In 1901 the anarchist assassination of President McKinley aroused tremendous anger throughout the United States and was the catalyst for diplomatic efforts to coordinate transatlantic measures against the anarchists. Why, then, did America refuse to sign the St. Petersburg Protocol on international anti-anarchist police cooperation agreed to in 1904 by much of continental Europe? This article seeks to answer that question as well as to chart the little-known role in the war against anarchism of the Secret Service and, beginning in 1910, of the nascent Bureau of Investigation.

At the turn of the century two spectacular assassinations demonstrated the continuing threat of anarchist terrorism and the extent to which this problem involved countries on both sides of the Atlantic. In September 1901, the assassination of President McKinley shattered American complacency that, as a republic and a democracy, the United States was immune to anarchist ‘propaganda by the deed’, which had been the scourge of Europe’s political leaders and royalty during the 1890s. This was little more than a year after an Italian anarchist residing in Paterson, New Jersey, had crossed the Atlantic to shoot down King Humbert of Italy. European reaction to the McKinley assassination was immediate. Germany and Russia dispatched a joint diplomatic note calling for negotiations on international anti-anarchist measures. After more than two years of discussion ten eastern, central and northern European countries signed an anti-anarchist protocol in St. Petersburg on 14 March 1904 that provided for police cooperation and information exchange. Curiously, the countries which signed the protocol did not include the two states most aggrieved, the United States and Italy.

Why did America refuse to join with much of continental Europe in forming an anti-anarchist ‘Interpol’? Some of the answers are fairly obvious. America’s traditions of isolationism, its abhorrence of European entanglements and its antipathy for an increasingly overbearing Germany and despotic Russia dissuaded it from adhering to the St. Petersburg Protocol. But at the time Washington also had a purely utilitarian reason for avoiding international commitments, whether it was directed against the
anarchists or against other perceived threats to the established order. As this article will demonstrate, the lack of a national American police force and central criminal identification service prior to the full development of the FBI in the mid-1920s restricted America’s freedom of action in ways that have seldom, if ever, been noted by historians. Nor have historians investigated the diplomatic efforts to bring America into the European anti-anarchist dragnet after President Roosevelt called in December 1901 for international treaties among all civilized powers to make anarchism a crime against the law of nations and to empower the federal government to deal with this crime.¹

Interestingly, Italy’s reasons for rejecting the St. Petersburg Protocol of 1904 and increased international anti-anarchist cooperation bear some similarity to those of America. Italy, like the United States, wished to avoid entanglement on this issue with the ultraconservative eastern and central European states, a desire reinforced by the emergence in 1901 of a more liberal and progressive government administration under Giuseppe Zanardelli and Giovanni Giolitti. Italy also had a practical consideration for avoiding an international anti-anarchist agreement. This was the fear that, if it joined the anti-anarchist accord, thousands of Italian anarchists residing abroad might be expelled back to Italy, and Rome would have no legal means of preventing their unwelcome homecoming.²

Given the fear, and even panic, that anarchist terrorism aroused throughout the world, particularly after the onset in 1892 of a series of anarchist bombings in Paris, it is somewhat surprising that the United States and Italy proved so standoffish. A brief examination of the impact of anarchist terrorism on western society makes this clear. The years 1892 to 1901 were the Decade of Regicide, during which period more monarchs, presidents and prime ministers were assassinated than at any other time in recorded history, before or since. The 1890s also became the era of the terrorist bloodbath, as anarchists hurled deadly explosive devices into crowded cafes, religious processions and opera audiences. During that decade, in France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, England, Switzerland, the Ottoman Empire, and the United States, real or alleged anarchists killed about 60 and injured over 200 people with bombs, pistols and daggers (during the entire ‘golden age’ of anarchist terrorism, 1880–1914, about 150 succumbed and over 460 were injured).³ While these figures may seem low by our horrifying present-day standards (and was largely due to the lesser efficacy of that era’s weaponry), at the time terrorism on this scale was still unheard of and made all the more frightening by its successful assault on powerful symbols of authority and stability such as the French stock exchange and parliament, as well as the heads of state of nations on two continents. To quote a popular British journal, anarchist terrorism seemed to have become
an ‘epidemic...almost as mysterious and universal as the influenza’ against which ‘police precautions appear to be as useless as prophylactics against the fatal sneeze’.

Writing in Harper’s Weekly in December 1893, an historian from the University of Wisconsin described anarchism as ‘the most dangerous theory which civilization has ever had to encounter’ and its rebellion against the state comparable to Satan’s revolt against God. In the public mind ‘anarchist’ became virtually synonymous with ‘terrorist’, and all political violence of a terrorist nature tended to be attributed to the anarchists, although this was often inaccurate.

Despite warnings in the media, most Americans were complacent about the dangers of anarchism. After the bloody repression of the anarchists at the time of Chicago’s Haymarket bombing in 1886, only one major act of anarchist violence took place in the United States prior to 1901. This was Alexander Berkman’s unsuccessful attempt in 1892 to kill Henry Clay Frick, the ruthless, strike-breaking general manager of Carnegie Steel. Unlike in Europe, where anarchist violence was often followed by brutal police repression and subsequent anarchist reprisals in an apparently endless chain reaction, no one sought revenge for Berkman’s lengthy sentence of imprisonment. During the 1890s the United States’ near immunity to anarchist violence seemed natural to most Americans, who believed not only that no native anarchists resided in the country, but also that, given the freedom and liberty provided by American laws and institutions, anarchists, whether of native or foreign origin, had no reason to attack public officials. On 30 September 1893 the New York Times claimed in an editorial that, ‘There are no native American Anarchists’. The journalist Francis Nichols, in an article published a month before the assassination of McKinley, alleged that, because anarchists were ‘at least allowed the right of conducting a peaceful propaganda’ in the United States, they hoped for the President’s ‘protection and preservation’, rather than his murder, since they knew that ‘these favorable conditions would be reversed if American sentiment were once aroused by an attack on the Chief Executive of the Nation’.

In September 1901 the assassination of President McKinley by Leon Czolgosz, a 28-year old man born in Alpena, Michigan, near Detroit, shattered this illusion and shocked the nation. For months the country was convulsed as many Americans went on a violent rampage against the anarchists. On the night of the murder attempt, one young man urged a crowd in New York to follow him to Paterson, New Jersey, where many anarchists lived, and ‘begin the slaughter’, burning Paterson to the ground. ‘If President McKinley dies’, shouted the speaker, ‘there will be 10,000 anarchists killed in Paterson to avenge his death.’ Police standing by made no effort to stop over a hundred men and boys from beginning their
bloodthirsty march on the New Jersey textile factory town. Presumably this particular march fizzled out (the newspapers leave no record as to its fate); but if it had made it to Paterson, the police might well have collaborated in its participants’ murderous design. Paterson detective sergeant Henry Titus, in charge of the district where the anarchists usually congregated, declared, according to a September 9 article in the New York Times, that, ‘The only proper way for the police to deal with these fellows [i.e., the anarchists] is to go to their meetings armed with a sawed off gun and shoot the speakers when they begin to rant’.10

Across the country ordinary citizens as well as local officials acted out detective Titus’s violent impulses. Mobs forced dozens of anarchists to flee their homes and tried to wreck, in one case successfully, the offices of anarchist publications. Without warrant the police arrested scores, perhaps hundreds, of anarchists – more than 50 in Chicago alone – on mere suspicion of involvement in the president’s assassination.11 In Chicago the police took into custody Emma Goldman, the well-known anarchist writer and speaker. After Goldman protested against police brutality, one officer slugged her in the jaw, knocking out a tooth and covering her face with blood. ‘Another word from you, you damned anarchist, and I’ll break every bone in your body!’12 Emma received this violent treatment although she had only once, briefly, met Czolgosz and was uninvolved in any plot to murder McKinley. In jail Goldman received letters denouncing her in these terms: ‘You damn bitch of an anarchist, I wish I could get at you. I would tear your heart out and feed it to my dog.’ Another writer promised: ‘we will cut your tongue out, soak your carcass in oil, and burn you alive’.13 While the news media did not advocate such barbaric reprisals, it did call for a variety of other responses to the assassination. Most frequently newspapers and periodicals demanded the exclusion of anarchist immigrants from the United States; they also asked that anarchism be treated by international agreement as piracy and that anarchists be subjected to ‘police control’.14

