THE ACQUISITION OF TEXAS

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Preface

The Missouri question aroused a sectional struggle which came near causing a rupture between the states. From 1820 down to 1836 when the bitter feeling reached its peak in the gag resolutions, the slavery question overshadowed all other national questions. With feeling and attention so centered on the slavery question, it was natural that violent prejudices should color the accounts of early writers on the Texas question.

The colonization of Texas began in 1821 and Texan independence was achieved in 1836. Thus this period of Texas history coincided with the most bitter period of the abolitionist movement. The abolitionist viewed events in Texas as the results of a conspiracy on the part of the slave states to regain what they had lost in the compromise of 1820. And it was not until recent years that historians like E.C.Barker, G.P.Garrison, J.H.Smith, J.H.Latane, and others began to question the traditional view which had been developed by the antebellum period to explain the motives for every movement in terms of the slavery controversy. These men have come to interpret the colonization of Texas as a natural phase of the westward movement; the revolution as the inevitable result of the racial inheritances of two conflicting civilizations; and the annexation of Texas a result of the free choice of the Texan people to become again a part of their native country.

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H. A. M.

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Introduction

The acquisition of the Mexican cession re-opened the slavery question and started a new phase of the great sectional debate which hastened, if it did not make inevitable, the Civil War. The traditional view arising from the accounts colored by violent prejudices of contemporary anti-slavery agitators came to hold that the annexation of Texas and the resulting war with Mexico was a conspiracy of slave-holders to acquire "bigger pens for niggers." Every one is familiar with the views so effectively expressed in the Biglow Papers by James Russell Lowell.

In the early part of the war with Mexico, abolitionists and other anti-slavery advocates made bitter accusations that the colonization, revolution, and annexation of Texas was a diabolical conspiracy on the part of slavocracy to acquire more territory for slavery and maintain a supremacy in the national councils.

Benjamin Lundy published in 1836, at the close of the Texas revolution, a pamphlet entitled:

> The War In Texas; a review of facts and circumstances, showing that this contest is the result of a long premeditated crusade against the government set on foot by slave holders, land speculators, etc, with the view of re-establishing, extending and perpetuating the system of slavery and the slave trade in the Republic of Mexico.

The migration to Texas came close on the heels of the Missouri Compromise and the first point in Lundy's argument was that this migration was promoted by an aggressive

slavocracy which sought to compensate for the loss of the wide upper part of the Louisiana purchase which lay north of the line thirty-six degrees thirty minutes north latitude and from which slavery was excluded.

Lundy furnished material for J.Q. Adams's stinging speeches and drew authority from them in turn to ballast his own productions; and historians for half a century rested complacently on both, with no uncomfortable pricking of the inquisitive, critical instinct which they applied to the analysis of other sources and other subjects.

It is the purpose of this study to examine the facts concerning the colonization, revolt, and annexation of Texas with a view of ascertaining to what extent slavery was a motive.

The Colonization of Texas

Everyone is familiar with the fact that the westward movement and the pioneer spirit has been a unique factor in determining the history of the United States. It was the westward movement of pioneers that brought the early colonists to the Atlantic sea-board. Westward across the Atlantic they came seeking political, economic or religious freedom. The same bold spirit led them westward through the mountains and down the branches of the Mississippi river. Steadily and constantly the frontier moved westward.

From 1607 to 1819 the American frontier had moved from the Atlantic sea-board to the Sabine. The Treaty of Paris in 1783 had given Americans a generous area of more than three quarters of a million square miles, extending from the Atlantic to the Mississippi and from the Great Lakes and the St Lawrence to the thirty-first parallel. In 1803 this area was doubled by the Louisiana purchase. During 1810-1813 we occupied all of West Florida. The treaty with Spain in 1819 fixed the western boundary at the Sabine river. By that time the frontier had reached the boundary and the western movement was being damed back.

Just beyond the international boundary lay the unoccupied lands described by Senator Benton as follows:[1]

> A most delicious country; fertile, bountiful prairies covered with grass and flowers; vast meadows and most delightful champaign country; dry, pure, elastic air;

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1. E.C. Barker, Mexico and Texas, p. 16.

