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John Quincy Adams and the Monroe Doctrine

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Source: *The American Historical Review*, Oct., 1902, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Oct., 1902), pp. 28-52

Published by: Oxford University Press on behalf of the American Historical Association

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1832573>

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## JOHN QUINCY ADAMS AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE

### II.

ON November 13 Adams prepared the usual memorandum of suggestions for the President's annual message at the opening of the session of Congress.<sup>1</sup> He took it to the Executive Mansion and found Monroe "still altogether unsettled in his own mind" on the answer to be given to Canning's proposals, and "alarmed, far beyond anything that I could have conceived possible, with the fear that the Holy Alliance are about to restore immediately all South America to Spain." In this view he was supported by Calhoun, a man who certainly did not err on the side of a cheerful optimism, and the surrender of Cadiz to the French was the immediate cause of this despair. Adams pressed for a decision, either to accept or to decline Canning's advances, and a despatch could then be prepared conformable to either decision.<sup>2</sup> Monroe's vacillation was all the more notable as he had received the counsels of Jefferson and Madison, an episode of which Adams was still in ignorance, for he was not shown the letters until the fifteenth.

If Calhoun was the alarmist member of the Cabinet, Adams was at the other extreme. As well expect Chimborazo to sink beneath the ocean, he believed, as to look to the Holy Alliance to restore the Spanish dominion upon the American continent. If the South Americans really had so fragile governments as Calhoun represented them to be, there was every reason not to involve the United States in their fate. With indecision in the President and dark apprehension in Calhoun, Adams alone held a definite opinion, and in clear phrase he expressed it in summation of the Cabinet discussion :

"I thought we should bring the whole answer to Mr. Canning's proposals to a test of right and wrong. Considering the South Americans

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum is among the Monroe MSS. in the New York Public Library. It consists of four pages of manuscript, and contains nothing on Canning's proposition. I was in the belief that it was an incomplete paper until I found in the Ford collection, in the same library, a rough note in Monroe's writings of "Adams's Sketch," closely following the heads of the Adams manuscript and leaving no doubt of its covering all the points of that paper.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 185.  
( 28 )

as independent nations, they themselves, and no other nation, had the *right* to dispose of their condition. *We* have no right to dispose of them, either alone or in conjunction with other nations. Neither have any other nations the right of disposing of them without their consent. This principle will give us a clue to answer all Mr. Canning's questions with candor and confidence, and I am to draft a dispatch accordingly."<sup>1</sup>

At this juncture Russia again intervened. On November 15, Baron de Tuyl communicated to Adams extracts from a despatch received from his court, dated August 30, N. S., containing an exposition of the views of the Emperor Alexander and his allies on the affairs of Spain and Portugal. It was not unusual for the ruler of Russia to take the governments of other countries into his confidence and display before them some of the political principles which controlled his actions or explain some of the motives which actuated his councils. As a member of the Holy Alliance, he was bound by its decisions, and was often made the spokesman of its policy. Such utterances usually took the form of circular letters addressed to the different cabinets of Europe, and, so far as I am able to discover, had not for some years been addressed to the United States. This was only natural, for the United States had deliberately isolated itself from European councils, and could hardly expect to be deemed worthy of being taken into the secret conclaves of the powers dealing with matters on which our representatives were ever asserting they could give no opinion or pledge of action. Further, the very political system of the United States was so opposed to that dominating Europe, that ground for common action could not be found. If England, with her relatively liberal system and many mutual interests with continental Europe, found herself unable to act with the Holy Alliance, it was out of the question for the United States, without any of these interests, to take part in their proceedings. There was every reason for keeping entirely aloof, and, even in a matter that did concern our country, like the negotiations on the slave trade, it was only as a matter of favor that the United States was informed of the conclusions, and as a matter of grace invited to give its adherence to the result. It was, therefore, an unusual incident for the government of the United States to receive from such a source a communication bearing upon the general public policy of Europe. It was difficult to escape the conclusion that some ulterior motive was to be sought. The paper is not accessible, and deserves to be given in full.

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 186.

## COUNT NESSELRODE TO BARON TUYLL.

Extrait.

ST. PETERSBOURG le 30. Août, 1823.

Quand les principes qu'une cour a résolu de suivre, sont établis avec précision ; quand le but qu'elle se propose est clairement indiqué, les événements deviennent faciles à juger pour Ses Ministres et Agents diplomatiques. Ceux de l'Empereur n'avaient donc pas besoin d'instructions nouvelles pour apprécier et considérer sous leur vrai point de vue les heureux changements qui viennent de s'accomplir dans la Péninsule.

Pénétrés de l'esprit qui dirige la politique de Sa Majesté Impériale, ils auront applaudi aux déclarations, dont ces changements ont été précédés, exprimé les vœux les plus sincères en faveur d'une entreprise qui embrasse de si hauts intérêts et annoncé sans hésitation que l'Empereur et ses alliés voyaient avec un véritable sentiment de joie, la marche des troupes de S. M. T. C. couronnée d'un double succès par le concours des peuples auxquels l'armée française a offert une généreuse assistance et par l'affranchissement des païs où la révolution était parvenue à détrôner l'autorité légitime.

Aujourd'hui que les artisans des malheurs de l'Espagne, renfermés dans Cadix et dans Barcelone, peuvent bien encore abreuver de nouveaux outrages leurs prisonniers augustes, mais non asservir et tyranniser leur patrie ; aujourd'hui que le Portugal a noblement secoué le joug d'une odieuse faction, nous sommes arrivés à une époque, où il ne sera point inutile de vous informer des décisions et des vues ultérieures de Sa Majesté Impériale.

La force des armes déployée à propos ; environnée de toutes les garanties que réclamait la résolution d'y avoir recours ; tempérée par toutes les mesures et toutes les promesses qui pouvaient tranquilliser les peuples sur leur avenir ; soutenue, enfin, par cette puissance d'union et d'accord qui a créé de nos jours un nouveau système politique : la force des armes n'a eu en quelque sorte qu'à se laisser apercevoir pour démasquer aux yeux du monde un despotisme qu'avaient trop souvent révoqué en doute ou l'erreur des hommes à théories qui s'abusaient involontairement peut-être sur le véritable état des choses, ou la mauvaise foi des hommes à projets criminels qui ne cherchaient que les moyens d'étendre et de propager la contagion des mêmes malheurs.