In his first message to Congress in December 1901, the newly installed president, Theodore Roosevelt, delivered an incendiary condemnation of the anarchists and called for severe measures against them. Roosevelt claimed that the ‘harm done...to the Nation’ by the murder of McKinley was ‘so great as to excite our gravest apprehensions and to demand our wisest and most resolute action’. He described Czolgosz, a handsome, inarticulate recluse guilty of no prior offenses, as ‘Judas-like’ and as an ‘utterly depraved criminal’. He said that the anarchists in general had no claim to the status of social reformers. The anarchist was ‘merely one type of criminal, more dangerous than any other because he represents the same depravity in a greater degree’. Roosevelt went on to compare anarchists to pickpockets, highwaymen and wife-beaters, and said their ‘speeches,
writings, and meetings’ were ‘essentially seditious and treasonable’. After demanding legislation to keep foreign anarchists out of the country and deport those who were already here, meting out ‘far-reaching’ punishment to any who remained, Roosevelt called for an international anti-anarchist agreement:

Anarchy is a crime against the whole human race; and all mankind should band against the anarchist. His crime should be made an offense against the law of nations, like piracy and that form of manstealing known as the slave trade; for it is of far blacker infamy than either. It should be so declared by treaties among all civilized powers. Such treaties would give to the Federal Government the power of dealing with the crime.15

Roosevelt’s call for international action elicited a quick response. Ever since the assassination of King Humbert of Italy in July 1900, the Russian government had been putting out diplomatic feelers and looking for agreement on ways to reinforce the anti-anarchist measures approved by all of Europe, except Britain, at a conference held in Rome in 1898.16 Those measures, the Russian government pointed out, had only been partially enforced. The legislative and political actions against the anarchists called for at the conference had not materialized. The sole change after 1898 had been the establishment of direct relations between the higher police authorities of the different countries and the secret ‘exchange of information...regarding the surveillance of the best-known anarchists and their movements in the great urban centers’. While, according to the Russians, this measure had ‘clearly facilitate[d] surveillance’, it had proved insufficient to prevent new assassination attempts.17

Germany readily supported Russia’s proposals for more effective anti-anarchist measures; and, in November 1901, the two countries presented a joint memorandum on the subject to all the European states. On December 12, encouraged by Roosevelt’s message to Congress, the German and Russian ambassadors submitted a similar memorandum to the United States. In this proposal they called for the ‘establishment of a rigorous surveillance of the anarchists by the creation of central bureaus in the various countries, by the exchange of information, and by international regulations relative to the expulsion of anarchists from all countries of which they are not subjects’. The memorandum also called for legislative measures strengthening the various penal codes against the anarchists and against the subversive press.18

Secretary of State John Hay’s reply on 16 December 1901 expressed President Roosevelt’s ‘cordial sympathy with the views and purposes’ of
the Russo-German proposals and pointed to the suggestions for new legislation contained in the president’s message to Congress. Moreover Hay declared that ‘the President will be glad to adopt such administrative measures as are within his constitutional power to cooperate with other governments to this end’. A number of anti-anarchist bills were soon presented in the House and Senate. One of these provided for the death penalty for persons who killed the president, those in line of succession to the presidency, ambassadors of foreign countries and the sovereigns of foreign nations. Due to objections that the proposed law curbed states’ rights, gave potentially dangerous powers to the central government and was inequitable, providing more protection against murderous attacks for the president than for the average citizen, Congress never passed the proposed legislation.

John Wilkie, head of the Secret Service, which at the time was America’s only – and inadequate – national police force, regretted the failure of the anti-anarchist bill, since, as he wrote in a letter to Roosevelt’s secretary, ‘were it now in effect with the information we have accumulated I am quite sure we could bring successful prosecutions against a large number of the leading spirits in anarchistic circles, both in the East and in the West’. In 1901–1902 the Secret Service had drawn up lists with the names and addresses (often only by city) of hundreds of anarchists living in the United States (and a few living abroad). These lists were arranged according to location and by ‘group’, e.g., the ‘Italian French’ group with 140, mostly Italian, names, and ‘Group Debater [sic] Club, Social Science, Liberator’, with mostly central and eastern European names, including Emma Goldman and the ‘very dangerous’ B. Sedletsky of Chicago. Even before the death of McKinley, the Washington D.C. police and the Secret Service had compiled, according to a memorandum by George Cortelyou, the president’s personal secretary, ‘pretty thorough records of the criminal and anarchist classes, the secret service having in some instances alphabetical lists of all the anarchists in a city’. Since Czolgosz’s name had not appeared on any of these lists prior to his deadly deed, one may question their value.

While Congress did not approve the anti-anarchist law, it did pass legislation in 1903 and 1907 excluding from entrance into the country immigrants who held anarchist beliefs. During 1902–1903, the states of New York, New Jersey and Wisconsin all passed laws punishing ‘criminal anarchy’.

The Germans and the Russians felt these various American measures failed to address the crucial issue of international cooperation to prevent anarchist crimes. Therefore on 1 May 1902, their ambassadors presented to the American government a second, detailed series of proposals calling,
first of all, for the police expulsion of anarchists back to their homelands, bypassing diplomatic channels (thus avoiding delays and complications) and after prior warning to the affected countries. Secondly, Germany and Russia proposed the establishment of national central bureaus of police ‘whose duties will be to gather information concerning anarchists and their doings’ and convey this information, including photographs of anarchists, to the other central bureaus. Regular reports on anarchist activities in each country were to be exchanged every six months. Central Bureaus must also ‘reply to all the inquiries they may receive from the other Bureaus’. 

In the strictest confidentiality, this memorandum was conveyed to the Committees on the Judiciary of both Houses of Congress. These committees, chaired by senator George Hoar and representative George W. Ray, were then considering anti-anarchist legislation. Senator Hoar took exception to the Russo-German accusation that Congress had done nothing to ensure international action against the anarchists. Hoar noted that he had suggested to the Senate on 5 December 1901 that ‘some convenient island should be set apart by the agreement of all civilized nations to which anarchists should be deported’ and allowed to build their anarchist utopia any way they saw fit. This idea never received serious consideration; nor did the Congress and the president accept the less-draconian Russo-German proposals.

In March 1904 Berlin and St. Petersburg finally convinced ten eastern, central and northern European countries to sign a secret protocol along the lines advocated to Washington in May 1902. Germany, Austria-Hungary, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, Russia, Rumania, Serbia, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire were later joined by Spain and Portugal (and even Switzerland, at least by a de facto accord) in adhering to the protocol signed at St. Petersburg. On May 8, Luxembourg signed a separate, modified version of the protocol, but with Germany and Russia alone.

On 9 May 1904, the United States was invited to adhere, but refused. Given the anti-anarchist outrage in the United States after the death of McKinley, given President Roosevelt’s ringing call in December 1901 for international measures, given his view expressed publicly as late as 1908 that ‘when compared with the suppression of anarchy, every other question sinks into insignificance’, given the president’s consistent commitment to supporting ‘civilization’ internationally, and his fears of societal dissolution, why did the United States refuse to become involved in the new anti-anarchist ‘Interpol’? It is difficult to document a satisfactory answer to this question. The published Roosevelt correspondence provides no testimony about the president’s thinking on the issue. The president’s papers stored in the manuscript section of the Library of Congress, consisting mainly of official correspondence, do not provide a shred of information.
With one exception, the papers of Roosevelt’s attorney general, Philander Knox, his secretary of war, Elihu Root, his assistant secretary of state, Alvey Adee, and his secretary of state, John Hay, also provide no evidence.

