

Special Relationship in the Malay World



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Special Relationship in the Malay World

Indonesia and Malaysia

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“Sometimes I see Malaysia as my brother;
sometimes I see it as my enemy.”

An Indonesian Senior Researcher

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Ho Ying Chan
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ABBREVIATIONS

AMDA	Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement / Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASA	Association of Southeast Asia
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
Bendera	Benteng Demokrasi Rakyat (The People's Democratic Front)
CPM	Communist Party of Malaya
CPOPC	Council of Palm Oil Producing Countries
DPR	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (People's Representative Council)
EAEC	East Asia Economic Caucus
EAEG	East Asian Economic Group
EC	European Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FPDA	Five Power Defence Arrangement
GAM	Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Aceh Independence Movement)
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

GBC	General Border Committee
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
G-15	Group of Fifteen
ICJ	International Court of Justice
Maphilindo	Malaysia–Philippines–Indonesia Confederation
MASOC	Malaysia SEA Games Organising Committee
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People’s Consultative Assembly)
MPRS	Provisional People’s Consultative Assembly
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NIC	Newly Industrializing Country
NORAD	North American Air Defense Agreement
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
OPSUS	<i>Operasi Khusus</i> (Special Operations)
PJBD	Permanent Joint Board on Defence
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia (Communist Party of Indonesia)
PRB	Partai Rakyat Brunei
PRRI	Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia)

RELA	Jabatan Sukarelawan Malaysia (The People's Volunteer Corps)
SAF	Singapore Armed Forces
SEAFET	Southeast Asia Friendship and Economic Treaty
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SESKOAD	Sekolah Staf Komando Angkatan Darat (Army Staff and Command College of Indonesia)
TAC	Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia
TNKU	North Kalimantan National Army
TPDA	Three Power Defence Arrangement
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
ZOPFAN	Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality

1

INTRODUCTION

The term “special relationship” has been used by many states to characterize a specific set of their bilateral ties with other states: for example, the ties between the United States and the United Kingdom; the United States and Canada; the United States and Israel; France and the Sub-Saharan African states; and Spain and the Latin American states. The meaning of a special relationship is centred on the term “special”. It usually means a quality that is exceptional in a positive sense. Consequently, a special relationship between two states is generally being understood as a close friendship.

The concept of a special relationship remains under-defined and under-conceptualized. A large part of the meaning of this concept has been introduced by politicians, which often entails sentimental expressions. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher reiterated her understanding of the Anglo-American special relationship during her speech in Washington in 1985: “[i]t is Special. It just is. And that’s that!”¹ she asserted. Margaret Thatcher’s assertion reflects politicians’ instinctive

¹ Margaret Thatcher’s Speech at British Embassy, Washington, 20 February 1985, available at <<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105971>> (accessed 15 March 2011).

understanding of the concept of a special relationship. Such instinctive tendency contributes to the opacity of the concept. Feldman has pointed out that an obvious reason for the absence of a definition of a special relationship is “the brevity with which journalists are forced to write or with which politicians and government are obliged to speak”.² Systematic disentangling of what has been said about a special relationship, therefore, is necessary in order to establish an understanding of the concept which best reflects its real meaning.

The essence of a special relationship is reflected by its association with close friendship. As Aristotle had noted, “no one can have complete friendship with many people”.³ A friendship fundamentally means a relationship that is different from other relations. Friendships are commonly understood as “a relationship satisfying cognitive and emotional needs and characterized by reciprocity, trust, openness, honesty, acceptance, and loyalty”.⁴ In other words, a friendship is an intimate relationship that is “necessarily exclusive”.⁵

The intimate nature of a friendship means that friends depend on each other for creating “a stable sense of Self”, in which they constantly confirm and adapt their ideas of order.⁶ Berenskoetter has pointed out that throughout history, “friendships have been identified as being capable of both strengthening and undermining order”.⁷ For example, the United States and the United Kingdom had jointly created and are leading the

² Lily Gardner Feldman, *The Special Relationship Between West Germany and Israel* (Boston: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), p. 4.

³ Aristotle, NE, Book VIII, 6 and Book IX, 10, quoted in Felix Berenskoetter, “Friends, There Are No Friends? An Intimate Reframing of the International”, *Journal of International Studies* 35, no. 3 (2007): 668.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 649.

⁵ Laurence Thomas, “Friendship and Other Loves”, in *Friendship: A Philosophical Reader*, edited by Neera Kapur Badhwar (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 48–64. Marilyn Friedman, *What Are Friends For?* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), quoted in Berenskoetter, “Friends, There Are No Friends? An Intimate Reframing of the International”, p. 649.

⁶ Berenskoetter, “Friends, There Are No Friends? An Intimate Reframing of the International”, pp. 672–73.

⁷ *Ibid.*

Western World; likewise, France and Germany have been working together to forge European integration. The dynamics of friendships indicate that a special relationship — which is a friendship between two states — is a force that has a tendency to fashion order.

