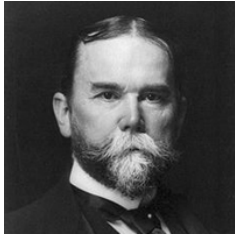


## Open Door Policy

1899-1900 ← John Hay – Secretary of State  
The Open Door in China



Secretary of State John



What is the **Open Door Notes**?

The Open Door Notes is an **international agreement** that promoting **the U.S. policy** of to have secure the equal opportunity for international trade, **commerce** in China, and respect for **China's administrative** and **territorial integrity**.

### John Hay, in full **John Milton Hay**

- Born October 8, 1838, Salem, Indiana, U.S.
- Died July 1, 1905, Newbury, New Hampshire
- U.S. secretary of state (1898–1905) who skillfully guided the diplomacy of his country during the critical period of its emergence as a great power;

### How did Hay do?

- First, **Hay** searched for the agreement of the **British** and **Japanese Governments**. Both of which considered the American suggestion to be in their interests. Although both conditioned their acceptance of the terms on the agreement of all the powers involved.
- **France** followed the **British** and **Japanese** example.
- This **British, Japanese, and French** support the suggestion of Hay that forced **Germany** and **Russia** to adhere to the terms of the note, although **Russia** did so with so many caveats that it practically negated the Note's central principles.
- Nevertheless, Hay declared that all the powers had accepted the ideas with responses that were "**final and definitive.**"
- **In 1900**, however, **internal events** in China threatened the idea of the Open Door.
- An **anti-foreign movement** known as the **Boxer Rebellion**, named for the martial artists that led the movement, gathered strength, and began attacking foreign missionaries and Chinese converts to Christianity.
- With the backing of **Empress Dowager Cixi (Tz'u Hsi)** and **the Imperial Army**, the Boxer Rebellion turned into a violent conflict that claimed the lives of hundreds of foreign missionaries and thousands of Chinese nationals.
- As the Boxers descended upon Beijing, foreign nationals living in that city— including **embassy staff**—clustered together in the besieged foreign legations, and called upon their **home governments** for assistance.

### process

- With **foreign armies** fighting their way from the **Chinese coast** to save their citizens in the capital, in some cases securing their own concessions and areas of special interest along the way, the principle of **the Open Door** seemed to be in grave danger.
- **On July 3, 1900**, Hay circulated another message to the foreign powers involved in China.
- This time noting the importance of **respecting the “territorial and administrative integrity” of China**.
- Although the **goal** was to prevent the powers from using the Boxer Rebellion as an excuse to carve China into individual colonies, the Open Door Circular requested no formal agreement or assurances from the other powers.
- Together, the Open Door Notes served the important purpose of outlining **U.S. policy** toward China and expressing U.S. hopes for cooperation with the other foreign powers with a stake in the region.
- They were of lasting importance in U.S.-East Asian relations, and contributed to the idea of a Sino-American “special relationship.”
- However, because they were non-binding, **the Notes did not prevent the United States**—or any other power—from one day seeking Chinese territory, or acting in any way that was preferential to their own interests, even at the expense of the Chinese Government.
- **Hay** himself even briefly considered **a seizure of Chinese territory**.
- Although he quickly rejected the idea. Although the Notes were not binding, Hay’s **successors** nonetheless adhered to the policy of maintaining the Open Door in China.
- **The articulation of the Open Door policy represented the growing American interest and involvement in East Asia at the turn of the century**.
- Ironically, Hay articulated the Open Door policy at a time when the U.S. Government was doing everything in its power to close the door on Chinese immigration to the United States.

### Influence

1. Will in no way interfere with any **treaty port** or any **vested interest** within any so-called “**sphere of interest**” or leased territory it may have in China.
2. That the Chinese treaty tariff of the time being shall apply to **all merchandise landed or shipped to all such ports** as are within said “sphere of interest” ( unless they be “free ports”), no matter to what nationality it may belong, and that duties so leviabale shall be collected by the Chinese Government.
3. That it will **levy no higher harbor dues** on vessels of another nationality frequenting any port in such “sphere” than shall levied on vessels of its own nationality, and no higher railroad charges over lines built, controlled, or operated within its “sphere” on **merchandise** through such “sphere” than shall be levied on similar merchandise belonging to its own nationals transported over equal distances.