By examining the general context of U.S. foreign relations and by referring to American public opinion the historian can, nevertheless, infer the reasons for Roosevelt’s refusal to go along with the Germans and the Russians. After 1898 tension and apprehension frequently marked the United States’ relationship with Germany and Russia. During the Spanish–American War a German squadron had steamed into Manila harbor in the hopes of picking up any pieces of the Spanish empire that the Americans did not want. Tensions mounted alarmingly between the American and German fleets before Admiral Dewey and Admiral Diederichs worked out a *modus vivendi*. The American press took a very sinister reading of this episode, leading some among the public to believe that Germany was preparing to stab the United States in the back just as the Americans were triumphing over their Spanish enemy. The Manila incident created a ‘latent animosity’ toward Germany in American public opinion that underlay the two countries’ relationship for at least a decade.31

Moreover, America’s sudden emergence as an imperial power in 1898 came just at the time that Germany had begun to build a high seas fleet. Both countries were now full-fledged rivals for territory and markets around the world. Competition for control of the Samoan Islands came to a head in 1899, when the question was resolved peacefully. But the growing commercial presence of Germany in Latin America and its willingness to resort to force led to a more serious dispute in 1902–1903, at precisely the time when Berlin was trying to negotiate the anti-anarchist agreement. Only eight days after submitting the anti-anarchist memorandum to secretary Hay, Germany broached the possibility of blockading Venezuelan harbours to force the collection of back debts from a corrupt Venezuelan regime.32

After a year of fruitless negotiations with Cipriano Castro, the Venezuelan leader, Germany, joined by Britain and later by Italy, commenced a blockade of the Venezuelan coast. At least in the eyes of the American newspapers, Germany took the leading role in this punitive action, landing troops, bombarding Venezuelan forts and sinking a few Venezuelan gunboats. A wave of anti-German feeling swept over American public opinion.33 Many Americans believed that Germany was trying to overturn the Monroe Doctrine and acquire naval bases and colonies in the Western Hemisphere. President Roosevelt’s private reaction to the German destruction of Venezuela’s Fort San Carlos was, ‘Are the people in Berlin crazy?’34 Ultimately Roosevelt intervened and got the disputes between the Europeans and the Venezuelans referred to the International Tribunal at the Hague.35
This was a good example of the worldwide sweep of Roosevelt’s conception of foreign policy, and it is no exaggeration to say that Roosevelt was the first president to enunciate clearly a global role for America. Potentially, such a farsighted approach might have led him into joining with Europe in an international anti-anarchist agreement, if various difficulties had not barred the way.

Animosity toward Germany among top American officials, as well as the general public, was one of these difficulties. The anti-German prejudices of the American press and public, which had been inflamed and blown all out of proportion by the incidents that had occurred in Manila harbour, Samoa, and Venezuela, were shared by admiral Dewey (and the officers of the General Board of the U.S. Navy), Elihu Root and, most importantly, John Hay. Hay had been ambassador to Britain prior to becoming secretary of state in 1898 and was a decided Anglophile. He was ‘foolishly distrustful of the Germans’, to cite Roosevelt.

Roosevelt was more ambivalent than Hay in his feelings toward Germany and its kaiser. Roosevelt admired the Germans for their achievements and he never forgot his stay as a teenager during the summer of 1873 with a warm-hearted German family in Dresden, since which time it ‘would have been quite impossible to make me feel that the Germans were really foreigners’. In public he referred to Kaiser Wilhelm as a ‘great man’. Roosevelt was ‘a personal and intimate friend’ of Herman Speck von Sternburg, who, on his recommendation, became German ambassador to the United States in January 1903, and who was married to an American.

But if his public persona was usually friendly, in private Roosevelt expressed more mixed feelings, tempering praise with criticism and concern about the behaviour of the kaiser and the German government. In an April 1901 letter Roosevelt wrote that ‘Germany is the great growing power, and both her faults and her virtues, at least of the superficial kind, are so different from ours, and her ambitions in extra-European matters are so great, that she may clash with us...Germany’s attitude toward us makes her the only power with which there is any reasonable likelihood or possibility of our clashing within the future’. Regarding Wilhelm, in a 1905 confidential letter to secretary Hay, Roosevelt expressed his irritation: ‘The kaiser has become a monomaniac about getting into communication with me every time he drinks three pen’orth of conspiracy about his life and power’. The unlikable personality of Ambassador von Holleben, the rigid aristocrat who had preceded von Sternburg and who had initially presented the Russo-German anti-anarchist proposal, also worked against the achievement of an agreement.

Whatever Roosevelt’s early admiration for German accomplishments and his personal feelings toward Wilhelm and his diplomats, these
sentiments were overshadowed after 1900 by apprehensions about Germany’s expanding economic, military and colonial power, which threatened to encroach on American interests in Asia and the Western Hemisphere.42 In the final accounting, therefore, as the German foreign office reported, ‘the United States of America seems to want to go its own way and act against anarchism legislatively’, rather than through international diplomatic and police action.43

Many of the same observations regarding German-American relations apply to Roosevelt’s (and America’s) attitudes towards Russia. These attitudes shifted from a traditional friendliness prior to 1900 to a growing fear of Russia’s expansion into Asia and indignation against its despotic government, especially its murderous treatment of the Jews.44 Close friends of Roosevelt, such as Brooks Adams, perceived a Slavic–German partnership threatening to dominate the entire Eurasian landmass and thus control the world. Against such a threat it was natural for the United States to ally with Britain.45 While the president had some liking for Germany, he had almost none for the Czarist regime.46 Artur Cassini, Russian ambassador between 1897 and 1905, did little to endear himself to American officiandom since he was frequently tactless, arrogant, and overbearing.47 When in February 1904 war broke out between Japan and Russia, American public opinion and the United States government supported Japan.48

America’s growing antipathy toward Russia and Germany was highlighted and perhaps accelerated by a simultaneous rapprochement with Britain. In the late nineties, several powerful British politicians and officials began to work for better relations with the United States.49 Hay welcomed this increasing cordiality, as did Roosevelt, since both believed that the English and the Americans shared common values. In Roosevelt’s words: ‘Fundamentally I feel that all the English speaking peoples come much nearer to one another in political and social ideals, in their systems of government and of civic and domestic morality, than any of them do to any other peoples’.50 In 1898 Britain, while remaining officially neutral, tilted in favor of the United States during the Spanish–American War (a stance that greatly impressed Roosevelt), and in 1901 acceded to American demands in treaty negotiations for a possible Isthmian canal.51 In 1903, after the British acquiesced in an Alaskan border settlement highly favourable to the United States, several historians speak of an informal alliance between the two countries.52 These developments discouraged Washington from entering into an anti-anarchist league with Berlin and St. Petersburg, a league which Britain and many of the other western European states refused to join.

While the anti-Russian, anti-German, but pro-British drift of American public opinion and foreign policy provides the general context, I have also been able to find one piece of documentary evidence from the archives that
explains America’s refusal to sign the St. Petersburg Protocol. This is a passage, dated 10 May 1904, and omitted from the printed version of John Hay’s diary:

In the matter of the secret treaty against anarchists it was also decided [by the Cabinet] that we should say that our Constitution and laws made a secret treaty impossible, but that so far as executive authority extended we would endeavor to cooperate for the extirpation of these pests, and would continue, as we had done for several years past, to urge upon Congress the passage of remedial legislation. I told the Cabinet that Mr. Hoar had written me that the anti-assassination bill could not pass if it included a provision as to conspiracies against the lives of foreign Chiefs of State.53

This passage in Hay’s diary makes clear that the constitutional requirement that all treaties be submitted for the Senate’s approval rendered impossible the signing of a secret agreement. Congressional resistance to passing the anti-assassination bill reflected traditional American opposition to entanglements with the European powers (and, as we shall see, animosity toward the creation of a political police force), an attitude that would also have blocked acceptance of the St. Petersburg Protocol if it had ever come up for a vote.

Yet, this does not provide the entire story. Washington could have taken the same tack as Berne, (which, with its long traditions of neutrality, political liberty and federalism, resembled the United States) and agreed to a de facto, rather than a de jure, adherence to the Protocol. One crucial, unspoken factor remained that prevented American adhesion to the agreement and would have continued to prevent it even if the president and Congress had been willing to break with America’s isolationism from Europe and sign an at least semi-secret treaty (since news of the treaty and of some of its provisions soon leaked out through the European press).54

Striking evidence for this hidden factor is found in an unlikely spot. Seven months after Germany approached the U.S. regarding the anti-anarchist protocol, it asked Washington to join another international agreement. This was a treaty to suppress the white slave trade, the transportation across international borders of women forced into prostitution (and as different as they might seem, for America the white slave trade and anarchism had this much in common: they were both closely connected with the wave of immigrants pouring into the country at the end of the nineteenth century and later).55 All the European great powers, as well as Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden and Norway, Switzerland, and Spain, signed this agreement in Paris on 18 May 1904. In
this treaty the ‘participating Governments agree[d] to establish or designate an authority who will be directed to centralize all information concerning the procuration of women or girls’ and these central authorities were ‘to correspond directly with each other’ (art. 1). The German Empire had already formed such an authority at the Central Police Department (Polizeipraesidium) in Berlin. Each Government also ‘agree[d] to keep a strict watch over the trading of women or girls, particularly at seaports and railway stations and en route’ (art. 2). Women who had been traded to foreign countries were to be sent home at public expense, should they or their relatives desire it and private means not be forthcoming (art. 4).56 Finally governments were to watch carefully the clandestine agencies that engaged in transporting women for prostitution (art. 6). If one takes out the phrases ‘procuration of women or girls’, ‘trading of women’, and procuring ‘agencies’, and replaces them with the word ‘anarchists’, this agreement reads very much like the text of the St. Petersburg Protocol. Both provided for the establishment of central monitoring agencies, the exchange of information collected by these agencies, direct police to police communications, close surveillance of those engaged in anti-social activities, and the payment at public expense of the transportation costs home of either anarchists or ‘fallen women’.