> springs of sweet waters; clear and rapid streams; no swamps; abundance of buffalo, horses, and deer. Such are the exclamations - such the testimony - of the companions of La Salle in 1685 - such the early pretensions of Texas to the character of salubrity as well as of beauty and fertility, which the lapse of a century and a half has confirmed and established. Texas - in fact 'the north of Italy,' the 'south of France,' of North America; and made so by the same causes which make northern Italy and southern France the paradise of Europe - the proximity of mountains covered with snow; elevated surfaces; clear shores; due interspersion of hills and valleys, of woodland and prairie; and complete openness to the reception of the sea breeze. The snowy mountains lie in the northwest; the hills of San Saba traverse the length of Texas parallel to the course of Red River . . . and this snowcapped mountain and extended ridge of hills, approaching nearer to the sea than any other high lands in our part of North America, with a complete exemption from swamps, give to this favored region that peculiar elasticity of atmosphere and salubrity of climate which was remarked by the first explorers, and is experienced by the latest settlers.

In 1819 the American pioneer was at the door of this veritable paradise. Behind him was the habit, two centuries old, of westward migration. This alone is sufficient to explain the motive for the settlement of Texas. Yet two other factors contributed a powerful impulse; the panic of 1819 and the land system of the United States.

The economic conditions resulting from the panic of 1819 are illustrated in letters of Moses Austin to his son who was attending school near Lexington, Kentucky.[2] In August, 1819, he wrote: "Nothing can equal the general distress for money - I hope to send you some next mail, I cannot this." On February 2, 1820, he sent the boy twenty dollars - "It's the best and only money now to be had in this country." A week later he

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2. The Austin Papers, II, 354-355

wrote: "I have inclosed you a Ten Dollar Note on the Bank of Tennessee. I am sorry I could not send you better money but there is no money but State Bank Tennessee and State Bank Kentucky, and Missouri bank bills to be had in this country." On February 23: "I was in hopes I could by this mail forwarded you fifty dollars, but I could not obtain the money I had expected. Inclosed I send you five dollars Nashville money. . . . You must try to get the Nashville money exchanged or get some person in Lexington to forward it to Nashville and send back Kentucky money. There is no other way to manage."

The effect of the panic passed slowly in the West. A letter to Stephen F. Austin at the end of 1824 illustrates:[3]

> I can do nothing more than live. If there is the least appearance of my making money, directly there is an Execution and Disconsirts all my plans, so that I have Intirely quit Trying for anything more than to Make what we can comfortably live on. . . . My boys are got to be able to Do business in their own Names; So that they cannot take everything as they have done before.

In the face of such trying times the people naturally believed that the government should give relief, but such was not the policy of the government. From 1800 to 1820 the price of public land was fixed by act of congress at the minimum of two dollars an acre payable in four installments. An act of 1820 reduced the price to a dollar and twentyfive cents an acre but required the whole amount in cash - a provision which put government land beyond the reach of all except the wealthy.[4]

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3. Ibid, p. 915.

4. Barker, op. cit., p. 18.

Contrast this illeberal land policy of the United States with the inducements offered by the Mexican government. The national law under which all foreign settlements, except Austin's first colony, were made in Texas was enacted by the Mexican congress on August 18, 1824. It fixed certain general regulations for the administration of the public lands and then transferred the respective states the right and duty of developing the details of a colonization policy. The most important restrictions imposed upon the states by the federal act were:[5]

> (1) That foreigners should not be settled within twenty leagues of the national boundary nor within ten leagues of the coast without the concurrent approval of both the state and federal executives;
>
> (2) That no individual should be allowed to hold title in his own person to more than forty-nine thousand acres of land; and
>
> (3) that congress reserved authority to stop at discretion immigration from any particular nation.

The legislature of Coahuila and Texas passed a liberal colonization law on March 24, 1825. Heads of families fulfilling the easy requirements of this law could obtain 4,428 acres of land for the nominal fee of thirty dollars, payable to the state in installments of four, five, and six years. Clerical expenses stamped paper for the title, surveyors charges, and other fees ran the total cost of such a grant to about two hundred dollars. To stimulate the rapid settlement of vacant lands, the law further provided for the

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5. Barker, on. cit., p. 12.

employment of immigration agents called empressarios. Such agents could obtain exclusive contracts for terms of six years to settle stipulated numbers of families in designated areas.[6]

The contrast between these two land policies explains the letter of Jonas Harrison to Austin on December 8, 1832.[7]

> The system of land sales in those states (the United States) has long been a subject about which feverish sensibility and rather a rude spirit of domination has generally prevailed. If the government there would in time have radically changed it, and checked the progress of what every one individually pronounced an evil, . . . we had most of us never seen Texas.