En Espagne, la nation toute entière attendait impatientement l'occasion de prouver que la plus coupable imposture avait seule pu lui prêter ces vœux subversifs de l'ordre social et ce désir d'avilir la Religion et le Trône que démentait d'avance chaque page de son histoire. En Portugal, il a suffi d'un exemple et du courage d'un jeune Prince, pour que l'édifice révolutionnaire tombât au premier choc, and pour ainsi dire, de sa propre faiblesse. C'est une grande and consolante leçon que la Providence Divine nous réservait. Elle accorde la justification d'un éclatant triomphe aux desseins des Monarques qui ont pris l'engagement de marcher dans ses voies ; mais peut-être n'a-t-on pas assez observé que les mémorables événements, dont nous sommes témoins, marquent une nouvelle phase de la civilisation Européenne. Sans s'affaiblir, le patriotisme paraît s'être éclairé ; la raison des peuples a fait un grand pas, en reconnaissant que, dans le système actuel de l'Europe, les conquêtes sont impossibles ; que les Souverains qui avaient mis leur gloire à réparer les effets de ces anciennes interventions dont la malveillance essayait encore d'alarmer la crédulité publique, ne renouvelleraient point ce qu'ils avaient toujours condamné, et que ces vieilles haines nationales

qui repoussaient jusqu'aux services rendus par une main étrangère, devaient disparaître devant un sentiment universel, devant le besoin d'opposer une digue impénétrable au retour des troubles et des révolutions dont nous avons tous été, trente ans, les jouets et les victimes. Que l'on compare l'Espagne telle que nous la peignaient des prédictions sinistres, à l'Espagne telle qu'elle se montre aujourd'hui ; que l'on suive les rapides progrès de la bonne cause, depuis l'année dernière, et on se convaincra de ces utiles vérités, on verra que la paix, en se rétablissant, aura pour base la conviction généralement acquise des précieux avantages d'une politique qui a délivré la France, en 1814 et 1815, volé au secours de l'Italie en 1821, brisé les chaînes de l'Espagne et du Portugal en 1823 ; d'une politique, qui n'a pour objet que de garantir la tranquillité de tous les Etats dont se compose le monde civilisé.

Il importe que les Ministres et Agents de l'Empereur ne perdent pas de vue ces graves considérations et qu'ils les développent toutes les fois qu'ils trouvent l'occasion de les faire apprécier.

L'Alliance a été trop calomniée et elle a fait trop de bien pour qu'on ne doive pas confondre ses accusateurs, en plaçant les résultats à côté des imputations, and l'honneur d'avoir affranchi et sauvé les peuples, à côté du reproche de vouloir les asservir et les perdre.

Tout autorise à croire que cette salutaire Alliance accomplira sans obstacle sérieux l'œuvre dont elle s'occupe. La Révolution expirante peut bien compter quelques jours de plus ou de moins d'agonie, mais il lui sera plus difficile que jamais de redevenir Puissance ; car les Monarques Alliés sont décidés à ne pas transiger, à ne pas même traiter avec elle. Certes, ils ne conseilleront, en Espagne, ni les vengeances ni les réactions ; et leur premier principe sera constamment, que l'innocence obtienne une juste garantie et l'erreur un noble pardon ; mais ils ne sauraient reconnaître aucun droit créé et soutenu par le crime ; ils ne sauraient pactiser avec ceux qu'on a vus renouveler à l'isle de Léon, à Madrid et à Séville des attentats qui prouvent le mépris ouvert de tout ce que les hommes devraient respecter le plus dans l'intérêt de leur repos et de leur bonheur. C'est avec cette détermination qu'a été formé et que sera poursuivi le siège de Cadix. On ne posera les armes qu'au moment où la liberté du roi aura enfin été conquise et assurée.

Ce moment sera celui, où les Alliés rempliront envers l'Espagne le reste de leurs engagements et de leurs devoirs. Ils se garderont de porter la plus légère atteinte à l'indépendance du Roi, sous le rapport de l'administration intérieure de ses États, mais par l'organe de leurs Ambassadeurs (Sa Majesté Impériale se propose alors d'accréditer temporairement le Lieutenant Général Pozzo di Borgo auprès de S. M. C.) ils élèveront la voix de l'amitié, ils useront de ses privilèges, ils profiteront de leur position, pour insister avec énergie sur la nécessité d'empêcher que l'avenir ne reproduise les erreurs du passé, de confier à des Institutions fortes, monarchiques et toutes nationales les destinées futures de l'Espagne et de rendre désormais inutile l'assistance qu'elle a reçue, en y fondant un gouvernement dont la sûreté résidera dans le bien même dont il sera l'instrument et l'auteur.

Les Alliés ne pourront signaler ni les lois, ni les mesures, ni les hommes les plus capables de réaliser de telles intentions. Mais ils croiraient manquer à une de leurs obligations les plus essentielles, s'ils n'avertissaient Ferdinand VII, redevenu libre, que leur entreprise demande encore une dernière apologie aux yeux de l'Europe, et que si la

prospérité de l'Espagne n'en est la conséquence immédiate, ils n'auront rien fait ni pour lui, ni pour eux.<sup>1</sup>

L'Empereur souhaite avec la même sincérité et le même désintéressement un bonheur durable à la Nation portugaise. Nos communications jointes à celles des Cours d'Autriche, de France et de Prusse qui partagent ce désir, en offriront la meilleure preuve au Cabinet de Lisbonne, et nous n'aurons plus de vœux à former, si le nouveau gouvernement du Portugal prépare avec prudence et maturité les matériaux d'une restauration solide, et s'il rivalise de zèle avec le Cabinet de Madrid pour décider, à l'avantage réciproque des deux Etats, les questions de politique extérieure et administrative, qu'ils ont, l'un et l'autre, à méditer et à résoudre.

Tel est le sens dans lequel ont agi et dans lequel continueront d'agir l'Empereur et ses Alliés. . . .

Vous êtes autorisé à faire usage de la présente dans vos rapports confidentiels avec le gouvernement des États-Unis d'Amérique.<sup>1</sup>

This remarkable manifesto, most appropriate for an autocrat in speaking to other autocrats, but entirely unsuited for gaining the confidence of the "one example of a successful democratic rebellion," naturally influenced Adams in preparing his reply to Canning. The draft of a despatch on all the communications from Rush bearing upon the proposed concert was prepared on November 17, and given to the President on the same day. Whatever may have been the general intention of Adams in preparing this draft, the scope of his policy was greatly enlarged by the communications made by the Russian minister. It was sufficiently aggravating to have been lectured on political principles in the note instructing the minister to make it known that the Emperor would receive no representatives from the late Spanish colonies. The few political remarks in reply included in Adams's note to Baron Tuyl had been ruthlessly cut out by the President, as tending to irritate his Imperial Majesty. From a statement of principle it had been turned, as Adams says, into "the tamest of all State papers." The only consolation was that it entirely satisfied the Russian minister. But now another Russian manifesto had been communicated, explaining more fully, and, it may be added, more offensively, the views and intentions of the Holy Alliance, couched in language which only an autocrat could employ. It was the Holy Alliance proclaiming the virtues and glories of despotism. This gave Adams his opening. If the Emperor set up to be the mouthpiece of Divine Providence, it would be well to intimate that this country did not recognize the language spoken, and had a destiny of its own, also under the guidance of Divine Providence. If Alexander could exploit his political principles, those of a brutal repressive policy, the United States could show that another system of government, re-

<sup>1</sup> Of this paragraph Adams wrote that it was a "satire upon the rest of the paper."

mote and separate from European traditions and administration, could give rise to a new and more active political principle, — the consent of the governed, between which and the Emperor there could not exist even a sentimental sympathy. If the Holy Alliance could boast of its strength and agreement when engaged in stamping out all opposition to legitimacy, the United States, hearing the whisperings of a projected American union, with itself at the head, an Alliance that did not arrogate to itself the epithet of Holy, could demand that the European concert justify its existence, its actions and its motives by records other than the bloody scenes at Naples, in France, and in Spain. Here was Adams's opportunity. It was no longer Canning who was to be answered; it was Europe,— and he seized it as only a masterful man, certain of his ground, can find in the very reasons of his opponent the best of support for his own position.