Washington’s reply to Germany’s new proposal is therefore most instructive in helping us to understand why the U.S. had declined to join the earlier agreement. On 16 December 1904, secretary of state Hay revealed his answer in a note addressed to undersecretary of state Adee:

We might prepare a counter memorandum in reference to this subject [the German proposal on the trade in women], saying, in substance, that the Government of the United States, having no national system of police, is unable to enter into conventional agreements with other powers in regard to this subject…57

The lack of a national police force was therefore the hidden, practical reason why the United States could not sign the anti-anarchist protocol of 1904. However much Roosevelt and the American public may have been furious about the anarchists, the United States had no means of systematically communicating or cooperating with the central police organizations of other states regarding this menace. Although it did from time to time try to answer requests by foreign governments for information regarding alleged anarchists and potential assassins, the Secret Service was too small (with a force in the field of only fifty to sixty agents) and occupied with too many other duties, such as tracking down counterfeiters and, beginning in 1901, regularly protecting the president, to function as a central police
organization for the entire United States. Essential for the effective operation of such an organization was a centralized system for collecting and disbursing information on criminals and suspects, a system which neither the Secret Service nor any other federal agency possessed.

In October 1900 Spain, sorely tried by repeated anarchist bombings and assassinations, and anxious for improved international police communications regarding terrorists, made just this point. In a confidential dispatch to Madrid, the Spanish minister in Washington, D.C., complained about the ineffectiveness of the American police.

I held a long conversation with the Secretary of State of the United States, with reference to the confidential circular of the [Spanish Foreign] Ministry, n. 13 of 15 August last [regarding the need for international cooperation against the anarchists]...In pointing out to Mr. Hay the seriousness and danger represented by the anarchist colonies in this country, and particularly that of Paterson, which at this time is the most visible one, although those of New York, Brooklyn, and others may from one moment to the next be equally harmful, he told me that he saw and appreciated the danger as much as the European Governments, but that the American [government] had its hands tied by federal laws and by the particulars of each state. While for some years now one could prosecute in Chicago (Illinois) and condemn to death accomplices in anarchist crimes, it would be impossible to do this in New York or New Jersey. He added that in this country personal dossiers [or files] are not permitted...Neither does one have, he told me, judicial dossiers (casiers judiciaires). Due to all of this the American Government is unable to make agreements regarding this matter, since it is unable to offer any reciprocity for that which other governments can offer and carry out.

On the other hand, Mr. Hay volunteered that whatever the police here discover of interest to us would immediately be brought to our attention. This offer, of whose sincerity I have no doubt, amounts to nothing or almost nothing, when one considers that the police forces of these states have no interest in this question, and will undertake no effort to discover anything. They might sometimes be helpful, although not on every occasion, if one asked them a concrete question, and if one indicated to them a precise point that one wanted clarified, but one can not by any means trust that they will voluntarily give periodic and regular information.

Mr. Hay also told me that there would be no problem if the Spanish police corresponded directly with those in the United States. The considerations made already apply equally to this situation. The
Spanish police might hope for an answer to concrete questions, but they should not hope for impromptu reports. And one must keep in mind that the Police of the States are independent from one another and that in each case one has to direct oneself to that which has competence in the matter of the moment. Even so I believe that it would be more effective if these questions were directed through the [Spanish] Legation.

This was the result of my conversation with the Secretary of State. It was not very satisfactory, but one could not hope for anything better. I believe that if one wants to know something, it is indispensable to have one’s own police, and even in that case, it would be very difficult to discover something of true importance. Italy has it [i.e., a police force in the U.S.], although it has only set it up just now, that is to say, too late [since two months before, on July 29, King Humbert had been assassinated]. The Italian Consul General in New York, who is in charge of it, has offered to communicate to me anything which he might know that would be of interest to us. I’m unaware if other nations also maintain [police in the United States], but I would not find it odd if Germany should fall into this category.60

This perceptive Spanish report shows how the absence of a national American police force created a vacuum that could only be filled by foreign governments and foreign-sponsored agents. Advised by its diplomatic representatives in the United States of the inadequacy of American government and police efforts against the anarchists, beginning in October 1900 Italy stationed an Italian police officer in New York City to monitor the activities of Italian anarchists there and in nearby Paterson.61 Spies were recruited from the local Italian immigrant communities in Chicago, San Francisco, and other cities.62

During the 1880s, Germany hired a New York police agent to watch Johann Most, the inflammatory anarchist of German origin who had published a manual on constructing bombs. After dismissing this agent in 1889, Berlin dispensed with such services for a decade. After 1900, it again employed various agents in both New York and Chicago, including several hired from the Pinkerton Detective Agency.63 At some point in the late nineties or early twentieth century, Austria-Hungary had a secret agent reporting on the Chicago anarchists, and there were numerous reports of Tsarist agents trying to infiltrate the Russian immigrant community in the United States.64

The implications for American sovereignty and security of all these foreign agents and police operating on its territory went unexamined, as did Hay’s rather extraordinary encouragement of direct communications
between American and European police forces. Switzerland, whose resemblance to the United States has already been noted, forbade foreign police and agents on its territory, because it viewed them as infringing on Swiss jurisdiction and as likely to hire or become *agent provocateurs* who instigated the very deeds of violence they were supposed to prevent.\(^65\) Switzerland could hardly uphold such a policy unless in exchange it was willing to provide information to governments concerned about subversives and terrorists residing on Swiss territory. Therefore in 1888–89 Berne did what Washington had failed to do, and created a central policing organization in the federal prosecutor’s office. The federal prosecutor was charged with political police work for the entire confederation and was ready to provide foreign authorities with information on dangerous anarchists. Berne also created central files on all anarchists living in Switzerland.\(^66\)

While Hay encouraged direct communications between foreign and domestic police authorities, the British government prohibited it, requiring that all police requests be funneled through diplomatic channels.\(^67\) The Continental police were more open to exchanges of information between different police forces, but only after these had been formally regulated by international agreements such as the Rome and St. Petersburg accords, or through bilateral diplomatic agreements.

An example of this, as well as more evidence that America was ineffective in international policing, occurred in December 1902. At that time the Austrians, whose government, more than any other, worked for closer international police cooperation during the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth centuries, proposed to the United States the establishment of direct communications between the Viennese police authorities, which were in charge of the empire’s international police contacts, and the Bureaux of Identification at New York, Chicago and Philadelphia for the exchange of pertinent information regarding criminals.\(^68\) Secretary of State Hay, after consultation with the Secret Service, could only respond that ‘this Government maintains nowhere a National Bureau of Identification’ that might facilitate communication between Vienna and American police departments. On the advice of the chief of the Secret Service, Hay referred the Austro-Hungarians to the police authorities of New York City and to the ‘national bureau of identification’ established by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP).\(^69\)

The latter organization belied its name since it was composed primarily of municipal police departments from across the United States (apart from the stubbornly autonomous New York Police Department), and of a sprinkling of members from Canada, Latin America, Europe and Asia.\(^70\) For
many years the IACP’s president and driving force was Richard Sylvester, the police chief of Washington D.C. In 1903 Sylvester was also secretary-treasurer of the IACP’s ‘National Bureau of Identification’ (NBI). When the State Department contacted Sylvester about cooperating with the Austrians, Sylvester replied that he would be delighted to have the Viennese police, for the price of five dollars in annual dues, secure membership in the IACP and exchange information with the NBI, which possessed ‘many thousands of photographs and Bertillon measurements of criminals, anarchists and suspects’. In a subsequent letter to the State Department, Sylvester also pinpointed the difficulty, amounting to incomprehension, that blocked closer police cooperation and information exchange between Europe and America:

It is quite evident that our foreign police friends are unacquainted with the system of policing which prevails in the United States. There [i.e., in Europe] the head and front of the service is directly under the general government; here we have distinct and separate state and municipal institutions, they being under the control of the municipalities in the several states; and it would be impossible for the United States Government [author’s italics] to enter into an interchange with the Austria[sic]-Hungarian Government in regard to the finger print or Bertillon systems, for that reason.72

While the police chief of Vienna did indeed join the IACP, little evidence exists in the records of either the IACP or those of the affiliated National Bureau of Identification that much communication took place between the European and American police organizations. A rare piece of correspondence with Europe, dated 19 August 1908, suggests why: not only could NBI superintendent Van Buskirk find no record regarding the person under inquiry, but he addressed the letter of reply to ‘Chief of Police, Wien, Germany [author’s italics]’! The NBI, with its tiny staff – usually no more than its superintendent and a secretary – and meager funding (problems compounded in July of 1908 by an infestation of roaches, waterbugs and other insects that threatened to devour the photos and records stored at the Bureau),74 was barely adequate to handle its tasks within the United States, let alone carry on sophisticated international communications.