However, conflicts are discernible in a special relationship. As Kissinger has noted, the close Anglo-American special relationship at times experiences “mutual exasperation”.⁸ Reynolds, meanwhile, argues that the unique feature of U.S.–UK special ties is that both cooperation and competition have equal weight in the relationship.⁹ He observes that Anglo-American relations are woven with “complex strands of interest, ideology and emotion”, and describes it as “a relationship of competitive cooperation”.¹⁰

The tendency of two states sharing a special relationship to establish their common vision of the world, coupled with the conspicuous presence of conflicts in such a relationship, implies that the relationship might generate impacts on international politics. Viewed in this light, the concept of a special relationship deserves a detailed study.

The association of a special relationship with close friendship means that the relationship is intertwined with peaceful qualities. A relationship between two states is close only when there is a desire for peace between them. For example, the mutual wish for friendly ties between the United States and the United Kingdom since the 1890s had given rise to a special relationship between the two states in the 1910s. Similarly, the desire for rapprochement between France and Germany since the end of the Second World War had led to the close ties between all levels of societies of the two states under the framework of the Franco–German Friendship Treaty.¹¹

⁸ Henry A. Kissinger, “Reflections on a Partnership: British and American Attitudes to Postwar Foreign Policy”, *International Affairs* 58, no. 4 (1982): 575.

⁹ David Reynolds, “Rethinking Anglo-American Relations”, *International Affairs* 65, no. 1 (1989): 98.

¹⁰ David Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance 1937–41: A Study in Competitive Co-operation* (London: Europa Publications Limited, 1981), pp. 293–94.

¹¹ Feldman, *The Special Relationship Between West Germany and Israel*, pp. 284–85.

The peaceful characters of a special relationship imply that it has the qualities of a pluralistic security community. A pluralistic security community is a transnational region comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful change. Dependable expectations of peaceful change means the ability of the actors concerned to know that neither of them would prepare or even consider to use violence as a means to resolve their disputes. The peaceful nature of a pluralistic security community coincides with the traits of peace in a special relationship. In this sense, there is an inseparable link between a special relationship and a pluralistic security community.

Yet, while a special relationship has the qualities of a pluralistic security community, it is not necessarily a pluralistic security community. The United States and Britain continued to engage in their rivalries for naval supremacy throughout the 1920s even though they had begun to share a special relationship since the 1910s. The United States and Canada each continued to develop war plans directed at each other well into the late 1930s despite the existence of special ties between them since the 1910s. The fact that a special relationship is not necessarily a pluralistic security community denotes that certain conditions need to be in place before the relationship can become such a community. This observation brings about the central question of this study: under what circumstances could a special relationship lead to the emergence of a pluralistic security community?

Through addressing the central question, this study aims to establish an understanding of a special relationship, its dynamics and its transformation into a pluralistic security community. A theoretical framework based on constructivist theory has been developed to address the central question. By reviewing the existing literature on special relationships and security communities, the framework establishes an appreciation of the essence of a special relationship as well as its links with a pluralistic security community. Various evidences in international relations, especially the histories of Anglo-American and U.S.–Canada relations from the 1850s to the 1960s, have been used by the framework to substantiate its arguments. The basic idea of the framework is as follows:

A state's survival essentially concerns its existence of self. The will to survive of a state hence is rooted in its awareness of self. States' understandings of self shape, and are shaped by, their identities and power, namely, material capacities, in the form of identifications with one another.

A state's understanding of self is the basis for its intersubjective understandings. Intersubjective understandings of states are a stable set of identities and interests which are founded on their understandings of self.¹² States apprehend the world through the lenses of their intersubjective understandings.¹³ Intersubjective understandings are essentially the cognitive collective knowledge of states, yet they are experienced as having an independent and real existence, hence confront the states as social reality.¹⁴

This study reveals that two states share a special relationship when two sources of closeness — that of the two states' common identities and common strategic interests — coexist between them. It argues that a special relationship produces substantial cooperation and substantial conflicts between the two states involved. In other words, a special relationship is distinguished by its double-edged effects. This study points out that a special relationship constitutes a security regime. Two states in a special relationship — a security regime — are bound by their shared commitment to avoid an armed conflict between them. Built on a special relationship's existing function as a security regime — this study argues — the relationship will transform into a pluralistic security community when power imbalance exists between the two states involved.

The theoretical framework of this study is being tested through the examination of Indonesia–Malaysia relations from 1957 to 2017. It is a common recognition that Indonesia and Malaysia share a special relationship since the two states are bound by their common cultural

¹² Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics", *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 397–99.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 396–97. Also see Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory", *World Politics* 50, no. 2 (1998): 326.

¹⁴ Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It", p. 399. Also see Emanuel Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics", *European Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 3 (1997b): 327.

identities. By developing a theoretical framework of a special relationship, this study aims at advancing better appreciation of Indonesia–Malaysia relations — which is to explain the bilateral ties through the lens of the interplay of power and common identities in the relationship. In particular, this study seeks to address a long-standing puzzle in Indonesia–Malaysia relations: why conflicts between Indonesia and Malaysia are rather obvious even though both allegedly are close to each other? That said, this study is not a comprehensive historical account of Indonesia–Malaysia relations. It is rather an attempt to better understand the bilateral ties by examining it using the theoretical framework of this study.

