Mistake: Russia sold Alaskan gold to the U.S. Alaska had been considered a burden, rather than an asset, by Russia for a long time.So, when William Seward, U.S. Secretary of State, began negotiations on his own initiative, he expected to encounter some opposition.However, the purchase of a seemingly desolate and mostly frozen land was greeted with criticism by the press and the public.It was remote, .indefensible, and of little benefit

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