In the following parallel are given Adams's first draft of the answer to Canning, prepared November 17, and the amendments made by Monroe, November 20.

ADAMS'S DRAFT.<sup>1</sup>

N. 76 RICHARD RUSH, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, U. S., London.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON,  
29 November, 1823.

*Sir*, — Your despatches numbered 323, 325, 326, 330, 331, 332, 334 and 336 have been received, containing the Reports of your Conferences, and copies of your confidential Correspondence with M<sup>r</sup> Secretary Canning, in relation to certain proposals made by him tending to a concert of principles, with reference to the Affairs of South America, between the United States and Great Britain, and a combined and candid manifestation of them to the World.

The whole subject has [been] received the deliberate consideration of the President, under a deep impression of its general importance, a full conviction of the high interests and sacred principles involved in it, and an anxious solici-

<sup>1</sup> What is inclosed in brackets of both Adams's and Monroe's papers was omitted in the final form of this despatch.

tude for the cultivation of that harmony of opinions, and unity of object between the British and American Nations, upon which so much of the Peace, and Happiness, and Liberty of the world obviously depend.

I am directed to express to you the President's entire approbation of the course which you have pursued, in referring to your Government the proposals contained in M<sup>r</sup> Canning's private and confidential Letter to you of 20 August. And I am now to signify to you the determination of the President concerning them. A determination which he wishes to be at once candid, explicit, and conciliatory, and which being formed, by referring each of the proposals to the single and unvarying Standard of Right and Wrong, as understood *by us* and maintained by us, will present to the British Government, the whole system of opinions and of purposes of the American Government, with regard to South America.

The first of the *principles* of the British Government, as set forth by M<sup>r</sup> Canning is

“ 1. We conceive the recovery of the Colonies by Spain to be hopeless.”

In this we concur.

The second is

“ 2. We conceive the question of the Recognition of them as Independent States, to be one of time and circumstances.”

We *did* so conceive it, until with a due regard to all the rights of Spain, and with a due sense of our responsibility to the judgment of mankind and of posterity, we had come to the conclusion that the recovery of them by Spain *was hopeless*. Having arrived at that conclusion, we considered that the People of those emancipated Colonies, were *of Right*, Independent of all other Nations, and that it was our duty so to acknowledge them. We did so acknowledge them in



March 1822. From which Time the recognition has no longer been a question *to us*. We are aware of considerations just and proper in themselves which might deter Great Britain from fixing upon the same *Time*, for this recognition, with us; but we wish to press it earnestly upon her consideration, whether, after having settled the point that the recovery of the Colonies by Spain was *hopeless*—and after maintaining at the Cannon's mouth, commercial Relations with them, incompatible with their Colonial Condition while subject to Spain, the *moral* obligation does not necessarily result of recognizing them as Independent States.

“3. We are however by no means disposed to throw any impediment in the way of an arrangement between them and the mother Country, by *amicable Negotiation*.”

Nor are we. Recognizing them as Independent States we acknowledge them as possessing full power, to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things, which Independent States may of right do. Among these an arrangement between them and Spain, by amicable negotiation is one, which far from being disposed to impede, we would earnestly desire, and by every proper means in our power endeavour to promote provided it should be founded on the basis of Independence.<sup>1</sup> But recognizing them as Independent States, we do and shall justly and [*provided their accommodation with Spain be founded on that basis*] necessarily claim in our relations with them political and commercial to be placed upon a footing of equal favour with the most favoured Nation.

“4. We aim not at the possession of any portion of them ourselves.”

“5. We could not see any por-

<sup>1</sup> This phrase is taken from Monroe's amendments.

MONROE'S AMENDMENTS.

amendment proposed to first line,  
<sup>3<sup>a</sup></sup> pa :  
 [“provided their accommodation with Spain *was* be founded on that basis.”]

tion of them transferred to any other Power, with indifference."

In both these positions we fully concur—And we add

That we could not see with indifference any attempt [by one or more powers of Europe to dispose of the Freedom or Independence of those States, without their consent, or against their will.]

[To this principle, in our view of this subject all the rest are subordinate. Without this, our concurrence with Great-Britain upon all the rest would be useless.] It is upon this ground alone as we conceive that a firm and determined stand could now be jointly taken by Great Britain and the United States in behalf of the *Independence of Nations*, and never in the History of Mankind was there a period when a stand so taken and maintained, would exhibit to present and future ages a more glorious example of Power, animated by Justice and devoted to the ends of beneficence.

[With the addition of this principle, if assented to by the British Government, you are authorised to join in any act formal or informal, which shall manifest the concurrence of the two Governments on this momentous occasion. But you will explicitly state that without this basis of Right and moral obligation, we can see no foundation upon which the concurrent action of the two Governments can be harmonized.

If the destinies of South America, are to be trucked and bartered between Spain and her European Allies, by amicable negotiation, or otherwise, without consulting the feelings or the rights of the People who inhabit that portion of our Hemisphere.]

[The ground of Resistance which we would oppose to any *interference* of the European Allies, between Spain and South America, is not founded on any partial interest of

substitute the following after attempt in 6<sup>th</sup> line.

"any attempt by one or more powers of Europe, to restore those new States, to the crown of Spain, or to deprive them, in any manner whatever, of the freedom and independence which they have acquired, [*Much less could we behold with indifference the transfer of those new gov<sup>ts</sup>, or of any portion of the spanish possessions, to other powers, especially of the territories, bordering on, or nearest to the UStates.*"]

omit in next parag<sup>h</sup> the passage marked and substitute the following—

"with a view to this object, it is indispensable that the British gov<sup>t</sup> take like ground, with that which is now held by the UStates,—that it recognize the independence of the new gov<sup>ts</sup>.—That measure being taken, we may then harmonize, in all the [*necessary*] arrangements and acts, which may be necessary for its accomplishment." [*the object.*] It is upon this ground alone, etc. [to the end of the parag<sup>h</sup>.]

omit the residue and substitute something like the following—

[“We have no intention of acquiring any portion of the spanish possessions for ourselves, nor shall we ever do it by force. Cuba is that portion, the admission of which into our union, would be the most eligible, but it is the wish of this gov<sup>t</sup>, that it remain, at least for the present, attached to Spain. We have declared this sentiment publicly. and shall continue to act on it. It could not be admitted into our union, unless it should first declare its independence, and that independence should be acknowledged by Spain, events which may not occur for a great length of time, and which the UStates

our own or of others. If the Colonies belonged to Spain we should object to any transfer of them to other Nations, which would materially affect our interests or rights, but with that exception we should consider Spain as possessing the common Power of disposing of her own Territories. Our present opposition to the disposal of any part of the American Continents by Spain, with her European allies is that they do not belong to Spain, and can no more be disposed of by her, than by the United States.

