosevelt, was also active in relations with the Far East.

President Roosevelt intervened first hand in Asian affairs. John Paton Davies states, “…Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge-advocated positive action in East Asia to protect American interests and maintain a balance of power.”23 One particular event that Roosevelt intervened on included the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-05. Roosevelt’s stance in this war and United States policy brought opposition to European powers. President Roosevelt “intimated to restless Europe that when a Power seized the opportunity to profit by the existing disorder it would have to reckon with the most positive opposition of the United States.”24 Roosevelt recognized the importance of Europe in American affairs and he approached this through the Pacific and Asia. In the Russo-Japanese War, President sympathies were with Japan. American policy
would be benevolent toward Japan.\textsuperscript{25} With this policy, President Roosevelt exhibited leadership through neutrality by expressing desire for China’s neutrality to be respected hostilities they would not disturb China. The United States interest in the Russo-Japanese War insisted that Russia not be permitted to consolidate her position in the Far East.\textsuperscript{26} The Portsmouth Conference created a treaty that ended the Russo-Japanese War. President Roosevelt was at the heart of the conference. With his involvement with the peace negotiations President Roosevelt received a Noble Peace Prize. Coming out of the Peace at Portsmouth, President Roosevelt pushed his Secretary of State Elihu Root to lead diplomatic discussions with Japan. In 1908, the Root-Takahira Agreement confirmed the Open Door policy in China. “Both nations (United States and Japan) bound themselves to maintain the existing \textit{status quo} in China.”\textsuperscript{27} This became an important aspect in further United States and Asia relations. Also in 1908, President Roosevelt created the Gentlemen’s Agreement. This executive agreement permitted immigration of Japanese of non-laboring classes.\textsuperscript{28} This action by President Roosevelt salvaged Japan’s pride, after California created laws discriminating against Japanese. With these policies and interventions in the Far East, President Roosevelt succeeded diplomatically in the Far East. Henry Pringle gives a good summation of Roosevelt’s actions stating:

\begin{quote}
His (Roosevelt) motive was not primarily altruistic. He viewed the United States, with intelligence, as no longer isolated but a member of the family of nations. America’s future would be profoundly affected were either Russia or Japan to become the undisputed master of the Pacific. And because the fate of the Far East rested with Europe, the destiny of the United States was concerned, too, with the relative strength of Germany, France, Russia, and England.\textsuperscript{29}
\end{quote}

President Roosevelt’s policies with the Far East adhere to the reasons why a country performs diplomacy.

President Roosevelt’s intervention in the Russo-Japanese War showed national self-interest in diplomacy. Roosevelt kept the interest of the United States having some control of the Pacific at heart when dealing with the Portsmouth Conference and other Far East policies. Along with some control of the Pacific, the economy was directly affected. President Roosevelt’s motives for diplomatic relations with the Far East touched on the economy of the United States by enabling control of the Pacific for naval protection of merchant and commercial ships. In addition, with Far East relations the United States established relations with China that improved continually over the years reaching most favored nation status. With access to the Pacific Ocean, the United States directly received access to resources throughout the Pacific and with nations in

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\textsuperscript{25} Theodore Roosevelt: The Great Diplomat
the Far East including China. President Roosevelt carried his ideological purposes into relations with the Far East. Roosevelt, a progressive, moved the United States out of the isolationist ideology into the expansionist ideology. All five aspects of why a country performs diplomacy are seen in President Theodore Roosevelt’s relations with the Far East.

President Roosevelt’s relations with Latin America and the Far East directly affected relations with European nations. With the Russo-Japanese War, the United States took a firm stance against European nations attempting to strike their power and influence over Asian affairs. Latin American relations with the United States directly affected European nations more so. After the Spanish-American War, the United States switched their focus from Spain to Germany. German trade in Latin America increased and German settlers increased in South American countries. Germany set up a blockade of Venezuelan coast; they did so in hope to rebuild relations with Great Britain and challenge the United States defense of the Monroe Doctrine. The presence of German warships for the blockade irritated United States public opinion and stretched out President Roosevelt’s patience in the matter. President Roosevelt responded with strong defense of the Monroe Doctrine and led to Germany backing down. Exactly what President Roosevelt did is unknown; the majority of his diplomatic relations with Germany in this instance was private. United States and European nation’s relations would intensify in 1904.

In 1903-04, European nations’ actions jeopardized the Monroe Doctrine in President Roosevelt’s eyes. “His (President Roosevelt) experience with European nations endeavoring to collect debts from countries in Latin America bothered the president.” From these advancements by European nations, President Roosevelt developed his “Roosevelt Corollary” to the Monroe Doctrine. As discussed earlier, this corollary insured that no American republic would be controlled by European powers. This corollary was disliked by Germany, specifically, and other nations followed in their feelings for the corollary. President Roosevelt had brought the United States to a role of power and respect in the world.

President Theodore Roosevelt displayed every aspect of diplomacy through his years as president. As President, Roosevelt moved the United States out of the old idea of isolationism into a new era of expansion. President Roosevelt worked directly with his cabinet pushing relations to improve the United States’ interests with world powers. “Theodore Roosevelt’s accession to the Presidency brought the new imperialist movement to full flower, and, in all of his foreign ventures, in Santo Domingo Panama, the Far East, in building a greater American fleet.” During his tenure, President Roosevelt established
relations in Latin America, the Far East, and Europe. In Latin America, President Roosevelt succeeded with the Panama Canal. In addition, his intervention in the Cuban affair provided the United States with power and influence in hemispheric relations. Coinciding with Latin American relations and European relations, the “Roosevelt Corollary” to the Monroe Doctrine moved the United States into a world power. Far East relations assured the United States of some power and control in the Pacific.

Throughout the history of the United States, there have been successful diplomats. John Quincy Adams, maybe one of the greatest diplomats in United States history, Benjamin Franklin, and James Monroe established many of the United States’ policies and early diplomacy throughout the world. However, these men were of the isolationist time. President Theodore Roosevelt brought the United States into a new era. Through his education, leadership, and policies, Roosevelt moved the United States into a world power. Theodore Roosevelt is one of the greatest diplomats of the twentieth century and all of United States history.

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