Indonesia–Malaysia relations, in the meantime, provide a strong test of this study's theoretical framework. The notion of a special relationship is originated from the West. Also the most studied special relationships in international politics are those formed by Western and developed states, such as the Anglo–American and the U.S.–Canada special relationships. These are the reasons why this study has decided to incorporate the histories of Anglo–American and U.S.–Canada relations into its theoretical framework. The examination of Indonesia–Malaysia relations, therefore, will reveal whether this study's hypothesis is able to predict the forming of a special relationship, its dynamics, and its transformation into a pluralistic security community, considering that Indonesia and Malaysia share common identities, yet they are neither Western nor developed states. In other words, if the theoretical arguments of this study apply to Indonesia–Malaysia relations, the arguments' ability to predict will be significantly proven, hence could be generalized as a theory of a special relationship.

This book consists of two major parts: (1) Theoretical Framework of a Special Relationship and (2) History of Indonesia–Malaysia Relations, 1957–2017. Chapters 2 to 4 — the first part — constitutes the theoretical framework. Chapter 2 identifies the essence of a special relationship, the relationship's expressions, and the circumstances in which such a relationship will emerge. It also confirms that a special relationship and a pluralistic security community are essentially interlinked, and that such a relationship can transform into a pluralistic security community. Chapter 3 based on the findings of the previous chapter discusses the key

conceptual components of a special relationship, followed by Chapter 4 which explains the dynamics of such a relationship and its transformation into a pluralistic security community.

The second part — Chapters 5 to 7 — tests the theoretical arguments of this study by examining Indonesia–Malaysia relations from 1957 to 2017. Chapter 5 argues that there was no special relationship between Indonesia and Malaya/Malaysia from 1957 to 1965. Chapter 6 — Indonesia–Malaysia relations from 1966 to 1984 — explains that the two states began to share a special relationship shortly after the fall of the Sukarno regime. Chapter 7 — Indonesia–Malaysia relations from 1985 to 2017 — reveals the double-edged effects of the Indonesia–Malaysia special relationship, and shows that the relationship is not a security community but remains as a security regime owing to the absence of power imbalance between Indonesia and Malaysia.

Chapter 8 — the conclusion — discusses the key findings of the study as well as the insights on Indonesia–Malaysia relations brought forth by this study.

Part I

Theoretical Framework of a Special Relationship

2

MAKING SENSE OF A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

This chapter reveals that a special relationship between two states is founded on their two sources of closeness — that of the two states' common identities and shared strategic interests. It subsequently discusses about the expressions of a special relationship. This chapter then brings to light the understanding that two states bound by common identities each needs to own a necessary amount of power before they could share a special relationship. After defining a security community, this chapter demonstrates that a special relationship and a pluralistic security community are basically different from each other, yet they are essentially interlinked — the two concepts each represents a relationship of common identities as well as power between two sovereign states. Finally, the chapter reveals that certain conditions need to be in place before a special relationship can transform into a pluralistic security community.

THE CONCEPT OF A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

The Coming About of the Conception of a Special Relationship

The concept of a special relationship is generally being understood as a closer friendship between two states when compared to their other

bilateral relations, where such a relationship is founded on the two states' closely shared interests and their sentimental assertion of shared identities. The idea of a "special relationship" entered into the discussion of international relations when the term was coined by Winston Churchill in his "iron curtain" speech at Fulton, Missouri in March 1946. Churchill in his speech warned that permanent peace would not be achieved without "the fraternal association of the English Speaking People. This means a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States."¹

The notion of a special relationship between Britain and the United States was a century in the making, amid the ripening of their friendship since the late eighteenth century. The sense of closeness between the two states was naturally and consistently generated by their common identities, rooted in the two states' shared culture, common language, historical ties and shared political values and institutions. In 1782, after it was reminded by Britain of the possibility of French pursuing deceptive tactics, the United States had decided to ignore its treaty with France, which obliged them not to make separate peace with other states.² It went ahead to conduct separate negotiations with Britain to end the American Revolutionary War.³ Such an incident demonstrated the dynamics of common identities, which produced positive associations between the United States and Britain, even at a time when Britain had suffered a grave military defeat in its war against the United States a year earlier. As observed by Allen, the two states pursued "the practice of playing off doubtful friends against open enemies"; the Frenchman, on the other hand, acknowledged "the unusual character of the Anglo-American relationship".⁴

The mutual sense of closeness, which derived from their shared identities, was openly expressed by the political leaders from the United

¹ Randolph S. Churchill, ed., *The Sinews of Peace, Post-War Speeches by Winston S. Churchill* (London: Cassell, 1948), pp. 98–99.