With regard to the Islands of Cuba and Porto-Rico, to the Inhabitants of which the free Constitution of Spain, as accepted and sworn to by the King has been extended, we consider them as possessing the right of determining for themselves their course of conduct, under the subversion of that constitution, by foreign Military power. Our own interest and wish would be that they should continue in their political connection with Spain under the administration of a free Constitution, and in the enjoyment of their Liberties as now possessed ; we could not see them transferred to any other Power, or subjected to the antient and exploded dominion of Spain, with indifference. We aim not at the possession of them ourselves.]

I am with great Respect, Sir,  
your very humble and obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>

ADAMS'S SUBSTITUTE.

We believe however that for the most effectual [*object*] accomplishment of the object common to both Governments, a perfect understanding with regard to it being established between them, it will be most advisable that they should act separately each making such Representation to the Continental European Allies or either of them, as circumstances may render proper, and mutually communicating to each other the purport of such

will rather discourage than promote.]

On this basis, this gov<sup>t</sup> is willing to move in concert with G. Britain, for the purposes specified.

[with a view however to that object, it [*is submitted*] merits consideration, whether it will not [*be most advantageous to*] contribute most effectually, to its accomplishment, a perfect understanding being established between the two gov<sup>ts</sup>, that they act for the present, & until some eminent danger should occur, separately, each making such representation to the allied powers, or to either of them as shall be deemed most adviseable. Since the receipt of your letters, a communication has been made by Baron T. the Russian minister here, to the following effect. [then state his letter respecting minister etc., and also the informal communication. State also the instructions given to M<sup>r</sup> Middleton, and *those* the purport of those, which will be given to the minister at Paris.] On this subject, it will be proper for you to communicate freely with Mr Canning, as to ascertain fully the sentiments of his gov<sup>t</sup>. He will doubtless be explicit, as to the danger of any movement of the allied powers, or of any, or either of them, for the subjugation, or transfer of any portion of the territory in question, from Spain, to any other power. If there be no such danger, there will be no motive for such concert, and it is only on satisfactory proof of that danger, that you are authorized to provide for it.]

Representations, and all information respecting the measures and purposes of the Allies, the knowledge of which may enlighten the Councils of Great-Britain and of the United States, in this course of policy and towards the honourable end which will be common to them both. Should an emergency occur in which a *joint* manifestation of opinion by the two Governments, may tend to influence the Councils of the European Allies, either in the aspect of persuasion or of admonition, you will make it known to us without delay, and we shall according to the principles of our Government and in the forms prescribed by our Constitution, cheerfully join in any act, by which we may contribute to support the cause of human freedom and the Independence of the South American Nations.

On November 21st these papers were examined in Cabinet meeting. Canning had said that Great Britain would not throw any impediment in the way of an arrangement between the colonies and mother country, by amicable negotiation. He would not object to the colonies, under that method, granting to Spain commercial privileges greater than those given to other nations. This did not meet the wishes of Adams, who desired for the United States the footing of the most favored nation. The President did not understand the full meaning of this wish, and proposed a modifying amendment, "which seemed to admit that we should not object to an arrangement by which special favors, or even a restoration of authority, might be conceded to Spain." This was to accept Canning's position to the full, and perhaps even went further, for the restoration of Spanish authority could hardly have occurred to a man who started from the belief that the recovery of the colonies by Spain was hopeless. Both Calhoun and Adams strenuously objected. "The President ultimately acceded to the substance of the phrase as I had in the first instance made the draft; but finally required that the phraseology of it should be varied. Almost all the other amendments proposed by the President were opposed principally by Mr. Calhoun, who most explicitly preferred my last substituted paragraph to the President's projected amendment. The President did not insist upon any of his amendments which were

not admitted by general consent, and the final paper, though considerably varied from my original draft, will be conformable to my own views.”<sup>1</sup>

One paper still remained to be answered, and it was really the most important of all—the Emperor’s pæan on despotism. Not only was it important as an expression of opinions and policy abhorrent to the American system of government, but it gave Adams the opportunity of making a reply to Europe. Canning’s offer of a joint responsibility, limited it must be added to furthering the ends of Great Britain, was no longer to be considered. As an ally of Great Britain the United States would play a very secondary part. Alone, even against united Europe, America could gain the same result and without departing from a policy of avoiding entangling political alliances with any European power. Monroe was willing to raise a European question by aiding Spain and Greece. Adams avoided such a step and changed the issue into an American question, to be determined by America without the interference of any European government, whether English or continental. In this lies the great merit and strength of Adams’s position. He lifted the question from one of joint action with England to one of individual action of the United States.

At the Cabinet meeting of November 21, Adams outlined his intended reply to the later communications received from Baron Tuvill, a paper to be first communicated verbally and afterwards delivered to him confidentially. “My purpose would be in a moderate and conciliatory manner, but with a firm and determined spirit, to declare our dissent from the principles avowed in those communications; to assert those upon which our own Government is founded, and, while disclaiming all intention of attempting to propagate them by force, and all interference with the political affairs of Europe, to declare our expectation and hope that the European powers will equally abstain from the attempt to spread their principles in the American hemisphere, or to subjugate by force any part of these continents to their will.”<sup>2</sup>

While the President approved this idea, his first draft of his message to Congress showed that he had not comprehended the general drift of the Secretary’s intentions in the conduct of the foreign relations of the United States. In calling the Cabinet meeting for the 21st he had included among the questions to be considered “whether any, and if any, what notice, shall be taken of

<sup>1</sup>*Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 193.

<sup>2</sup>*Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 194.

Greece, and also of the invasion of Spain by France.”<sup>1</sup> Accordingly his draft alluded to recent events in Spain and Portugal, “speaking in terms of the most pointed reprobation of the late invasion of Spain by France, and of the principles upon which it was undertaken by the open avowal of the King of France. It also contained, a broad acknowledgment of the Greeks as an independent nation.”<sup>2</sup> Where was the future Monroe doctrine in all this? It was, as Adams said, a call to arms against all Europe, and for objects of policy exclusively European—Greece and Spain. Protest only led the President to promise to draw up two sketches for consideration, conformable to the two different aspects of the subject. He was ready to adopt either, as his Cabinet might advise. Nothing could better prove how the essential part of Adams’s views had escaped Monroe’s attention. On the next day the Secretary again urged Monroe to abstain from everything in his message which the Holy Alliance could make a pretext for construing into aggression upon them. He should end his administration—“hereafter to be looked back to as the golden age of this republic”—in peace. If the Holy Alliance were determined to make up an issue with the United States, “it was our policy to meet it, and not to make it. . . . If they intend now to interpose by force, we shall have as much as we can do to prevent them, without going to bid them defiance in the heart of Europe.”<sup>3</sup> And Adams again stated the heart of his desired policy in unmistakable words: “The ground that I wish to take is that of earnest remonstrance against the interference of the European powers by force with South America, but to disclaim all interference on our part with Europe; to make an American cause and adhere inflexibly to that” In Gallatin, Adams found a congenial spirit on every point save that of the Greeks; and Gallatin talked with Monroe. The result of the urgency of these two men was that the President modified his paragraphs on foreign affairs, and made them conformable to the spirit of Adams’s position. The result is to be seen in the Presidential message of December 2,

<sup>1</sup>JAMES MONROE TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

*Dear Sir,*—I have given notice to the other members of the adm<sup>l</sup>, who are present, to meet here at one o’clock, at which time you will bring over the draught of the instruction to Mr. Rush for consideration. I mean to bring under consideration, at the same time, the important question, whether any, and if any, what notice, shall be taken of Greece, and also of the invasion of Spain by France. With a view to the latter object, be so good as to bring over with you, a copy of the King’s Speech, to the legislative corps, announcing the intended invasion.