Stephen F. Austin more than once expressed the opinion that the worst fate that could befall Texas would be for the United States to acquire the territory and introduce its land system. A letter from Austin to J.F. and E.M. Perry dated March 28, 1830 shows Austin's attitude on this matter.[8]

> Pay no attention to rumors and silly reports, but push on as fast as possible. We have nothing to fear from this government nor from any other quarter except from the United States of the North. If that Govt. should get hold of us and introduce its land system, etc., thousands who are now on the move, and have not yet secured their titles would be totally ruined. The greatest misfortune that could befall Texas at this moment would be a sudden change by which any of the emigrants would be thrown upon the liberality of the congress of the United States of the North. Theirs would be a forlorn hope. I have no idea of any change unless it be effected by arbitrary force, and I have too much confidence in the magnanimity of my native country to suppose that its government would resort to

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6. Ibid, p. 13.

7. The Austin Papers, II, 900.

8. Ibid.

> that mode of extending its already unwieldy frame over the territory of its friend and neighbor and sister republic.

Essentially the same ideas were expressed by Austin in a letter to Musquiz, the political chief at San Antonio:[9]

> The National government cannot give title to one single individual for even one vara of public land to a foreign power. . . . One of the objects of the Government of the North in seeking to acquire Texas is to derive revenue from the sale of our public lands, and if we should be transferred to that government without the previous necessary guarantees, many individuals who have received concessions under the old government and under this would lose their lands under the pretext of not having complied with the trivial details under the grant. . . . It is my duty to inform you as my political chief of the public opinion here concerning a particular of such grave importance to all the inhabitants of Texas and of so much interest to the government, for it is possible that in Mexico they might believe that the new colonists desire to be transferred to the Government of the North, and influenced by this mistaken belief, they might perhaps take some steps very injurous to Texas and the true interests of the State of Coahuila and Texas and all the nation. The new colonists desire no such thing, nor would they in any manner consent to a transfer to the Government of the North without the greatest number of previous guarantees.

These statements would hardly be expected from one who was leading a conspiracy to secure more slave territory for the United States; furthermore the facts indicate that Austin was not a pro-slavery advocate but was anti-slavery in sentiment and, like most of the early colonists of Texas, a man imbued with the spirit of the pioneer.

This pioneer spirit of Austin's had been handed down through five successive generations since 1638 when Richard Austin, his wife and two sons, left the south of England and sought religious freedom in the New World.

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9. Ibid, p. 386.

Moses Austin, the father of Stephen F. Austin, following the urge of the pioneer spirit, moved from New Haven to Philadelphia, from Philadelphia to Richmond, and from Richmond to Missouri.[10]

Many of the other early colonists to Texas, like Austin, came to Texas from a slave state but had immigrated originally from a free state. There is no precise information available to show whence the three hundred families of Austin's first colony immigrated, but in a tabulation of 902 applicants from July 1825 to July 1831, the records of the general land office of Texas gives the following:[11]

Louisiana ------	201	New York ------	39
Alabama --------	111	Kentucky ------	37
Arkansas --------	90	Ohio ----------	28
Tennessee ------	89	Pennsylvania --	14
Missouri -------	72	Georgia -------	14
Mississippi ----	56	Virginia ------	13

It will be seen that the slave states have a rather large lead in this tabulation, but these figures certainly could not be interpreted as showing a conspiracy to secure Texas as a slave state. They do show clearly that the states at the top of the list are states whose proximity to Texas made it possible for men of small means, small farmers, back country men of the Jackson-democrat type, to immigrate from them to Texas. It will also be seen that New York is above Kentucky and Ohio above Virginia and Georgia.

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10. E.C. Barker, The Life of Stephen F. Austin, p. 5.

11. Records of General Land Office of Texas, 54-8-17.

An official census of the colony taken in the fall of 1825 but reported in March 1826 showed 1,800 souls, of whom 443 were slaves. Eleven families owned 271 of these while the remaining 172 were distributed among 58 families with from one to eight in a family.[12]

The following extract from a letter written by General Teran to President Victoria gives the views of one of Mexico's most patriotic and cultured public men:[13]