² Harry C. Allen, *Great Britain and the United States: A History of Anglo-American Relations (1783–1952)* (New York: St. Martin's Press Inc., 1955), pp. 253–56.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

States and the United Kingdom during the 1780s. On 5 December 1782, King George III in the House of Lords said, “Religion, language, interests and affection may, and I hope will, yet prove a bond of permanent union between the two countries.”⁵ On the other hand, the first American Minister to Britain, John Adams, when first met with King George III in 1785 said, “I shall esteem myself the happiest of men if I can be instrumental...restoring...the old good-nature and the old good-humour between people who, though separated by an ocean and under different governments, have the same language, a similar religion and kindred blood.”⁶

However, common identities-induced positive identifications between the United States and Britain alone, did not result in substantial friendship between them. At the turn of nineteenth century, the brief existence of the two states’ common strategic interests had shown that substantial friendship between them nearly came into being, when common identities and shared strategic interests almost coexisted in their relationship. In the late 1790s to early 1800s, there had been talks of forging an Anglo-American alliance to face the common threat exerted by the culturally different other — France.⁷ The natural bonds between the United States and the United Kingdom underpinned by their common identities, led them to look to each other for help when they were threatened by states of different culture.

Britain realized the value of American friendship amidst its war against France. As a war between the United States and France had become increasingly likely in the late 1790s, Britain began to explore possible collaborations with the United States to confront France. Such collaborations, however, did not materialize; America and France soon achieved peace in 1801. Nonetheless, not long after that, Thomas Jefferson, then U.S. President, made no secret that the United States would seek for the assistance from Great Britain if necessary, in order to quash France’s desire to expand its power in North America following France’s acquisition

⁵ Robert Balmain Mowat, *Americans in England* (U.S.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1935), p. 54.

⁶ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, p. 266.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 304–6.

of Louisiana from Spain in 1800.⁸ Yet, such strategic consideration quickly evaporated in 1803, when Napoleon proposed to sell Louisiana to the United States.⁹ America swiftly accepted the offer as it deemed Louisiana was the key to its future.¹⁰ The coexistence of common identities and shared strategic interests in U.S.–UK relations did not eventually come into place; firm Anglo-American friendship therefore had yet to surface.

Similar dynamics of possible cooperation between the United States and Britain re-emerged in the 1820s. The French invasion of Spain in April 1823 had raised talks of Anglo-American cooperation to prevent France from acquiring Spanish colonies in Latin America. Such cooperation, however, did not take place as the two states held fundamentally different strategic concerns. The United States, with its prime aim of preventing European powers from interfering in American continent's affairs, hence its fear of Britain's intention to annex Spanish colonies in America, requested Britain to recognize the independence of Spanish American colonies, before the two states could cooperate to contain France.¹¹ Britain, on the other hand, rejected such demand as it deemed the revolutions of the Spanish American was contradictory to its political system of monarchy, and it had recently been an ally of Spain.¹² Above all, Britain was fearful of American annexation in Latin America, especially the Spanish lands of Texas and Cuba.¹³ Once again, the divergence of their respective strategic interests prohibited the two states from forging substantial friendship between them, despite sharing common identities.

Since the 1850s, the U.S. power had grown consistently. Henry Adams observed, "The revolution since 1861 was nearly complete, and, for the first time in history, the American felt himself almost as strong as an Englishman."¹⁴ The growing American power spawned structural

⁸ Ibid., p. 306.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 359, 366, 372–75.

¹² Ibid., pp. 366–67, 374–75.

¹³ Ibid., p. 369.

¹⁴ Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (U.S.: Sentry Edition, 1961), p. 235.

changes in the U.S.–UK relations. Allen wrote, “Anglo-American friendship grew in strength almost exactly in proportion as American world interests expanded.”¹⁵ The increasingly powerful United States found itself in growing need of British friendship while it was expanding its power abroad in the 1890s.¹⁶ Britain — a world power — on the other hand, was in strong desire for American friendship as it was increasingly conscious of its isolation in international affairs, especially in the face of the threats from Russia and Germany.¹⁷ In short, both the United States and the United Kingdom needed each other to preserve their respective interests overseas. The growing of American power, matched with Britain’s existing power, produced their mutual need for strategic cooperation between them. The perceived mutual strategic dependence had its roots in the two states’ mutual sense of closeness, derived from their common identities. Mahan — then a former U.S. navy admiral — wrote in 1897,

When we begin really to look abroad, and to busy ourselves with our duties to the world at large in our generation — and not before — we shall stretch out our hands to Great Britain, realizing that in unity of heart among the English-speaking races lies the best hope of humanity in the doubtful days ahead.¹⁸

The coexistence of shared identities and common strategic interests in Anglo-American relations during the 1890s, intensified positive identifications between them. As a consequence, their friendship grew substantially. The two states’ policymakers during this period advocated the idea of “Anglo-American understanding”. Mahan in his first published work in 1890 avowed a “cordial understanding with Britain”.¹⁹ Then U.S. Secretary of State, John Hay, proclaimed, “As long as I stay here no action shall be taken contrary to my conviction

¹⁵ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, p. 562.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 568.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 425, 525, 568.

¹⁸ A.T. Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power: Present and Future* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, Limited, 1897), pp. 258–59.