Nov<sup>r</sup> 21. 1823.

J. M.  
—Adams MSS

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 194.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 197.

1823, enunciating the doctrine that has since gone under the name of Monroe.

Adams had prepared the draft of his reply to the Russian communication, as he thought, in such a manner as to "correspond exactly with a paragraph of the President's message which he had read to me yesterday, and which was entirely conformable to the system of policy which I have earnestly recommended for this emergency." It was intended to be a firm, spirited, and yet conciliatory answer to all the communications lately received from the Russian government, and at the same time an unequivocal answer to the proposals made by Canning to Rush.

"It was meant also to be eventually an exposition of the principles of this Government, and a brief development of its political system as henceforth to be maintained: essentially republican, maintaining its own independence, and respecting that of others; essentially pacific—studiously avoiding all involvement in the combinations of European politics, cultivating peace and friendship with the most absolute monarchies, highly appreciating and anxiously desirous of retaining that of the Emperor Alexander, but declaring that having recognized the independence of the South American States, we could not see with indifference any attempt by European powers by forcible interposition either to restore the Spanish dominion on American Continents or to introduce monarchical principles into those countries, or to transfer any portion of the ancient or present American possessions of Spain to any other European Power."<sup>1</sup>

How far these intentions were fulfilled a careful study of the paper itself will show. Like all of Adams's papers it is clearly expressed and most direct to the point.

Observations on the Communications recently received from the Minister of Russia.<sup>2</sup>

The Government of the United States of America is *Republican*. By their Constitution it is provided that "The United States shall guaranty to every State in this Union, a *Republican* form of Government, and shall protect each of them from invasion.

[The principles of this form of Polity are; 1 that the Institution of Government, to be lawful, must be pacific, that is founded upon the consent, and by the agreement of those who are governed; and 2 that each Nation is exclusively the judge of the Government best suited to itself, and that no other Nation, can justly interfere by force to impose a different Government upon it. The first of these principles may be designated, as the principle of *Liberty*—the second as the principle of *National Independence*—They are both Principles of *Peace* and of *Good Will to Men*.]

[A necessary consequence of the second of these principles is that] The United States recognize in other Nations the right which they claim and exercise for themselves, of establishing and of modifying their own

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 199, 200.

<sup>2</sup> What is enclosed between brackets was struck out of the paper.

Governments, according to their own judgments, and views of their interests, not encroaching upon the rights of others.

Aware that the Monarchical principle of Government, is different from theirs the United States, have never sought a conflict with it, for interests not their own. Warranted by the principle of National Independence, which forms one of the bases of their political Institutions, they have desired Peace, Commerce and Honest Friendship with all other Nations, and entangling alliances with none.

From all the combinations of European Politics relative to the distribution of Power, or the Administration of Government the United States have studiously kept themselves aloof. They have not sought, by the propagation of their principles to disturb the Peace, or to intermeddle with the policy of any part of Europe. In the Independence of Nations, they have respected the organization of their Governments, however different from their own, and [Republican to the last drop of blood in their veins], they have thought it no sacrifice of their principles to cultivate with sincerity and assiduity Peace and Friendship even with the most absolute Monarchies and their Sovereigns.

To the Revolution and War which has severed the immense Territories, on the American [*Territories*] continents heretofore subject to the dominion of Spain from the yoke of that power, the United States have observed an undeviating neutrality. So long as the remotest prospect existed that Spain by Negotiation or by arms could recover the possession she had once held of those Countries, the United States forbore to enquire by what title she had held them, and how she had fulfilled towards them the duties of all Governments to the People under their charge. When the South-American Nations, after successively declaring their Independence, had maintained it, until no rational doubt could remain, that the dominion of Spain over them was irrecoverably lost, the United States recognized them as Independent Nations, and have entered into those relations with them commercial and political incident to that Condition—Relations the more important to the interests of the United States, as the whole of those emancipated Regions are situated in their own Hemisphere, and as the most extensive, populous and powerful of the new Nations are in their immediate vicinity; and one of them bordering upon the Territories of this Union.

To the contest between Spain and South America all the European Powers have also remained neutral. The maritime Nations have freely entered into commercial intercourse with the South-Americans, which they could not have done, while the Colonial Government of Spain existed. The neutrality of Europe was one of the foundations upon which the United States formed their judgment, in recognizing the South-American Independence; they considered and still consider, that from this neutrality the European Nations cannot rightfully depart.

Among the Powers of Europe, Russia is one with whom the United States have entertained the most friendly and mutually beneficial intercourse. Through all the vicissitudes of War and Revolution, of which the world for the last thirty years has been the theatre, the good understanding between the two Governments has been uninterrupted. The Emperor Alexander in particular has not ceased to manifest sentiments of Friendship and good-will to the United States from the period of his accession to the throne, to this moment, and the United States on their part, have as invariably shown the interest which they take in his Friendship and the solicitude with which they wish to retain it.



In the communications recently received from the Baron de Tuyll, so far as they relate to the immediate objects of intercourse between the two Governments, the President sees with high satisfaction, the avowal of unabated cordiality and kindness towards the United States on the part of the Emperor.

With regard to the communications which relate to the Affairs of Spain and Portugal, and to those of South America, while sensible of the candour and frankness with which they are made, the President indulges the hope, that they are not intended *either* to mark an *Æra* either of change, in the friendly dispositions of the Emperor towards the United States or of hostility to the principles upon which their Governments are founded; or of deviation from the system of neutrality hitherto observed by him and his allies, in the contest between Spain and America.

To the Notification that the Emperor, in conformity with the *political principles* maintained by himself and his Allies, has determined to receive no Agent from any of the Governments *de facto*, which have been recently formed in the new World it has been thought sufficient to answer that the United States, faithful to *their* political principles, have recognised and now consider them as the Governments of Independent Nations.

To the signification of the Emperor's hope and desire that the United States should continue to observe the neutrality which they have proclaimed between Spain and South-America, the answer has been that the Neutrality of the United States will be maintained, as long as that of Europe, apart from Spain, shall continue and that they hope that of the Imperial Government of Russia will be continued.

[To the confidential communication from the Baron de Tuyll, of the Extract, dated St Petersburg 30 August 1823. So far as it relates to the affairs of Spain and Portugal, the only remark which it is thought necessary to make, is of the great satisfaction with which the President has noticed *that* paragraph, which contains the frank and solemn admissions that "*the undertaking of the Allies, yet demands a last Apology to the eyes of Europe.*" ]

In the general declarations that the allied Monarchs will never compound, and never will even treat with the *Revolution* and that their policy has only for its object by *forcible* interposition to guaranty the tranquillity of *all the States of which the civilised world is composed*, the President wishes to perceive sentiments, the application of which is limited, and intended in their results to be limited to the Affairs of Europe.