The importance of the lack of a national police force in shaping American policy toward anarchist terrorists is emphasized by recounting the subsequent experience of the 1904 treaty on repressing the traffic in white slaves. Agreed to by the Senate in 1905, it languished on the president’s desk for three years until Roosevelt announced American adherence on 16 June 1908. Historians have puzzled over the president’s long delay, but
Hay’s note makes it clear that, together with various procedural problems, the anti-white slavery ‘Convention’ was not ‘submitted to the President for ratification for the reason that it was held by Secretary Hay that the U.S. having no national system of police’ could not fulfill the treaty’s provisions. Incidentally, despite the quaint and slightly absurd notion of pre-World War I ‘white slavery’, this treaty and the subsequent creation of a central bureau in Paris to facilitate the exchange of information and to coordinate the actions of the various national police forces in its suppression, holds great significance for the history of international policing. Prior to 1914, the anti-white slavery treaty of 1904 was the single most important step taken toward the creation of an international police organization, and an important precedent for the establishment in 1946 of Interpol (the successor to a similar organization founded in Vienna in 1923).

Even after Hay’s death in 1905 when, despite his earlier objections, the government decided to adhere to the anti-white slave trade convention, the United States proved largely unable to comply with its provisions. The office of the commissioner-general of Immigration, which also stood in the front lines of the fight against the invasion of foreign anarchists, was designated as America’s central enforcement and information gathering agency in the war against international prostitution. In a revealing memorandum of 12 January 1910, however, commissioner-general Daniel Keefe informed the secretary of Commerce and Labor, ‘that the resources at [the Immigration Bureau’s] command were wholly inadequate to cope with the situation’. Heroic, if temporary, efforts made to monitor and repress the white slave trade produced results ‘insignificant compared with the extent of the traffic, but are sufficient to show that the Bureau is putting forth the best possible efforts to strictly enforce the law and carry out the purpose of the [anti-white slavery] treaty’. It was not the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, but the newly formed investigative service in the Justice Department that would soon shoulder the majority of the burden in this struggle.

The creation of this embryo which later became the FBI was the result of Congress’s surprising resolution in May 1908 to forbid, by refusing funding, all government agencies except the Treasury from using Secret Service agents when inquiring into law violations. Without this congressional prohibition, the Secret Service might eventually have evolved into some version of the FBI, the CIA or even a combination of the two. More immediately, the impact of the congressional decision was to severely diminish the effectiveness of the Justice Department, since it and other federal bodies had long relied on borrowing Secret Service agents for all their investigative needs. Congress’s action grew out of a scandal involving
the prosecutions of a senator and a representative for conniving in fraudulent deals involving federal lands, although the federally-instigated prosecutions themselves turned out to be corrupt (tainted by jury tampering). Ultimately, Congress feared the development, in the words of two members of the House of Representatives, of a ‘Federal secret police…a central secret-service bureau, such as there is in Russia today’.

Nonetheless President Roosevelt believed that a federal detective force was absolutely essential to prevent and punish crime. Therefore he directed attorney general Bonaparte to organize an investigative service (named the ‘Bureau of Investigation’ in 1909, and renamed the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1935) inside the Justice Department. Bonaparte formally instituted the agency on 26 July 1908. At first this nameless investigative agency was tiny indeed. In a letter to the U.S. attorney’s office in Denver, Bonaparte reported that ‘owing to the action of the Congress in forbidding the employment of Secret Service men by this Department, I have been compelled to take some ten of their men into the employment of the Department of Justice as Special Agents. For the moment we have not work for so many.’

Was this new agency created in part to deal with the anarchist menace?

Such a conclusion is tempting given Roosevelt’s message a few months prior to the agency’s creation that ‘when compared with the suppression of anarchy, every other question sinks into insignificance’. The full text of Roosevelt’s 9 April 1908 message to both houses of Congress and published in the press, stated that:

I herewith submit a letter from the Department of Justice which explains itself. Under this opinion, I hold that existing statutes give the President the power to prohibit the Postmaster-General from being used as an instrument in the commission of crime; that is, to prohibit the use of the mails for the advocacy of murder, arson, and treason; and I shall act upon such construction. Unquestionably, however, there should be further legislation by Congress in this matter. When compared with the suppression of anarchy, every other question sinks into insignificance. The anarchist is the enemy of humanity, the enemy of all mankind, and his is a deeper degree of criminality than any other. No immigrant is allowed to come to our shores if he is an anarchist; and no paper published here or abroad should be permitted circulation in this country if it propagates anarchistic opinions.

Congress ordered that Roosevelt’s message be submitted to the appropriate committees and printed, but apparently never passed legislation on the matter.
In retrospect, the severity of Roosevelt’s condemnation of the anarchists, including even a call for unprecedented restrictions on freedom of the press, seems altogether extraordinary. It reflected an alarming revival in anarchist and radical activity following the 1905 Revolution in Russia. An example of this resurgence in America was Emma Goldman’s founding in March 1906 of a new anarchist journal, *Mother Earth*. This project received valuable assistance in May of that year after the release from prison of Alexander Berkman. During the winter of 1907–1908, a severe economic crisis and resulting unemployment left many workers receptive to the ideas of the ‘reds’, the anarchists, socialists and other radicals. During 1908 Goldman toured the country, her lectures enjoying greater popular interest than ever before despite sporadic police harassment. Bungled attempts to curb ‘Red Emma’s’ freedom of speech made her into a hero and provided abundant free publicity for the anarchist cause.

Confused together in the public mind with this resurgence of peaceful, mainstream anarchism (Goldman had long ago renounced ‘propaganda by the deed’) were real or alleged acts of anarchist violence. During the first months of 1908, heavy-handed or brutal police dispersions of groups of the unemployed in Philadelphia and Chicago led to riots blamed on anarchist agitators. In Denver on 23 February 1908, after receiving eucharist at the altar rail, an unemployed shoemaker and Italian anarchist named Giuseppe Alia (or Alio) spat out the communion wafer and shot the administering priest in the heart. A week later a recent Russian immigrant from Kishinev made an attempt on the life of the Chicago police chief. According to the newspapers, in the scuffle that followed their encounter, the ‘avowed Anarchist and follower of Emma Goldman’ Lazarus Averbuch stabbed Chief Shippy in the arm, shot his son in the lung and wounded his driver in the hand. Averbuch’s victims responded by firing seven bullets into his body and killing him. The *New York Times* noted ominously that ‘the ramifications of the Anarchist plot [against Chief Shippy] are said to extend to other cities, and to be closely connected with the killing of the Rev. Leo Heinrichs…in Denver’. Goldman, on the other hand, denied ever knowing Averbuch or that he was even an anarchist. In New York City on March 28 a bomb in Union Square, intended for the police who had just prevented a meeting of the unemployed, blew up prematurely in the hands of a young anarchist. The explosion fatally wounded him and killed a bystander.