¹⁹ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, p. 563.

that the one indispensable feature of our foreign policy should be a friendly understanding with England. But an alliance must remain, in the present state of things, an unattainable dream.”²⁰ The idea of “understanding”, according to Allen, meant the United States and the United Kingdom held “a tone of general agreement on broad principles”, but avoided concrete cooperation, let alone the forming of an alliance between them.²¹

Britain’s and America’s policies during the Spanish-American War in 1898, and the Boer War in 1899, exemplified the idea of Anglo-American understanding. The British government adhered to the policy of benevolent neutrality, when the United States was at war with Spain in 1898. While such policy meant the absence of concrete cooperation between the United States and Britain, it actually reflected British friendly approach towards America. As British did not share the anti-American feeling of other European states, it practically protected the United States from the threats exerted by hostile European powers, since it was Great Britain that controlled the seas.²² On the other hand, British neutrality enabled the effective blockade in the Atlantic battle area by the United States during the war.²³ After America had won the war, Britain welcomed its annexation of Spanish colonies in the Pacific and the Caribbean, as America’s expansion would check the power of Britain’s potential enemies, hence allowed Britain to concentrate on other more vital danger areas.²⁴ Likewise for the Boer War in 1899, the practice of the policy of impartial neutrality by the U.S. government, in effect served as a crucial force to hamper other powers from interfering in this war. Without American participation, no effective interference could be possible.²⁵ Such policy came as an important assistance to

²⁰ Robert Balmain Mowat, *The Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States* (London: Edward Arnold & Co, 1925), p. 284.

²¹ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, pp. 549, 581.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 575.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 576–77.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 581–83.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 592–93.

Britain. It essentially allowed Britain to decisively defeat the Boer Republics at a time when Britain was isolated in Europe.²⁶

At the turn of the twentieth century, because of the steadily growing strength of the United States, mutual strategic dependence between America and Britain continued to solidify, hence friendship between them consistently intensified.²⁷ In the early 1900s, British policy of friendship with America had become the essential complement of Anglo-Japanese Alliance and Anglo-French Entente Cordiale.²⁸ The United States, on the other hand, was determined to maintain an intimate understanding with Britain.²⁹ A letter sent by then U.S. President, Theodore Roosevelt, to Spring-Rice, a British diplomat, during this period reflects the friendly sentiment between the two states in the early 1900s,

I feel so perfectly healthy myself and the Americans and Englishmen for whom I care...seem so healthy, so vigorous and on the whole so decent that I rather incline to the view of my beloved friend, Lieutenant Parker... whom I overheard telling the Russian naval attaché at Santiago that the two branches of Anglo-Saxons had come together, and "together, we can whip the world, Prince".³⁰

Having understood the true extent of American power, British realized the benefits of pursuing American friendship and the disastrous outcome of provoking American enmity.³¹ The increasing number of culturally different great powers during the early 1900s, led Britain to view American friendship as the promising answer to its international problems.³² Meanwhile, the supremacy of British navy, and the emergence of America's naval power, gave birth to the mutual complementary functions

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 590, 593.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 549.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 607.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 610.

³⁰ Forrest Davis, *The Atlantic System: The Story of Anglo-American Control of the Seas* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1943), p. 142.

³¹ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, pp. 441, 581.

³² Ibid., pp. 607–8.

of their navies, particularly in addressing the two states' shared fear of Germany, which looked set to construct a great fleet.³³

In the late 1900s, the Anglo-American friendship had become an indispensable factor in each of their foreign policy.³⁴ The mutual strategic dependence of the two states in international affairs led them to realize the increasing importance of maintaining a good understanding between them. Spring-Rice, after visiting the United States in 1905, where he represented Britain to discuss with the United States on the settlement of Russo-Japanese War in the Far East, said,

In England, of course, as Chamberlain told me very earnestly, every thinking man is convinced of the absolute necessity for England of a good understanding with America...³⁵

Roosevelt in his letter to King Edward VII in 1905 wrote,

I absolutely agree with you as to the importance, not only to ourselves but to all the free peoples of the civilized world, of a constantly growing friendship and understanding between the English-speaking peoples.³⁶

The mutual good understanding engendered the two states' parallel actions in international politics. Both states sided with Japan during its war with Russia in the Far East; both supported the Open Door Policy in China. Then British Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne, assured Washington in 1903 that Britain was "prepared to follow the United States step by step up to any point that may be necessary for the protection of our common interests in China".³⁷ When, in 1905, asked by the Japanese if America would join the Anglo-Japanese alliance, Lansdowne replied, "...I should expect to find them moving upon parallel lines with us, I doubted whether they were likely to do more."³⁸

³³ Ibid., pp. 560, 601, 607–8.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 614.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 616.

³⁶ Lionel M. Gelber, *The Rise of Anglo-American Friendship: A Study in World Politics, 1898–1906* (London, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 185.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 167.

³⁸ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, p. 619.