> The majority of the North Americans established here under the Spanish government - and these are few - are of two classes. First, those who are fugitives from our neighbor republic and bear the unmistakable earmarks of thieves and criminals; these are located between Nacogdoches and the Sabine, ready to cross and recross this river as they see the necessity of separating themselves from the country in which they have just committed some crime; however, some of these have reformed and settled down to an industrious life in the new country. The other class of new settlers are poor laborers who lack the four or five thousand dollars necessary to buy a sito of land in the north, but having the ambition to become land holders - one of the strong virtues of our neighbors - have come to Texas. Of such as this latter class is Austin's colony composed. They are for the most part industrious and honest; and appreciate this country. Most of them own at least one or two slaves. Unfortunately the emigration of such is made under difficulties, because they lack the means of transportation, and to accomplish this emigration it has become necessary to do what was not necessary until lately; there are empresarios of wealth who advance them the means for their transportation and establishment.
>
> The wealthy Americans of Louisiana and other western states are anxious to secure land in Texas for speculation, but they are restrained by laws prohibiting slavery. If these laws should be repealed - which God forbid - in a few years Texas would be a powerful state which could compete in production and wealth with Louisiana.

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12. Ibid.

13. Alleine Howren, "Causes and Origin of The Decree of April 6, 1830," South Western Historical Quarterly, XVI, 385.

Austin, himself, was the owner of but a single slave, an old decreped woman as he described her, and on several occasions he expressed himself as being adverse to the principle of slavery.[14]

Garrison gives the following list of northern immigrants prominent in the affairs of Texas.[15]

David G. Burnett, Provisional President 1836.
Timothy Pilsbury and David S. Kaufman, first United States congressmen from Texas.
R.T. Wheeler, one of the first judges of Texas Supreme Court.
Ashbel Smith, minister to England.
E.M. Pease, at one time governor of the state.

Slaves were brought into Texas in greater numbers after independence and after annexation, but the majority of immigrants were still non-slaveholders, and the slaves constituted only 27% of the total population of Texas in 1850 and only 30% in 1860.[16]

The majority of the immigrants to Texas, then, were not slaveholders. It was the lure of cheap land that brought these men to Texas. The Austin papers give many letters from prospective immigrants which show the character of the early settlers. Many of these letters indicate that the first rush of immigrants was usually with little or no knowledge of conditions in Texas. They were men who had everything to gain and nothing to lose. But such was not the

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14. See letter from Austin to Durst quoted below.

15. G.P. Garrison, Westward Expansion, p. 84.

16. C.S. Boucher, "In Re That Aggressive Slavocracy," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, VIII, 23.

ease with the slave owner. He was unwilling to risk his property by taking it into territory where the status of slavery was uncertain.

A letter from a prospective immigrant in Mississippi shows the attitude of the slaveholder in regard to Texas:[17]

> The emigrating, or Texas fever prevails to an extent that your wishes would no more than anticipate. It has pervaded all classes of the citizens of this state and the adjoining, from the man with capital to the man that wishes to acquire a living. Nothing appears at present to prevent a portion of our wealthy planters from emigrating immediately to the province of Texas but the uncertainty now prevailing with regard to the subject of slavery. . . . If slavery is tolerated by the new constitution I could wish, for benefit of yourself, and others, that you would petition the government for extension of territory. . . . Three hundred families more can be settled in less than two years.

Another wrote from Alabama:

> Our most valuable inhabitants here own negroes. I am therefore anxious to know what the laws are upon that subject. Can they be introduced as the laboring servants of emigrants? and (if so) when are they free? They are an important species of property here and our planters are not willing to remove without they can first be assured of their being secured to them by the laws of your government.

These letters are typical and show that the slaveholder would go to Texas if their slaves were safe, but they were not willing to risk their property in a zealous crusade for the expansion of slavery.

A review of the facts concerning the attitude of the Mexican government toward slavery shows the fears which kept the slaveholder out of Texas were not without foundation.

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17. E.C. Barker, "Slavery and the Colonization of Texas," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, II, p. 17.

Moses Austin's permit to establish the first Anglo-American colony in Texas was granted by Spanish authority. The laws of the Indies recognized slavery and the subject did not arise in connection with his petition.

In August, 1821, Stephen F. Austin secured permission to carry out his father's contract. This permission was granted and Austin then presented a plan for distributing land to colonists in proportion to the size of the family and fifty acres for each slave. The governor approved of this plan and later Austin increased the amount of land for each slave to eighty acres.[18]

Before Austin could bring in any colonists under this contract, the Mexicans had gained their independence from Spain and Austin felt it necessary to go to Mexico City to have the grant affirmed by the new government.