That the sphere of their operations was not intended to embrace the United States of America, nor any portion of the American Hemisphere.

And finally deeply desirous as the United States are of preserving the general peace of the world, their friendly intercourse with all the European Nations, and especially the most cordial harmony and goodwill with the Imperial Government of Russia, it is due as well to their own unalterable Sentiments, as to the explicit avowal of them, called for by the communications received from the Baron de Tuyll, to declare

That the United States of America, and their Government, could not see with indifference, the forcible interposition of any European Power, other than Spain, either to restore the dominion of Spain over her emancipated Colonies in America, or to establish Monarchical Governments in those Countries, or to transfer any of the possessions heretofore

or yet subject to Spain in the American Hemisphere, to any other European Power.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE WASHINGTON, 27 November, 1823

When Adams laid before the Cabinet on the twenty-fifth, this draft of his paper, much discussion and opposition were developed. The timidity of Monroe was aroused, and the other members of the Cabinet hesitated. Calhoun questioned whether it would be proper to deliver any such paper to the Russian minister; it contained an ostentatious display of republican principles, might be offensive to the Russian government, and even to that of Great Britain, which would by no means relish so much republicanism. The President's message would be sufficient. "It was a mere communication to our own people. Foreign powers might not feel themselves bound to notice what was said in that. It was like a family talking over subjects interesting to them by the fireside among themselves. Many things might be said there without offense, even if a stranger should come among them and overhear the conversation, which would be offensive if they went to his house to say them."<sup>1</sup>

Wirt, the Attorney-General, raised the point whether the United States would be justified in taking so broadly the ground of resistance to the interposition of the Holy Alliance by force to restore the Spanish dominion in South America. If the Holy Alliance should act in direct hostility against South America, would this country oppose them by war? There was danger in assuming the attitude of menace without meaning to strike. But Adams, while admitting the remote possibility of war, saw no immediate prospect of that event: "The interest of no one of the allied powers would be promoted by the restoration of South America to Spain; that the interest of each one of them was against it, and that if they could possibly agree among themselves upon a partition principle, the only possible bait they could offer to Great Britain for acceding to it was Cuba, which neither they nor Spain would consent to give her; that my reliance upon the co-operation of Great Britain rested not upon her principles, but her interest."<sup>2</sup>

Calhoun was filled with gloomy apprehensions. Having subdued South America, the Allies would turn their attention to the United States, "to put down what had been called the first example of successful democratic rebellion." By taking a firm stand now these intentions might be frustrated, even at the expense of war. And he repeated his suggestion of answering the Russian commu-

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 200.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 203.

nications by the paragraph in the Presidential message. To this Adams gave a conclusive reply.

“The communications from the Russian Minister required a direct and explicit answer. A communication of the paragraph in the President’s message would be no answer, and if given as an answer would certainly be very inconsistent with the position that foreigners have no right to notice it, because it was all said among ourselves. This would be precisely as if a stranger should come to me with a formal and insulting display of his principles in the management of his family and his conduct towards his neighbors, knowing them to be opposite to mine, and as if I, instead of turning upon him and answering him face to face, should turn to my own family and discourse to them upon my principles and conduct, with sharp innuendoes upon those of the stranger, and then say to him, ‘There! take that for your answer. And yet you have no right to notice it; for it was only said to my own family, and behind your back.’”<sup>1</sup>

For three days the discussion was continued, and resulted finally in a victory for Adams, but at the expense of two paragraphs of his draft—those indicated by the brackets. The Secretary fought well to have them retained, and thought the first of them to be the “heart of his paper.” From the principles there given “all the remainder of the paper was drawn. Without them, the rest was a fabric without a foundation.” The President<sup>2</sup> was fearful, and Wirt described the paragraph as a “hornet of a paragraph, and, he thought, would be exceedingly offensive.” Adams in reply could only say that it was the “cream of my paper,” but he felt that the President would not let it pass. Monroe, after forty-eight hours of consideration, gave an opinion:

Nov<sup>r</sup> 27 [1823.]

The direct attack which the parag<sup>h</sup> makes on the recent movements, of the Emperor, and of course, censure, on him, and its tendency to irritate, suggest the apprehension that it may produce an unfavorable effect. The illustration of our principles, is one thing; the doing it, in such a form, bearing directly, on what has passed, and which is avoided in the message, is another. Nevertheless, as you attach much interest to this passage, I am willing that you insert it, being very averse to your omitting anything w<sup>er</sup> you deem so material. J. M.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 208.

<sup>2</sup> JAMES MONROE TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

*Dear Sir*,—I am inclin<sup>d</sup> to think that the second parag<sup>h</sup> had better be omitted, and that such part of the 3<sup>d</sup> be also omitted, as will make that parag<sup>h</sup>, stand, as the second distinct proposition, in our system. The principle of the paper, will not be affected by this modification, and it will be less likely to produce excitement anywhere.

Two other passages, the first in the first page, and the second, in the 3<sup>d</sup> are also marked for omission. J. M.

You had better see the Baron immediately.

Nov<sup>r</sup> 27, 1823.

<sup>3</sup> From the Adams MSS.

But Adams did not include the paragraph, and in an incomplete shape the paper was read to Baron Tuyll.

In a despatch dated November 30, Adams explained to Rush more fully the attitude of the administration on Canning's proposals, making a general résumé of the questions raised, and advancing statements which could not with propriety have been included in a paper intended to be shown to the British minister. He asserted even more distinctly than did the message that American affairs, whether of the northern or of the southern continent, cannot be left "at the disposal of European Powers animated and directed exclusively by European principles and interests." As an exposition of the Monroe doctrine this despatch deserves to rank with the later utterances of Adams, when as President it became necessary to define more clearly the limits of interference or protection to be observed.

No. 77. RICHARD RUSH: Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary U. S. London.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE WASHINGTON 30 November, 1823.

SIR,—The Instructions contained in my Letter dated yesterday were given with a view to enable you to return an explicit answer to the proposals contained in Mr. Secretary Canning's confidential Letter to you of the 20<sup>th</sup> of August last. The object of this despatch is to communicate to you the views of the President with regard to a more general consideration of the affairs of South America; to serve for your government, and to be used according to your discretion, in any further intercourse which you may have with the British Cabinet on this subject.