Turning into the 1910s, the policy of American friendship, according to Allen, had become the traditional foreign policy of Britain.³⁹ Such a tradition was especially obvious, when Britain's strategic dependence on the United States turned salience during the First World War. As America's power had the deciding impact on the outcome of the war, Britain was determined to ensure its friendship with the United States.⁴⁰ Then British Prime Minister, Herbert Henry Asquith, said to the U.S. Ambassador to Britain, Walter Hines Page, "Mr. Page, after any policy or plan is thought out on its merits my next thought always is how it may affect our relations with the United States. That is always a fundamental consideration."⁴¹ Meanwhile, the presence of the threat exerted by the culturally different hostile power — German during the war, intensified the common identities-induced positive identifications between Britain and the United States. Spring-Rice, the British Ambassador, reported to the British government of his conversation with then U.S. President, Woodrow Wilson,

I knew that you believed the hope and salvation of the world lay in a close and cordial understanding between the free nations, more especially between those who were of the household of our language...we could almost endure with equanimity all the horrors of this terrible struggle if they led in the end to a close, sure and permanent understanding between the English-speaking peoples. If we stood together we were safe. If we did not stand together nothing was safe.⁴²

Wilson in other occasions said, "if Germany won it would change the course of our civilization and make the United States a military nation...", "England is fighting our fight."⁴³

³⁹ Ibid., p. 637.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 630, 637.

⁴¹ Burton J. Hendrick, *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page Volume II* (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1923), p. 169.

⁴² Stephen Gwynn, ed., "From April 1917 to January 1918", in *The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring Rice: A Record, Volume II* (New York: Books For Libraries Press, 1972a), p. 425.

⁴³ Edward Mandell House, *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House Volume I: Behind the Political Curtain, 1912–1915* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1926), p. 299. Also see Horace C. Peterson, *Propaganda for War: The Campaign Against American Neutrality, 1914–1917* (U.S.: Kennikat Press, 1968), p. 181.

Underpinned by the coexistence of their shared identities and common strategic interests arose since the end of nineteenth century, Anglo-American relations evolved into a bilateral relationship with special characters in the 1910s. Policymakers and government officials of the two states during this period shared an understanding that their friendship was closer than their other bilateral ties. Walter Hines Page, then U.S. Ambassador, described his relationship with then British Foreign Secretary, Edward Grey, “Now the relations that I have established with Sir Edward Grey have been built up on frankness, fairness and friendship. I can’t have relations of any other sort nor can England and the United States have relations of any other sort.”⁴⁴ Recounted on his friendship with then U.S. Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, the British Ambassador, Spring-Rice wrote, “whatever may be said of the relations, politically speaking, of England and America, one thing is absolutely certain — in no other country can an Englishman make such friendships.”⁴⁵ Allen observed, by 1910s, Britain understood America deeper than it understood any other power of the time; its understanding of America was hitherto the deepest in history.⁴⁶

Meanwhile, Anglo-American economic interdependence had grown extensively in the 1910s. The economic links between America and Britain during this period were far stronger than those either state had with any other state. On the other hand, while the United States joined the Allies as an “Associated Power”, not an ally, to fight against Germany during the First World War, the Anglo-American military cooperation was, nonetheless, intimate. The two states’ navies which were commanded by the British Admiral Bayley were operated in the chain of command based on seniority, not nationality, “the same courts of inquiry were shared”, and the admiral “flew his flag indifferently” in either state’s ships.⁴⁷ In sum, by the 1910s, America and Britain, in substance, shared a special relationship.

⁴⁴ Burton J. Hendrick, *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page Volume I* (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1923a), p. 382.

⁴⁵ Stephen Gwynn, ed., “The End of Service”, in *The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring Rice*, p. 432. Also see Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, p. 634.

⁴⁶ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, p. 654.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 693.

As the relationship continued to evolve into the 1920s, the British survival at sea had become essentially depended on its good relations with the United States — a newly emerged world power.⁴⁸ Britain had accepted its naval equality with the United States and the superiority of America's economy.⁴⁹ The policy of American Friendship since then, became the fundamental basis of British foreign policy.⁵⁰

The friendship between the United States and Britain eventually gave birth to the alliance between them in the Second World War. It was a time where Anglo-American friendship reached its climax. Ties between them during the war were far stronger than any alliance, and unprecedented in the history of war.⁵¹ The catastrophic threat of Nazi Germany amplified the combination of common identities and shared strategic interests in Anglo-American relations. Both states became the “sole bastion of Western civilization against the onslaughts of Nazi might”, thus depended on each other for survival.⁵² Then British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, said in Parliament on 18 June 1940,

I expect that the Battle of Britain is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilization...Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this Island or lose the war...if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known or cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age...⁵³

Churchill's speech made plain the mutual strategic dependence between Britain and America in defending the existence of their common civilization. The United States also understood that defending Britain against Nazi Germany concerned the very survival of America and its way of life.

The Anglo-American friendship during the war became exceptionally special. The two states together established a unique common machinery

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 728.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 723.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 728.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 835.

⁵² Ibid., p. 781.