When Austin arrived in Mexico City he found several other applicants besieging the government for colonization contracts in Texas and the Mexican congress considering a national colonization policy.[19]

The Mexican congress at this time was very much under the influence of the liberalism that had been spreading over the world ever since the French Revolution. Mexico had just succeeded in throwing off the yoke of Spain and the watch words, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity were in the minds

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18. The Austin Papers, I, p. 407-418.

19. Ibid, I, p. 504-505.

of the members of the new congress. Nevertheless they were also much influenced by the success of the government of the United States and were solicitous of securing immigration to develop the vast plains of Texas. Expediency triumphed for a time over idealism and a majority report returned a bill which would allow settlers to bring in slaves but children born to slaves in the empire after the publication of the law should be free at the age of fourteen. A minority bill at the same time declared uncompromisingly against slavery.[20]

After more than a month of wrangling on these bills the emperor forcibly dismissed congress and invested forty-five picked deputies with the legislative power. These deputies then revived and passed the original colonization bill. Article 30 of this bill stated the slavery provision.[21]

> After publication of this law there can be no sale or purchase of slaves that may be introduced into the empire. The children of slaves born in the empire shall be free at fourteen years of age.

Austin's influence in the passage of this law can be seen in one of Austin's letters to Jose Felix Trespalacious, governor of Texas:[22]

> I am certain that if I had not remained at the capital to agitate this subject and to importune continually the members of the junta, and particularly the members of the colonization committee, the law would never have been passed. . . . With the greatest effort I succeeded in obtaining an article concerning slaves, and although it is very different from what

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20. Barker, op. cit. p. 7.

21. H.P.N. Gammel, The Laws of Texas 1822-1909, I, p. 30.

22. The Austin Papers, I, p. 554-567.

> I wished, it is better than nothing. . . . This article passed with much difficulty. Never would an article have been passed by the Congress permitting slavery in the empire for a moment in any form whatever. After the dissolution of Congress I talked to each individual member of the Junta of the necessity that existed in Texas, Santander, and all the other unpopulated provinces, for the new colonists to bring their slaves; and in this way I procured the article.

Inturbide, the emperor, signed the law on January 4, 1823 but the overthrow of the government by Santa Anna led to the establishment of a republic and the suspension of all laws passed during the reign of Inturbide.

On July 13, 1824 the Republican Congress passed a law which produced a wave of uneasiness among the colonists. The following is a translation of the first two of the four articles of the law:[23]

> 1. Commerce and traffic in slaves, proceeding from any country and under any flag whatsoever, is forever prohibited in the territory of the United Mexican States.
>
> 2. Slaves that are introduced contrary to the tenor of the above article are free in virtue of the mere act of treading Mexican territory.

Well might the owners of slaves and those who believed that slave labor was necessary for the development of Texas be uneasy about this law. At first thought it seemed to abolish slavery in Texas completely. But Austin was somewhat reassured by Juan Antonio Padilla, the secretary of state, at Saltillo, who gave the opinion that it could be reasonably interpreted only as prohibiting the slave trade. Mexican lawyers, the secretary said, were fond of quoting

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23. L.G. Bugbee, "Slavery in Early Texas," Political Science Quarterly, XIII, p. 398.

the maxim that "what is not forbidden is permitted," and he believed, therefore, that settlers introduced under the new contracts with the state could bring in slaves for their own use and that any emancipation law of the future must provide compensation for the owner.[24]

In July, 1826, Austin was informed that work on the state constitution was approaching a critical stage. Ellis H. Bean, a correspondent, wrote from Mexico City that emancipation would certainly pass at Saltillo, but in his illiterate way outlined a plan for evading the effect of the law:[25]

> But there is a way your settlers can Stop in all But the sooner the Better that is to Gow in persens of and Alcalde stating that this Nigro cost you so much and when he Pays it by labor Don you have no charge against him he Discounts so much a month and other hirid Persons a small sum so that he will be the same to you as Before and it will be no more notised.

At the same time the political chief of Texas at San Antonio was deploring the Slavery Article, which he regarded as one of the calamitous results of the union with Coahuila. He advised a protest from all the inhabitants of Texas and pledged himself to do his utmost for its consideration at Saltillo.[26]

As reported by the committee on the constitution, the slavery article read as follows:[27]

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24. The Austin Papers, I, p. 1135.