These acts of public disturbance and violence, attributed to the anarchists or to the inspiration of their teachings, sent the authorities scrambling for remedies. On 4 March 1908, the *New York Times* announced that ‘the United States has declared open war on Anarchists’. In Chicago, the mayor, a judge of the criminal court, and the assistant state’s attorney all purchased revolvers to protect themselves. At the national level, according
to the New York Times, secretary Strauss of the Department of Commerce and Labor, with the ‘hearty indorsement[ sic] of President Roosevelt’ instructed the commissioners of immigration and immigrant inspectors ‘to ally themselves with the police and detectives of the cities and aid in putting an end to terrorism’. In a circular dated March 3, 1908, the secretary asked his immigration officials to ‘call to the attention of the chief of police or chief of the [local branch of the] Secret Service the definition of “Anarchist” contained in…the [Immigration] act of Feb. 20, 1907’, and ‘to rid the country [through deportation] of alien Anarchists and criminals’.97

Local police, immigration officials and the Secret Service, however, lacked expertise in identifying alien anarchists and could not rely on a well-established, national identification service to assist them in their efforts (which helps to account for the fact that ‘from 1903 to 1921 the United States excluded only thirty-eight persons for holding anarchistic beliefs’).98 Moreover, the Secret Service’s wings had been clipped by Congress’s denial of funding for agents ‘detailed or transferred’ out of the division. Nonetheless the Secret Service struggled valiantly to monitor anarchists in the U.S., violating at least the spirit of the congressional prohibition. For example, in the fall of 1908, the State Department requested that Chief Wilkie investigate a report received from the American Ambassador at Rome regarding a plot to assassinate President Roosevelt. Wilkie carried out ‘a very careful investigation’, which included sounding out the anarchists of Paterson, before arriving at the conclusion that the conspiracy was chimerical, and, since nothing came of the matter, apparently it was.99 In 1910, the State Department once again sought Secret Service help in uncovering an anarchist plot, this time against the Spanish king, and even offered to pay ‘any expense connected with this investigation’.100

At least one Secret Service effort at this time was decidedly unsuccessful. In early January 1912 the Spanish diplomatic representative in Washington requested that strict surveillance be exercised over the Spanish anarchist Pardiñas, who reportedly resided in Tampa, Florida (where a colony of Spanish, Italian, and Cuban anarchists existed, many employed in large cigar factories).101 Minister Riaño asked that the movements of Pardiñas and ‘his set’ be communicated to the Spanish government since reports indicated that they were gathering money and plotting to assassinate the Spanish king.102 Wilkie reported on February 21 that:

our agents have no information relating to a revolutionist of this name. There is a certain amount of activity at Tampa, Florida, on the part of sympathizers with the Spanish revolutionists and occasional collections are taken at meetings for the ‘benefit of the cause’. We have no information which would confirm the rumor that money is
being raised for the purpose of sending someone to Spain to assassinate the King.  

As the Spanish Viceconsul in Tampa later figured out, however, Manuel Pardiñas Serrato had resided in Tampa from, at least, November 1911 until he departed for New York City during the week of February 17, 1912.  

From there he traveled to Europe and, on 12 November 1912 assassinated, not the Spanish king, Alfonso XIII, but Prime Minister Canalejas.  

What was the role of the Justice Department’s newly founded detective bureau in combatting these anarchist *attentats*? The Bureau of Investigation might have assumed the role of America’s clearing house for information on the anarchists, making possible the collaboration desired by the European states. Despite its creation a few months after a panic had erupted over the anarchist menace, however, little evidence exists that, for years, it did much to combat terrorism. My perusal of the investigative case files of the Bureau for the period 1908–11 could unearth, for example, no mention of anarchists, assassins, or bombs.  

Neither Roosevelt nor his successors showed any new inclination to join the European anti-anarchist league. In 1913 Spain informed Germany of its desire to obtain the adherence of the United States, as well as of Italy and several Latin American countries, to the St. Petersburg Protocol in order to improve the Protocol’s effectiveness as a means of keeping track of and repressing the anarchist movement. The German government responded that:

> Regarding the adherence of other States to the St. Petersburg Protocol, the United States of America and Italy have flatly [*nettement*] refused adherence. New approaches to those two States offer hardly any chance of success.  

But in 1910 congressional legislation began a pivotal transformation of the Bureau that would ultimately revolutionize its capacity to confront both foreign and domestic threats. Responding to rising national hysteria over the dangers of the white slave trade (a hysteria that proved more powerful and lasting than that over anarchy), Congress passed the Mann Act. This act forbade foreign and interstate transportation of women ‘for the purpose of prostitution or debauchery’ and provided for the enforcement of the international treaty on the white slave traffic. Since the Justice Department was one of the principal federal agencies charged with enforcing this law, it ‘opened the way for the FBI to become a national crime-fighting organization’.  

New funding led to a tremendous increase in the size of the Bureau, from 35 agents in 1910 to some 300 on the eve of America’s entrance into World War I.  

This growth, rather than signifying the
beginning of a police state, was in line with the Progressive Era’s call for
the reform and professionalization of America’s police. Reformers wanted
to remove the police from domination at the local level by corrupt, partisan
political machines. They also wanted to make it more efficient through
greater centralization, and able to respond more effectively to the increasing
mobility of suspects and criminals in a rapidly industrializing and
urbanizing America.109

The Justice Department’s much strengthened Bureau of Investigation
was soon able to exercise its powers in the fight against anarchist terrorism,
and at least by 1913 had begun to play a major role, overshadowing the
Secret Service. In January, the Spanish government received news of a plot
against the king and prime minister of Spain concocted by anarchists in
New York City.110 At the request of the State Department, the attorney
general, utilizing the Bureau, launched a major effort to uncover the
conspiracy and arrest its perpetrators.

...[I]mmediately upon receipt of this information special agents of the
Bureau of Investigation, of this Department, at the ports of New York,
Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore were fully instructed in the
premises, and in accordance with their instructions, careful watch was
kept by them on boats bound for European ports, both passengers and
crews being carefully scrutinized, but no suspicious facts or
circumstances with reference to any person so examined were found.
The assistance of the immigration authorities and others was enlisted
in such a manner that the maximum aid was obtained without it
becoming necessary to disclose to any one, other than the
representatives of the Bureau of Investigation, the real purpose of the
expected visit of the anarchists to Europe. In addition, an investigation
was instituted at Pittsburg [sic], because of a report that a meeting of
anarchists was to take place there on or about the 25th of January.
Inquiries were also prosecuted in New York into the status of Jaime
Vidal and P[edro] Esteve, both of whom were suspected of being
connected with these anarchists and implicated in their conspiracy...

From Pittsburg comes the information, through a reliable source,
that three meetings were held on the 25th and 26th ultimo, one at
McKeesport, one at Sharpsburg and the other at the Royal Garden
Restaurant, in this city, by Italian and Spaniard anarchists, at which
places plans were made for the assassination of the King of
Spain...The information set forth above will be followed up
vigorously and every effort will be made by this Department to first
establish the identity of and then apprehend the two men selected to
carry out the purpose of the anarchists before they leave this country.111
Remarkable is both the apparent ease with which the Bureau carried out an extensive operation of anti-anarchist surveillance, as well as the speed with which it communicated its findings. The State Department had its Bureau of Investigation report ready for the Spanish government in less than half the time (two weeks) that it had taken the Secret Service in the Pardiñas case (over a month).

In May 1913, the Treasury Department, responding to another request from the Department of State, indicated that the Secret Service no longer wished to shoulder alone the duty of fighting anarchism. Instead it suggested that ‘the assistance of the Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, and the Immigration Bureau, Department of Labor, be enlisted in this inquiry’ regarding an anarchist named ‘Salinas Marcelot’ (actually Marcello Salinas) residing in Tampa, and a former intimate friend of Pardiñas.\textsuperscript{112} The Secret Service also requested information from the Post Office, and received a report from the Post Office Inspector in Tampa.\textsuperscript{113} These various pieces of correspondence from 1913 not only suggest that the Bureau of Investigation had begun to displace the Secret Service as the principal government force in the war against anarchist terrorism, but also that its resources and capacity for action were much greater than the older federal police organization’s had ever been.

The growth of the Justice Department’s investigative bureau continued as it was assigned new duties during World War I and the post-war era (at the same time that the European anti-anarchist league fell apart, torn asunder after its major supporters, Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Russia began fighting each other on the battlefield). In a step of fundamental importance for the development of a modern national police force, in 1924 Congress funded the creation of an Identification and Information Division as part of the Bureau. The acquisition and merging of the files on criminals and suspects maintained by the federal prison system in Leavenworth and by the National Bureau of Criminal Identification of the IACP, and their integration into the Bureau’s new Identification and Information Division made possible the formation of an up-to-date central bureau of criminal identification.\textsuperscript{114}

Parallel to and, in many cases, preceding the rapid development after 1910 of a national police force in America was a worldwide decline in the importance of anarchist terrorism. Except in Spain, in Argentina (at least during 1909 when the police chief of Buenos Aires was assassinated) and perhaps in the United States in 1908, after the assassination of McKinley ‘propaganda by the deed’ no longer exerted the great social and political impact it had had during the 1890s.\textsuperscript{115} Sporadic incidents continued to occur, but in the early twentieth century, the energies of many angry young men, which earlier might have gone into acts of terrorism, were now
channeled into the campaign against militarism, into socialism and into the labour movement. Anarcho-syndicalism flourished, particularly in Italy and France, and, in the form of the I.W.W., even sprang up in the United States. The return of better economic times, following the Great Depression at the end of the nineteenth century, partially alleviated the misery of the lower classes, from whose ranks had come many of the anarchist assassins. Progressive governments in the United States, Italy and France tried to remedy some of the distress of the working classes, while also looking more favourably than had their predecessors on organized labour activity.