In reviewing the proposals of Mr. Canning and the discussion of them in your Correspondence and Conferences, the President has with great satisfaction adverted to them, in the light of an *overture* from the British Government, towards a confidential concert of opinions and of operations between us and them, with reference to the countries heretofore subject to Spain in this Hemisphere. In the exposition of the *principles* of the British Government, as expressed in the five positions of Mr. Canning's Letter, we perceive nothing, with which we cannot cheerfully concur with the exception of that which still considers the recognition of the Independence of the Southern Nations, as a question of Time and Circumstances. Confident as we are that the Time is at hand, when Great Britain, to preserve her own consistency must come to this acknowledgment, we are aware that she may perhaps be desirous of reserving to herself the *whole* merit of it with the South-Americans, and that she may finally yield more readily to the decisive act of recognition, when appearing to be spontaneous, than when urged upon her by *any* foreign suggestion. The point itself has been so earnestly pressed in your correspondence and conferences with Mr. Canning, and is so explicitly stated in my despatch of yesterday as *indispensable*, in our view towards a co-operation of the two Governments, upon this important interest, that the President does not think it necessary that you should dwell upon it with much solicitude. The objections exhibited

by Mr. Canning against the measure as stated particularly in your despatches are so feeble, and your answers to them so conclusive, that after the distinct avowal of our sentiments, it may perhaps best conduce to the ultimate *entire* coincidence of purposes between the two Governments to leave the choice of *Time* for the recognition, which Mr. Canning has reserved to the exclusive consideration of the British Ministers themselves.

We receive the proposals themselves, and all that has hitherto passed concerning them, according to the request of Mr. Canning as *confidential*. As a first advance of that character, which has ever been made by the British Government, in relation to the *foreign* affairs between the two Nations, we would meet it with cordiality, and with the true spirit of confidence, which is candour. The observations of Mr. Canning in reply to your remark, that the policy of the United States has hitherto been, entirely distinct and separate from all interference in the complications of European Politics, have great weight, and the considerations involved in them, had already been subjects of much deliberation among ourselves. As a member of the European community Great Britain has relations with all the other powers of Europe, which the United States have not, and with which it is their unaltered determination, not to interfere. But American Affairs, whether of the Northern or of the Southern Continent *can* henceforth not be excluded from the interference of the United States. All questions of policy relating to them have a bearing so direct upon the Rights and Interests of the United States themselves, that they cannot be left at the disposal of European Powers animated and directed exclusively by European principles and interests. Aware of the deep importance of united ends and councils, with those of Great Britain in this emergency, we see no possible basis on which that harmonious concert of measures can be founded, other than the general principle of South-American Independence. So long as Great Britain withholds the recognition of that, we may, as we certainly do concur with her in the aversion to the transfer to any other power of any of the colonies in this Hemisphere, heretofore, or yet belonging to Spain; but the principles of that aversion, so far as they are common to both parties, resting only upon a casual coincidence of interests, in a National point of view *selfish* on both sides, would be liable to dissolution by every change of phase in the aspects of European Politics. So that Great Britain negotiating at once with the European Alliance, and *with us*, concerning America, without being bound by any permanent community of principle. [but only by a casual coincidence of interest with us,<sup>1</sup>] would still be free to accommodate her policy to any of those distributions of power, and partitions of Territory which have for the last half century been the ultima ratio of all European political arrangements. While we, bound to her by engagements, commensurate only with the momentary community of our separate particular interests, and self-excluded from all Negotiation with the European Alliance, should still be liable to see European Sovereigns dispose of American interests, without consulting either with us, or with any of the American Nations, over whose destinies they would thus assume an arbitrary superintendence and controul.

It was stated to you by Mr. Canning that in the event of a proposal for a European Congress, to determine upon measures relating to South

<sup>1</sup> The words enclosed have been struck out in pencil, as evidently a repetition of what had been already expressed.

America, he should propose, that you, as the Representative of the United States, should be invited to attend at the same; and that in the case, either of a refusal to give you that invitation or of your declining to accept it if given, Great Britain would reserve to herself the right of declining also to attend. The President approves your determination not to attend, in case the invitation should be given; and we are not aware of any circumstances under which we should deem it expedient that a Minister of the United States should be authorized to attend at such a Congress if the invitation to that effect should be addressed to this Government itself. We should certainly decline attending unless the South-American Governments should also be invited to attend by *their* Representatives, and as the Representatives of Independent Nations. We would not sanction by our presence any meeting of European Potentates to dispose of American Republics. We shall if such meeting should take place, with a view to any result of hostile action solemnly protest against it, and against all the melancholy and calamitous consequences which may result from it. We earnestly hope that Great Britain will do the same.

It has been observed that through the whole course of the Correspondence and of the Conferences, between Mr. Canning and you, he did not disclose the specific information upon which he apprehended so immediate an interposition of the European Allies, in the affairs of South-America, as would have warranted or required the measure which he proposed to be taken in concert with you, before this Government could be advised of it. And this remark has drawn the more attention, upon observing the apparent coolness and apparent indifference, with which he treated the subject at your last conferences after the peculiar earnestness and solemnity of his first advances. It would have been more satisfactory here, and would have afforded more distinct light for deliberation, if the confidence in which his proposals originated had at once been entire. This suggestion is now made with a view to the future; and to manifest the disposition on our part to meet and return confidence without reserve.

The circumstances of Mr. Gallatin's private concerns having induced him to decline returning to Europe at this time, and the posture of Affairs requiring in the opinion of the President the immediate renewal of Negotiations with France, Mr. James Brown has been appointed to that Mission, and is expected very shortly to proceed upon it.

I am with great Respect etc.

[JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.]<sup>1</sup>

With the submission to Congress on December 2d of the President's annual message, the incident was closed so far as the public utterance of the doctrine was concerned. The message, the two despatches to Rush, and the communication made to the Russian minister crossed the ocean at the same time, and Great Britain was the first of the European powers to know how far the United States had gone in declaring an independent action on South American concerns. The effect was immediate. The stocks of all South American countries rose in the market — one of the most delicate measures of public opinion. Rush wrote on December 27th :

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.

“ But the most decisive blow to all despotick interference with the new States is that which it has received in the President’s Message at the opening of Congress. It was looked for here with extraordinary interest at this juncture, and I have heard that the British packet which left New York the beginning of this month was instructed to wait for it and bring it over with all speed. It is certain that this vessel first brought it, having arrived at Falmouth on the 24th instant. On its publicity in London which followed as soon afterwards as possible the credit of all the Spanish American securities immediately rose, and the question of the final and complete safety of the new States from all European coercion, is now considered as at rest.”

It now remains to give some further evidence of the position of Monroe. The steps by which he was induced to modify his views to accord with those of Adams have been given, and it is seen that as late as November 13th he was entirely unsettled what answer to make to Canning’s propositions; that in the draft of his message he had shown a marked failure to grasp the full meaning of Adams’s arguments and was prepared to enter into European politics on a question entirely European; and that only a few days before the message was sent to Congress did he change his views of the relations of the United States to Europe so as to conform with those of his Secretary of State. While Adams looked upon the matter as closed, and must have felt the full force of his victory in making the influence of the United States thus felt in Europe, Monroe still entertained fears. On sending a copy of the message to Jefferson he wrote on December 4th :

“ I have concurr’d thoroughly with the sentiments expressd in your late letter, as I am persuaded, you will find, by the message, as to the part we ought to act, toward the allied powers, in regard to S<sup>o</sup>. America. I consider the cause of that country, as essentially our own. That the crisis is fully as menacing, as has been supposed, is confirmd, by recent communications, from another quarter, with which I will make you acquainted in my next. The most unpleasant circumstance, in these communications is, that Mr. Canning’s zeal, has much abated of late. Whether this proceeds, from the unwillingness of his gov<sup>t</sup>, to recognize the new gov<sup>t</sup>, or from offers made to it, by the allied powers, to seduce it, into their scale, we know not. We shall nevertheless be on our guard, against any contingency.”<sup>1</sup>

To his son-in-law, Samuel L. Gouverneur, he wrote on the same day, in a like apprehensive tone, as though the country had to fear a grave danger, evidently a remaining trace of the feeling that prompted the first draft of his message. Always rather formal in his manner of expressing his thoughts, he is even more than formal when striving to strike a note of profound import.