25. Ibid, I, p. 1368.

26. Ibid, I, p. 1407.

27. Bugbee, op. cit. p. 407.

> The state prohibits slavery absolutely and forever in all its territory, and slaves now in the state shall be free from the day the constitution is published in this capital. A law shall indemnify those who owned them at the time of publication.

Austin, Saucedo, the political chief at San Antonio, Baron de Bastrop, the representative of Texas in the legislature, and others who were interested in the matter did what they could to modify this report.[28]

The result was that the article, as finally passed on Janurary 31, 1827, read as follows:[29]

> Art. 13. From and after the promulgation of the constitution in the capital of each district, no one shall be born a slave in the state and after six months the introduction of slaves under any pretext shall not be permitted.

By this law it seemed that the status of slave property belonging to settlers already in Texas was reasonably sure, but unless some such method as that suggested by Ellis H. Bean could be carried on, no more slave owners could be induced to come to Texas.

Through the influence of Austin, Musquiz, Saucedo's successor, and Jose Antonio Navarro, a member of the committee on colonization, the following law was passed:[30]

> The legislature of the State of Cuahuila and Texas taking into consideration the scarcity of laborers and servants for agricultural purposes, and being desirous to promote the general advancement in all the various

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28. The Austin Papers, I, 1401, 1407, 1409, 1422, 1430, 1445, 1429, 1461, 1470, 1473, 1507.

29. Bugbee, op. cit. p. 407

30. Gammel, op. cit. Decree No. 56. Vol. I, p. 213.

branches of industry, have decreed as follows,

> All contracts not contrary to the laws of this state made in foreign countries between emigrants to or inhabitants of this State and servants or hierlings introduced by them are guaranteed as valid in this state.

By this decree the Texas settler developed a method of evading the law. He merely took the trouble to make a practically non-terminable contract with his slaves before he crossed the Sabine.[31] The decree effectively secured to the master the absolute control of the servant's labor, yet it left unmentioned the obnoxious word "slave", and thus did not outrage the Mexican's theory of equality of men.

Such was the status of slavery in Texas when in August 1829, President Guerrero was invested with extraordinary military authority in order to concentrate the resources of the nation to repel a Spanish invasion. General Tornel persuaded the President to take advantage of this military dictatorship to issue on September 15 a proclamation abolishing slavery through out the republic, except in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.

This decree was like a bolt from the blue in its suddenness and its effect on the people of Texas who learned of it. Musquiz, the political chief, drew up a petition asking exemption from the decree for Texas. In his petition he argued that the right of the colonists to hold slaves was specifically recognized by the act legalizing Austin's contract; subsequently both Federal and State colonization

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31. Niles Register, XXXIV, p. 334.
Cited by Howerin, op. cit. p. 387.

laws invited immigrants to settle in the country and guaranteed their property; slavery was one form of property indispensable to the colonists; slaves were already slaves before coming to Mexico, neither people nor government made them slaves; fatal consequences and disturbance of public order would follow publication of the decree.

Governor Viesca asked the president to exempt Texas from the decree and declared he would have done so even without the petition of the political chief, because the advancement of Coahuila was so dependent upon that of Texas.[32]

Navarro wrote to Austin on October 29, 1829:[33]

> We have already written very strongly to the government and to friends who can exert great influence for the repeal of such a law. We have also the satisfaction of having received by today's mail letters from some friends of the best deputies of Saltillo in which (they say) they are preparing to notice the decree in print, even before knowing what we have to say about it here. Thus you may believe that the best men of the state oppose such a law, which betrays justice and good faith.

Musquiz had written Austin of the decree, enjoining him to the strictest secrecy until the result of his petition for exemption should be known. In some unexplained way, however, a copy of the document reached the alcalde of Nacogdoches and caused consternation there, though he too, withheld it from official publication.

John Durst, a prominent citizen of Nacogdoches, wrote frantically to Austin:[34]

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32. Barker, op. cit. p. 25.

33. The Austin Papers, Cited by Barker, op. cit. p. 23.

34. Ibid.

In the name of God what shall we do? For God sakes advise me on the subject by the return mail. We are ruined forever should this measure be adopted.

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To this frenzied appeal Austin wrote:

What the people of Texas have to do is to represent to the government through the Ayuntamientos or some other channel, in a very respectful manner that agreeably to the constitution, and the colonization laws all their property is guaranteed to them without exceptions in the most solemn and sacred manner. That they brought their slave property into the country and have retained it here, under the faith of that guarantee, and in consequence of a special invitation publically given to emigrants by the government in the colonization law to do so. That they have taken an oath to defend the constitution and are bound to do so. That the constitution of the state expressly recognizes the right of property in slaves by allowing six months after its publication for their introduction into the state. That they will defend it and with it their property.