Should greater international police cooperation be added to this list of important factors helping to explain the decline of terrorism? This question is difficult to answer with precision. Evidence certainly exists that several European governments valued this cooperation very highly and one can make a plausible case that after 1900 a number of deadly assaults were prevented by more effective police action. France and Italy saw the most dramatic declines of any countries in the incidence of terrorism, and this may have been due in part to the increasing competence and sophistication of their police forces and police strategies. France as well as Italy signed bilateral anti-anarchist treaties with neighbouring states, France created a special anti-anarchist police and Italy created a far-flung system of police agents abroad who monitored anarchist activities. Given the high level of international police cooperation already engaged in by the French and the Italians, joining the anti-anarchist system set up by the St. Petersburg protocol might not have made that much of a difference in combating terrorism. Greater police effectiveness and cooperation may also have conferred indirect benefits. After 1900, in part because governments were generally less in the dark about the activities of anarchists and other subversives, they could act more confidently in carrying out social and political reforms, fairly certain that their police forces would be capable of handling any explosive social upheaval that might accompany such measures as liberalizing the right to strike.

This historical context, as well as evidence and insights drawn from various and unexpected sources, helps us to understand why America refused to sign the St. Petersburg Protocol of 1904 and to join in continental Europe’s pre-war crusade against anarchist terrorism. The tremendous anger against the anarchists aroused in the United States by the assassination of President McKinley proved insufficient to overcome long traditions of isolationism, fear of entanglement with the Old World, dread of European-style secret policing, and antipathy toward signing clandestine agreements. These traditional concerns, in so far as they regarded the signing of an anti-
anarchist accord, were bolstered after 1900 by new sentiments of apprehension and distrust of Germany and Russia, countries which appeared to be America’s major rivals in the competition for economic and political power in Asia and Latin America. In the end, none of these causes may have been as crucial as the simple fact that the United States had no central police organization or identification service, and, even if it had wanted to, could not have effectively cooperated with Europe in the international policing of anarchists.

In a curious twist of history, all this began to change once hysteria over white slavery replaced hysteria over anarchism at the forefront of national concerns. This led to American adherence to the international treaty on repressing the white slave trade, the passage of the Mann Act and greatly increased funding for the fledgling investigative division of the Justice Department. It also led to the gradual emergence of the Bureau of Investigation as America’s first effective national police force, capable of fighting both white slavery and international anarchist terrorism.119

NOTES

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2. Memorandum from Interior Minister (and beginning in 1903, Prime Minister) Giolitti to the Italian foreign minister, 12 May 1902, Series P: politica, 1891-1916, busta 47, Archivio storico, Italian foreign ministry, Rome [hereafter cited as IFM]; Giolitti to Italian foreign minister, no. 10560, most confidential, Rome, 30 May 1904, Polizia internazionale, busta 35, IFM.


6. Alfred Vizetelly’s popular and influential The Anarchists (London: John Land 1911) attributes to the anarchists every assassination and many acts of popular violence that took place during the last quarter of the nineteenth century up until the eve of World War I.
although the authors of many of these deeds were clearly revolutionaries and nationalists who did not share the anarchists’ desire to abolish hierarchical forms of centralized authority. Vizetelly continues to influence and confuse authors today, e.g. Barton Ingraham, *Political Crime in Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1979) p.186n, attributes the assassination of Alexander II of Russia (1881) and assassination attempts against Kaiser Wilhelm I (1878), King Humbert of Italy (1878), and Alexander III (1887) to the anarchists, although the culprits were in fact revolutionary socialists or deranged persons.

Prior to 1914, the *London Times* repeatedly labeled various murders, or attempted murders, and violent acts in India as ‘anarchist’ explicitly linking them to anarchist deeds in Europe, although the Indian terrorists were motivated by nationalist, rather than anarchist, ideals (e.g. ‘The Methods of Indian Anarchism’, 16 Feb. 1909, p.7; ‘Indian Anarchism’, 12 Feb. 1909, p.11; and especially, ‘The Attempted Assassination of [the Viceroy] Lord Hardinge’, 24 Dec. 1912, p. 5.

13. Ibid. p. 301.
15. Congress, Senate, President Roosevelt’s Message to the Senate and House of Representatives, 57th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* (3 Dec. 1901), vol. XXXV, p.82.
17. Promemoria of Russian Ambassador to German Foreign Office, Berlin, 4 Sept. 1900, German Foreign Office (records filmed at Whaddon Hall, Bucks, England, Dec. 1958), *Anarchimus (Geheim)*, 43.
20. Fine (note 1) pp.790–3. In a speech to the graduating class of the Yale Law School, Whitelaw Reid, a leading member of the Republican Party, former Ambassador to France, and long-time editor of the *New York Tribune*, contended that ‘the bill for protecting the life of the President failed, because certain Senators held that the head of the government was entitled to no greater protection before the law than its humblest or most worthless and vicious citizen’. *New York Herald*, 23 June 1903. See also the detailed discussion in Richard B. Sherman, ‘Presidential Protection during the Progressive Era: The Aftermath of the McKinley Assassination’, *The Historian* 46/1 (Nov.1983) pp.1–20.
22. ‘Lists of Suspected Anarchists’. RG 87 5/46/35/5, National Archives.
25. Promemoria, German embassy to state department, Washington D.C., 1 May 1902, RG 59, Microfilm M58, Reel T31, National Archives.
27. Published versions of the protocol in German translation can be found in German foreign office, Documente aus den russischen Geheimarchiven (Berlin 1918), pp.14–18, and in De Martens’ Nouveau Recueil général de traités, ed. Heinrich Triepel (3), vol. X, pp.81–4. Both sources mistakenly include Switzerland among the official signatories of the protocol. For the original French version of the protocol with the correct list of signatories, see the copy forwarded by German Ambassador Sternburg to Secretary of State Hay, strictly confidential, Washington, 9 May 1904, RG 59, Microfilm M58, Reel T33, National Archives.

Spain and Portugal accepted the St. Petersburg agreement on 15 and 25 June 1904, respectively. Spanish foreign ministry (Section 2) to German ambassador, very confidential, Madrid, 15 June 1904, Orden Público, Legajo 2753, Archivo Histórico, Spanish foreign ministry [hereafter cited as SFM], Madrid; copy of a note, Portuguese minister to the Russian minister of foreign affairs, very confidential, St. Petersburg, 25 June/8 July 1904, Administrativa Registratur, Generalia 1871–1910, F 529, p.275, Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv, Vienna [hereafter cited as HHSA].

Switzerland did not sign, but on 31 March 1904 agreed to comply unilaterally with the administrative measures of the accord, baring a change in political ‘circumstances or a change in legislature’. See the copy of a note from the Swiss Federal Council to the Russian minister in Berne, 31 March 1904, forwarded by German ambassador Sternburg to secretary of state Hay, strictly confidential, Washington, 9 May 1904, RG 59, Microfilm M58, Reel T33, National Archives. For further details on the St. Petersburg Protocol see Jensen (note 16) pp.337–8.

28. Luxembourg signed a version of the St. Petersburg Protocol which omitted the article calling for the notification of other signatories prior to the expulsion of anarchists (Habsburg Foreign Office to the Austrian and Hungarian ministers of the interior, secret, Vienna, 16 June 1904, Administrativa Registratur, Generalia 1871–1910, F 529, p. 251, HHSA. Many countries, including Italy, objected to this as a form of disguised extradition.

29. Ambassador Sternburg to Secretary Hay, Washington D.C., 9 May 1904, RG 59, Microfilm M58, Reel T33, National Archives.


33. Gatze (note 31) p.45.
34. Roosevelt also believed that ‘The English behaved badly in Venezuela’ and had ‘permitted themselves to be roped in as an appendage to Germany in the blockade of Venezuela’.