⁵³ Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War Volume II: Their Finest Hour* (London: Cassell & Co. Ltd., 1949), pp. 198–99.

for conducting the war, especially the creation of the Combined Chiefs of Staff Committee.⁵⁴ It was a joint body responsible to the U.S. President as Commander-in-Chief, and to the British Prime Minister as Minister of Defence; in which it served to ensure the unity of command during the war. Amidst the establishment of this committee, then U.S. President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, rejected a proposal for an Inter-Allied Supreme War Council, which would involve other allied powers; for he deemed that “only Britain and the United States could really frame the strategy of the war and execute it”.⁵⁵ So close was their relationship where in McNeill’s words, “After 1942 it would have been almost beyond the power of either nation to disentangle itself from the alliance with the other, even had anyone considered such a step desirable.”⁵⁶

The decades of growing closeness between the United States and Britain, which was bolstered by their common struggle against the deadly Axis in the Second World War, nurtured the idea of special associations with the United States among British policymakers. In July 1940, amid facing the greatest threat ever from Nazi Germany, then British Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, wrote in an official letter “the possibility of some sort of special association” between the United States and Britain.⁵⁷ Such an idea was later adopted by then British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill. In September 1943, he “instructed postwar planners that nothing should prejudice ‘the natural Anglo-American special relationship’”; in February 1944, he told the Foreign Office, “It is my deepest conviction that unless Britain and the United States are joined in a special relationship...another destructive war will come to pass.”⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Allen, *Great Britain and the United States*, pp. 837–38.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ William Hardy McNeill, *America, Britain, & Russia: Their Co-operation and Conflict, 1941–1946* (New York and London: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970), p. 17.

⁵⁷ Halifax to Hankey, 15 July 1940, FO 371/25206, W8602/8602/49, quoted in David Reynolds, “Rethinking Anglo-American Relations”, *International Affairs* 65, no. 1 (1989): 94.

⁵⁸ Telegram of 24 September 1943, quoted in Elisabeth Barker, *Churchill and Eden at War* (London: Macmillan, 1978), p. 199. Also see Churchill, minute M. 125/4, 16 February 1944, PREM 4/27/10, quoted in Reynolds, “Rethinking Anglo-American Relations”, p. 94.

The term “special relationship” went public when Churchill, while addressing the House of Commons in November 1945, advocated the need to preserve Britain’s “special relationship” with the United States over the atomic bomb.⁵⁹ The persistent contemplation of special ties with America culminated in Churchill’s decision to elaborate publicly the notion of Anglo-American special relationship in his “iron curtain” speech in the United States in 1946.

Since then, “special relationship” becomes a notable term in international politics. Policymakers use this term to describe close ties between states. Former U.S. President, Jimmy Carter, claimed, “We have a special relationship with Israel.”⁶⁰ Former German Ambassador to Israel said, “Germany’s relationship to Israel was never as normal as its ties to any other country. Relations were always special.”⁶¹ Former Canadian Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, said, “The United States remains Canada’s most important ally, closest friend and largest trading partner and I look forward to working with President Obama and his administration as we build on this special relationship.”⁶²

The Anglo-American special relationship emerged through the ripening of their generations of growing friendship. Yet, such an evolution was triggered, buttressed and sustained by two underlying sources of closeness — that of the coming together of common identities and shared strategic interests in the relations. There was no substantial friendship between Britain and the United States, despite their constant sense of closeness towards one another, which was induced by their

⁵⁹ Winston S. Churchill, “The Anglo-American Alliance, November 7, 1945, House of Commons”, in *Winston S. Churchill: His Complete Speeches, 1897–1963 Volume VII 1943–1949*, edited by Robert Rhodes James (New York and London: Chelsea House Publishers, 1974a), p. 7248.

⁶⁰ Bernard Reich, “Reassessing the United States–Israel Special Relationship”, *Israel Affairs* 1, no. 1 (1994): 65.

⁶¹ Welt am Sonntag, 6 January 1980, quoted in Lily Gardner Feldman, *The Special Relationship Between West Germany and Israel* (Boston: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), p. 176.

⁶² Stephen Harper, Statement on the Inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States of America, 20 January 2009, available at <<http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?category=3&id=2391>> (accessed 7 March 2012).

common identities. Substantial friendship between the two states began to emerge with the emergence of their common strategic interests in the late nineteenth century. The perceived mutual strategic dependence of the United States and the United Kingdom, in the meantime, had its origin in the common identities of the two states. It is the coexistence of the two sources of closeness that establishes intimacy between the United States and the United Kingdom, and produces cooperation between them. Thus, for a special relationship to exist, the coexistence of common identities and shared strategic interests in the ties of the two states involved appears to be necessary.

The Two Sources of Closeness in a Special Relationship

Most of the policymakers and scholars, who have discussed the concept of a special relationship, acknowledge the existence of the twin sources of closeness, namely, two states' common identities and shared strategic interests. Common identities of two states are derived from their shared culture, common language, historical ties or shared political values and institutions. Common strategic interests of two states, on the other hand, mean the two states rely on each other's material presence for survival. A state's strategic interest means a material presence which is fundamental to its survival.