“ I send you two copies of the message, better printed than that which I sent yesterday, with the information, which we possess, of the

<sup>1</sup> From the Jefferson MSS.

views of the allied powers, which altho' applicable to S<sup>o</sup> am : , touch us, on principle, it was thought a duty to advert to the subject, and in plain terms. It has been done, nevertheless, in mild, respectful, and friendly terms. Had I omitted to put the country on its guard, and any thing had occurrd of a serious character, I should probably have been censurd as it is they may look before them, and what may be deemed expedient. I shall be glad to hear in what light the warning is viewd.'<sup>1</sup>

A few days later he wrote more fully to Jefferson, and the letter is of sufficient importance to be given in full, for it shows that at last the President is reaching a better understanding of Adams's position.

MONROE TO JEFFERSON.

WASHINGTON, Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—Shortly after the receipt of yours of the 24<sup>th</sup> of October, and while the subject treated in it, was under consideration, the Russian minister, drew the attention of the gov<sup>t</sup> to the same subject, tho' in a very different sense from that in which it had been done by Mr. Canning. Baron Tuyll, announced in an official letter, and as was understood by order of the Emperor, that having heard that the republic of Columbia had appointed a minister to Russia, he wished it to be distinctly understood that he would not receive him, nor would he receive any minister from any of the new gov<sup>ts</sup> de facto, of which the new world had been recently the theatre. On another occasion, he observ'd, that the Emperor had seen with great satisfaction, the declaration of this gov<sup>t</sup>, when those new gov<sup>ts</sup> were recognized, that it was the intention of the UStates, to remain neutral. He gave this intimation for the purpose of expressing the wish of his master, that we would persevere in the same policy. He communicated soon afterwards, an extract of a letter from his gov<sup>t</sup>, in which the conduct of the allied powers, in regard to Naples, Spain, and Portugal, was reviewed, and that policy explain'd, distinctly avowing their determination, to crush all revolutionary movements, and thereby to preserve order in the civilized world. The terms "civilized world" were probably intended to be applied to Europe only, but admited an application to this hemisphere also. These communications were receivd as proofs of candour, and a friendly disposition to the U States, but were nevertheless answer'd, in a manner equally explicit, frank, and direct, to each point. In regard to neutrality it was observ'd, when that sentim<sup>t</sup> was declar'd, that the other powers of Europe had not taken side with Spain—that they were then neutral—if they should change their policy, the state of things, on which our neutrality was declar'd, being alterd, we would not be bound by that declaration, but might change our policy also.<sup>2</sup> Informal notes, or rather a proces verbal, of what passed in conference, to such effect, were exchangd between Mr Adams and the Russian minister, with an understanding however that they should be held confidential.

When the character of these communications; of that from Mr. Canning, and that from the Russian minister, is considered, and the time when made, it leaves little doubt that some project against the new gov<sup>ts</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> From the Monroe MSS. in the New York Public Library.

<sup>2</sup> To this point in thick lines; showing a change of pen, and presumably a change in time, what follows being written at a later day.



is contemplated. In what form is uncertain. It is hoped that the sentiments expressed in the message, will give a check to it. We certainly meet, in full extent, the proposition of Mr. Canning, and in the mode to give it the greatest effect. If his gov<sup>t</sup> makes a similar decl<sup>n</sup>, the project will, it may be presumed, be abandoned. By taking the step here, it is done in a manner more conciliatory with, and respectful to Russia, and the other powers, than if taken in England, and as it is thought with more credit to our gov<sup>t</sup>. Had we mov'd in the first instance in England, separated as she is in part, from those powers, our union with her, being marked, might have produced irritation with them. We know that Russia, dreads a connection between the UStates and G. Britain, or harmony in policy. Moving on our own ground, the apprehension that unless she retreats, that effect may be produced, may be a motive with her for retreating. Had we mov'd in England, it is probable, that it would have been inferr'd that we acted under her influence, and at her instigation, and thus have lost credit as well with our southern neighbours, as with the allied powers.

There is some danger that the British gov<sup>t</sup>, when it sees the part we have taken, may endeavour to throw the whole burden on us, and profit, in case of such interposition of the allied powers; of her neutrality, at our expense. But I think that this would be impossible after what has passd on the subject; besides it does not follow, from what has been said, that we should be bound to engage in the war, in such event. Of this intimations may be given, should it be necessary. A messenger will depart for Engl<sup>d</sup> with despatches for Mr. Rush in a few days, who will go on to S<sup>t</sup> Petersburg with others to Mr. Middleton. And considering the crisis, it has occur'd, that a special mission, of the first consideration from the country, directed to Engl<sup>d</sup> in the first instance, with power, to attend, any congress, that may be conven'd, on the affrs of S<sup>o</sup> am: or Mexico, might have the happiest effect. You shall hear from me further on this subject.

Very sincerely your friend

[no signature.]

Endorsed "rec<sup>d</sup> Dec. 11."<sup>1</sup>

With this letter I may close the present paper, leaving to a subsequent study the development of the doctrine given by Adams while President. That the authorship of what passes under the name of the Monroe doctrine belonged to Adams has been surmised by all who have treated of the occasion of the first utterances. Plumer, a contemporary, claimed the credit for Adams; Dr. Welling, no mean authority in such matters, as he went back to original sources as far as possible, asserted it as his conclusion; and Reddaway does the same. But none of those writers knew of the papers now used for the first time, papers that have slumbered in the archives at Quincy, where they have been so carefully preserved. They illuminate the pages of the *Memoirs* covering this period, and while permitting us to interpret the sentences of that record, they also bring forcibly before us the part that Adams played in not

<sup>1</sup> From the Jefferson MSS. in the Department of State, Washington, D. C.

only framing an American policy, but in forcing its acceptance upon an unwilling and fearsome President and Cabinet. It is useless to speculate upon what might have been the course pursued had Adams not been where he was. Monroe's career was one series of blunders and failures, a succession of performances which would have ruined any man not resting upon a tradition, a party and a state. He had undone himself in France under Washington; in France and England under Jefferson he had been discredited; in Spain he had failed; and in the war of 1812 he had done nothing. That such a man could have stood up against Europe alone is inconceivable, and there was no person in the Cabinet, except Adams, who would have given him support in such measure. To originate the idea, to carry it in the face of all opposition, to bring Monroe to its support and make him the spokesman—this was distinctly the work of Adams. It is needless to seek for the paragraphs of Monroe's message embodying this doctrine in the expectation of finding them in Adams's writing. It is enough to follow the course of events in the light of these new state papers to know that the Monroe doctrine was the work of John Quincy Adams.

WORTHINGTON CHAUNCEY FORD.