There ought to be no vociferous and visionary excitement or noise about this matter. Our course is a very plain one - calm, deliberate, dispationate, inflexible, firmness; and not windy and ridiculous blowing and wild threats, and much less anything like opposition to the Mexican constitution, nothing of that kind will do any good, it will in fact be unjustifiable, and will never be approved by me but on the contrary opposed most decidedly. I will not violate my duty as a Mexican citizen.

The constitution must be both our shield, and our arms; under it, and with it, we muct constitutionally defend ourselves and our property.

The chief of department Don Ramon Musquiz, has taken a firm and noble stand. He has suspended the publication of said decree and has represented in a very able manner against it. If he should finally be compelled to publish and circulate it, the Ayuntamientos must then take an unanimous, firm, and constitutional stand. The people will unanimously support them.

I know nothing of the men who compose the Ayuntamiento of Nacogdoches, if they are true patriots and true friends to themselves and to Texas they will not suffer that decree to be published or circulated in that Municipality and, they will take the stand I have indicated or some other that will preserve the constitution and our constitutional rights from open, and direct violation.

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35. Ibid.

> These are my ideas on the matter. I have said the same to my friends in Bexar, and when the decree arrives officially, (which it has not yet) I shall say the same to the Govt. What I do in this matter will be done openly. Mexico has not within its whole domain a man who w would defend its independence, the union of its territory, and all its constitutional rights sooner than I would, or be more ready and willing to discharge his duties as a Mexican citizen; one of the first and most sacred of those duties is to protect my constitutional rights, and I will do it, so far as I am able. I am the owner of one slave only, an old decreped woman, not worth much, but in this matter I should feel that my constitutional rights as a Mexican were just as much infringed, as they would be if I had a thousand, it is the principle and not the amount, the latter makes the violation more aggravated, but, not more illegal or unconstitutional.

On December 2, Augustine Viesca, Guerrero's secretary of relations, wrote the governor that:[36]

> The president has been pleased to accede to the solicitation of your Excellency and declare the department of Texas exempted from the general disposition comprehended in said decree (of September 15, 1829). Therefore his excellency declares that no change must be made as respects the slaves that legally exist in that part of your state.

Considering this shifting policy regarding the status of slavery, it is readily seen why slaveholders who owned a fortune in slaves were unwilling to emigrate to Texas.

The efforts to prevent the execution of laws inimical to slavery were pursued by all who had the interest of Texas at heart. Viesca, Musquiz, Navarro, and in fact "the best men of the state" - whether native Mexican or Anglo-American - opposed these laws. This was not because they were in sympathy with the institution of slavery, but, as is clearly seen from the correspondence quoted above, because they believed that slave labor was essential to the development of Texas.

Austin's letter to Durst throws much light on the attitude and character of its author. If Austin was sincere, and there are many reasons, some of which will appear later, to believe that he was, he was a loyal and patriotic Mexican citizen who was "willing to defend the independence and union of the territory of Mexico."

The letter to Durst also indicates that Austin's strong stand against the president's decree was not because of sympathy for the institution of slavery but because of the principle of good faith and constitutional right. That he was not in sympathy with the institution of slavery will become even more evident as we consider further events and correspondence.

Prior to 1830 Austin had been a leader in the struggles to prevent laws opposed to the interest of slaveholders. His motives were defense of constitutional rights, as stated above, and to provide Texas with labor which was necessary for its development. Back of both of these motives was his controlling principle which was always the advancement of Texas.

On April 6, 1830, there was passed a federal law which recognized existing slavery, but forbade further introduction of slaves, and prohibited further settlement of emigrants from the United States in Texas. Austin protested vigorously against the exclusion of Americans, but declared the slavery article to be "founded in justice and in the well being of the state."[37]

This statement from Austin seems, at first thought, to be inconsistent with his earlier efforts in behalf of slavery for Texas, but his real convictions concerning slavery seem always to have been averse to the institution.