35. This may, or may not, have followed Roosevelt’s ultimatum to the Germans, as the former president alleged in Aug. 1916. For a recent and impressive refutation of the ultimatum claim, see Nancy Mitchell, ‘The Height of the German Challenge: The Venezuelan Blockade, 1902–3’, Diplomatic History 20/2 (Spring 1996) pp.198–200.
36. Frederick W. Marks III, Velvet on Iron: The Diplomacy of Theodore Roosevelt (Lincoln,
41. This opinion was expressed during the midst of the negotiations to end the Russo-Japanese War. Roosevelt to Hay, 2 April 1905, in ibid. vol. IV, p.1157.
42. Beale (note 37) pp.262–4; Collin (note 31) pp.66–75.
43. Copy of Von Muehlberg, Foreign Office, Berlin, to Ambassador Alvensleben, St. Petersburg, secret, 12 January 1903, German Foreign Office, 43. Anarchismus (Geheim), microfilm.
47. Cassini openly favored Roosevelt’s opponent in the 1904 election; the president could not stand the Russian ambassador. Saul (note 44) pp.473, 483, 492.
51. Tilchin (note 34) pp.7–8; 17–18; 26–7.
56. Memorandum, German Embassy to Department of State, Washington D.C., 15 December 1904, RG 59, Microfilm M 58, Reel T31, National Archives.
57. Memorandum, December 16, 1904, attached to ibid.
58. This was the number of field operatives in 1908–09 (Sherman [note 20] p.15). The size of the Secret Service was a closely kept secret. The *New York Times* estimated that each of its 38 offices (if one includes its Washington, D.C., headquarters) had four to five agents, which


60. Duke of Arcos, Washington, D.C., to foreign minister, Madrid, reservado, n. 155, 19 October 1900, legajo 2751, expediente 35, Archivo Histórico, SFM.


62. Consul general, New York, to foreign ministry, Rome, confidential, 9 February 1906, busta 119, Rappresentazioni diplomatiche italiane negli Stati Uniti (1901–09), IFM.


68. The Austrian note submitted by ambassador Hengelmueller, dated 1 Dec. 1902, is summarized in David J. Hill, acting secretary of state, to the secretary of the treasury, Washington, D.C., 22 Jan. 1903, RG 59, M 40 roll 157, National Archives.

69. Hay to Ladislaus Hengelmüller, Washington, D.C., 22 and 30 April 1903, RG 59, M99, Reel 4, National Archives; L. M. Shaw, secretary (initialed by John E. Wilkie, Chief) Secret Service, to Secretary of State, 17 April 1903, United States Secret Service, RG 87, Letters Sent, 1899–1914, Box 17, National Archives.

70. ‘Over two hundred Superintendents and Chiefs of Police of this country, in conjunction with several from Canada, one from the City of Mexico, the head of the Department of Guatemala, the principal in authority at Rotterdam, and others, have organized and have maintained for ten years an organization known as the International Association of Chiefs of Police’. Richard Sylvester to Francis B. Loomis, assistant secretary, department of state, Washington, D.C., 26 April 1903, RG 65, stack 230/row 32/compartment 25/shelf 5 [hereafter cited as 230/32/25/05], Box 1, National Archives. In 1904 the police chiefs of Tegucigalpa, Honduras; Buenos Aires, Argentina; Hobart, Australia; and, in 1905, Tokyo, Japan, joined the IACP. Proceedings of the Annual Conventions of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, 1893–1905 (New York: Arno Press and The New York Times 1971) vol. 1, pp.138, 148–57.

71. Copy of letter, Sylvester to Loomis, assistant secretary, department of state, Washington D.C., 26 April 1903, RG 65, 230/32/25/05, box 1, National Archives. Joining the NBI with full access to all its files would have cost an additional fifteen dollars.

72. The French criminologist Alphonse Bertillon (1853–1914) invented the Bertillon system, which became France’s official method of criminal identification in 1888. Also termed anthropometry, because originally based on the measurement of various body sections (such as the elbow to the wrist) that do not change after the age of twenty, this system was widely used throughout the world until fingerprinting began to displace it. In 1901 England became the first country to discontinue using Bertillonneau and adopt fingerprinting; Sylvester’s letter to Adee makes clear that the United States did not begin to make the changeover until 1904. Copy of letter, Sylvester to Adee, second assistant secretary of state, Washington D.C., 7 March 1904, RG 65, 230/32/25/05, box 1, National Archives.

73. RG 65, 230/32/25/05. Record Group 65 contains copies of the correspondence of the IACP and the National Bureau of Identification (also called the National Bureau of Criminal Identification) between 1897 and 1924.
75. The text of the treaty and of Roosevelt’s proclamation is in department of state, Foreign Relations (1908) pp.333–5.
77. See internal State Department letter with attached Memorandum, J. R. Buck to S. Y. Smith, Washington, 12 February 1907, M862 roll 23, National Archives. The delay in the President’s official proclamation of the treaty was also due to procedural issues. The Senate ratified an international anti-white slavery agreement submitted to it in December 1902, but later this was temporarily abandoned by the European states, although reconfirmed by them in a new treaty signed in May 1904. The two treaties were identical in their terms, but it was unclear for a time ‘whether the advice of the Senate to adhere to the 1902 convention might properly be construed as authority for adherence by the United States to the 1904 convention’. Ibid.
79. Copy of memorandum, M862, roll 23, National Archives.
80. ‘No part of any money appropriated by this Act shall be used in payment of compensation or expenses of any person detailed or transferred from the Secret Service Division of the Treasury Department...’ Appropriations Act, 27 May 1908, HR 21260, 35 United States Statute, p. 328.
81. Melanson (note 1) p.7.
82. Whitehead (note 59) pp.18–19.
89. Goldman (note 12) pp.419, 448. ‘Never in all the years since I had first gone on tour, with the exception of the Union Square demonstration in 1893, had I seen masses so eager and enthusiastic’ (ibid., 427).
91. Alia was initially misidentified as a man named ‘Guarmacoto’. He told a policeman that ‘I am an Anarchist, and I am proud of it...I have a grudge against all priests in general. They are all against the workingman’, New York Times, 24 Feb. 1908, p.1; ‘Father Leo’s Slayer Guilty’, New York Times, 13 March 1908, p.13.
93. Goldman, who spells Lazarus’s last name ‘Overbuch’, also casts doubts on who shot whom during the scuffle with Police Chief Shippy (Goldman [note 12] pp.413–14).
95. 4 March 1908, p.1.
98. Preston (note 1) p.33.
99. Robert Bacon, assistant secretary of state, Washington, D.C., to Wilkie, 6 Nov. 1908; Wilkie to Bacon, 17 Nov. 1908, RG 87, box 10, file 74947, National Archives.
100. Huntington Wilson, assistant secretary of state, to Wilkie, Secret Service, treasury, 2 April 1910, RG 87, box 11, file 77335, National Archives.


102. Copy and translation, Juan Riaño, legation of Spain, to P. C. Knox, secretary of state, Washington, D.C., 8 January 1912, RG 87, Box 15, National Archives.

103. Wilkie to secretary of state, 21 February 1912, RG 87, Box 49, file 52468-G, National Archives.


105. Index to Administrative Reports on Cases, 1908–1911, RG 65, 230/32/26/04, National Archives.


110. Translation, Juan Riaño, legation of Spain, to P. C. Knox, secretary of state, confidential, Washington, D.C., 16 January, 1913, RG 87, Box 16, file 82865, National Archives. The justice department did not receive the Spanish request for information until 18 Jan. 1913.

111. Copy, William R. Harr, assistant attorney general, department of justice, to secretary of state, confidential, Washington, D.C., 1 Feb. 1913, RG 87, Box 16, file 82865, National Archives.

112. Treasury to secretary of state, 5 May 1913, RG 87, box 17, file 83223, National Archives.

113. Chief inspector C. B. Keene, post office department, to William Flynn, chief, Secret Service, treasury, 8 May 1913, RG 87, box 17, file 83223, National Archives.


118. As I have tried to show elsewhere, the case for the connection between police reform, social reform and the decline of widespread social violence (and terrorism) can be made persuasively for Italy. See Jensen, ‘Police Reform and Social Reform: Italy from the Crisis of the 1890s to the Giolittian Era’, *Criminal Justice History: An International Annual* 10 (1989) pp.179–200.

119. A good deal of historical irony exists in the fact that soon after the Roosevelt Administration refused in 1904 to join the anti-anarchist league and adhere to the anti-
white slavery convention it proclaimed the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (Dec. 1904). The Roosevelt Corollary made the United States the policeman of the Western Hemisphere, intervening in Latin American states whenever it felt necessary to rectify cases of 'wrongdoing' or 'impotence' (LaFeber [note 45] p.199; Marks [note 36] p.146). In a strange hypocrisy, the United States was happy enough, in the words of Roosevelt, to 'exercise...international police power' outside its borders, but was incapable of policing itself domestically (and therefore of joining international police organizations) because of the lack of a national police force and a national identification service of its own.