Churchill's conception of a special relationship was founded on the "fraternal association" between the United States and Britain, coupled with the strategic calculation where such partnership would strengthen "shared security interests and interlinked global economic interests".⁶³ Former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, argued, Britain should remain an ally of the United States, not simply because it is powerful, "but because we share their values".⁶⁴ His assertion explains that, while the special ties with the United States are essential for Britain's

⁶³ Churchill, ed., *The Sinews of Peace, Post-War Speeches by Winston S. Churchill*, pp. 98–99. Also see Patrick Porter, "Last Charge of the Knights? Iraq, Afghanistan and the Special Relationship", *International Affairs* 86, no. 2 (2010): 358.

⁶⁴ Samuel Azubuike, "The 'Poodle Theory' and the Anglo-American 'Special Relationship'", *International Studies* 42, no. 2 (2005): 132.

security, such an association is also a result of their shared values.⁶⁵ Former U.S. President, Bill Clinton, in a speech to both houses of the British Parliament in November 1995 said,

Today the United States and Britain glory in an extraordinary relationship that unites us in a way never before seen in the ties between two such great nations...our relationship with the United Kingdom must be at the heart of our striving in this new era, because of the history we have lived, because of the power and prosperity we enjoy...⁶⁶

Clinton's speech indicates that the U.S.–UK special relationship is vital for both states' survival, owing to their historical ties, combine with the amount of power that each of them possesses.

Kissinger, in his article "Reflections on a Partnership: British and American Attitudes to Postwar Foreign Policy" later suggested that common values and geopolitical consideration were complementary elements in U.S.–UK relations.⁶⁷ Reynolds argues that Anglo-American relation is a "relationship of culture as well as power", and that its special quality is derived from the two states' common interests, shared values and close personal ties "in the face of common threat".⁶⁸ Dumbrell, on the other hand, argues that the combination of inertia, gluing effect of shared culture and the refashioning of interests serve to ensure the sustainability of the U.S.–UK special relationship.⁶⁹ The refashioning of

⁶⁵ Former British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin once contented, "Now is the time to build up the strength of the free world, morally, economically and militarily with the United States, and at the same time to exert sufficient control over the policy of the well-intentioned but inexperienced colossus on whose co-operation our safety depends..." See Reynolds, "Rethinking Anglo-American Relations", p. 97.

⁶⁶ *Public Papers of the Presidents – 1995, Vol. 2*, Remarks to the Parliament of the United Kingdom in London, 29 November 1995, quoted in Steve Marsh and John Baylis, "The Anglo-American 'Special Relationship': The Lazarus of International Relations", *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 17, no. 1 (2006): 184.

⁶⁷ Henry A. Kissinger, "Reflections on a Partnership: British and American Attitudes to Postwar Foreign Policy", *International Affairs* 58, no. 4 (1982): 587.

⁶⁸ Reynolds, "Rethinking Anglo-American Relations", p. 104. Also see David Reynolds, "A 'Special Relationship'? America, Britain and the International Order since the Second World War", *International Affairs* 62, no. 1 (1985–86): 5–6.

⁶⁹ John Dumbrell, "The US–UK 'Special Relationship' in a World Twice Transformed", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17, no. 3 (2004): 448.

interests entails the changing of their common threat from the Nazism in the Second World War, Soviet communism in the Cold War, to terrorism in the War on Terror; coupled with their continued mutual reliance in achieving respective basic strategic needs.⁷⁰

The discussions of other so-called special relationships also see a combination of identities and strategic drivers. Former U.S. Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, while describing the U.S.–Israel relations in 1993 said, “...the relationship between the United States and Israel is a special relationship for special reasons. It is based upon shared interests, shared values, and a shared commitment to democracy, pluralism and respect for the individual.”⁷¹ A former French government official described France’s special ties with its ex-colonies in Africa as “the partner closest historically, closest geographically and culturally, surest sentimentally, and — last but not least — in the medium term, the most useful economically.”⁷² Such a statement highlights the combination of shared identities and common strategic interests as the reasons for the France–Sub-Saharan Africa special relationship.

Reich in his article “Reassessing the United States–Israel special relationship” contends that the U.S.–Israel special relationship is founded on “ideological, emotional and moral pillars and on a commitment to democratic principles buttressed by strategic and political factors”.⁷³ Both states view each other as a truly reliable strategic asset in preserving the peace and stability in the Middle East.⁷⁴ Haglund and Dickey hold similar understanding of the U.S.–Canada special relationship. Both respectively contends that the relationship is rooted in the two states’

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 438, 444–45, 449.

⁷¹ Reich, “Reassessing the United States–Israel Special Relationship”, p. 64.

⁷² Jacques Ferrandi, “*La politique africaine de la France et la Communauté économique européenne*”, in *La France et l’Afrique: quelle politique africaine pour la France?* edited by Jacques Baumel (Paris: La Fondation du Futur, 1985), p. 52, quoted in Alison Brysk, Craig Parsons, and Wayne Sandholtz, “After Empire: National Identity and Post-Colonial Families of Nations”, *European Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 2 (2002): 282.

⁷³ Reich, “Reassessing the United States–Israel Special Relationship”, p. 65.

⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 66, 69–72.