In a letter to a cousin, Henry Austin, who had been discussing the possibility of the transfer of Texas to the United States, Austin had said that he would oppose such a change unless he could have certain guarantees, among them the perpetual exclusion of slavery from Texas.[38]

He wrote even more strongly to Thomas F. Leaming of Philadelphia. One of the reasons, he said, which were causing him to think of the advantages of Swiss and German immigrants, aside from their character and industry was that[39]

> they have not in general that horrible mania for speculation which is so prominent a trait in the English and North American character, and above all they will oppose slavery. The idea of seeing such a country as this overrun by slave population almost makes me weep. It is in vain to tell a North American that the white population will be destroyed some fifty or eighty years hence by the negros. . . . To say anything to them as to the justice of slavery, or its demoralizing effects on society, is only to draw down ridicule upon the person who attempts it. In the beginning of this settlement I was compelled to hold out the idea that slavery would be tolerated, and I succeeded in getting it tolerated for a time by the Govt. I did this to get a start, for otherwise it would have been next to impossible to have started at all, for I had to draw on Louisiana and Mississippi, slave states, for the first immigrants. Slavery is now most positively prohibited by our Constitution and by a number of laws, and I do hope it may always be so.

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37. The Austin Papers, II, p. 377.

38. Ibid, "Austin to Henry Austin, June 1, 1830." II, p. 404.

39. Ibid, "Austin to Leaming," II, p. 413.

It appears, then, that the greatest leader of Texas colonization was opposed to slavery; that the colonization was a continuation of the westward movement of Anglo-Saxon pioneers spurred on by economic causes; that the majority of the colonists, while coming from close by southern states, were not slave holders; that most slave holders were kept out of Texas by the uncertain status of slavery; and that those who did go had no purposeful relation to the political history of slavery in the United States.

A quotation from E.C. Barker will pretty well summarize the views of most writers on the idea that Texas was settled to compensate the South for loss of territory north of the Missouri Compromise line:[40]

> Twenty years of browsing through newspapers, pamphlets and manuscripts of the period has discovered but one contemporary utterance that might be made to compensate the South for the loss of territory north of the Missouri Compromise line. That is an editorial remark quoted by John Fiske from the Richmond Virginia Enquirer of March 7, 1820, that Southern and Western representatives must "keep their eyes firmly fixed on Texas; if we are cooped up on the North, we must have elbow room to the West."
>
> The impression that one inevitably obtains from the letters of immigrants themselves is that they knew nothing of such a design and the cheap and fertile land of Texas was the only object of attraction.

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40. E.C. Barker, "The Colonization of Texas," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, X, p. 152.

The Texas Revolution

> Jackson was so sharpset for Texas, that, from the first year of his administration, he set his double engines to work, negotiating to buy Texas with one hand, and instigating the people of that province to revolt against Mexico with the other.[1]

Such is the opinion of John Q. Adams and such was the opinion of Benjamin Lundy. And so vehement were the arguments of these men that a view that Jackson formed and Houston executed a plan for stealing Texas in order to add strength to the slave section of the American Nation came to be generally accepted.

In the preceding chapter the vacillating policy of the Mexican government on the slavery question was discussed and it appears that our conclusion must be that the slavery question must have contributed something to the background of mental unease and misunderstanding but the evidence does not seem to indicate that this question was an active cause in precipitating the revolution. Professor E.C. Barker, in his book, "Mexico and Texas," states that it is his opinion that:[2]

> . . . slavery was a dull, organic ache and not an excruciating pain. Ultimately it must be cured, possibly by a major operation such as secession, but the condition of the patient was not critical and the derangement might yield to the milder treatment of state autonomy.

The preceding chapter also traced the story of the colonization of Texas. And the evidence indicates that Stephen F. Austin, the most outstanding leader of the

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1. J.Q. Adams, Memoirs, IX, p. 429.

2. Loc. cit. p. 86.

colonization movement was apparently a patriotic Mexican citizen; that he appreciated the liberal land grants of the Mexican government and used his influence, with apparent success, to instill the same attitude in the hearts of his colonists. Nevertheless there was a great contrast between the characteristics of the Anglo-American immigrants and the native Mexican. On the one hand was the blunt, independent, efficient American, a rebel against authority and a supreme individualist. On the other hand was the Latin American master of the soil, sensitive, secretive, subtle and indirect in his ways, by training and temperament a worshiper of tradition and a creature of authority.

Parallel with the contrast of temperament is the contrast of political experience. Bancroft declares that from 1535 until 1813 only three creoles became viceroys of Mexico, and he says that out of seven hundred and fifty four individuals who in the same period held the highest civil and military positions in all Spanish America only eighteen were born in the colonies.[3]

This exclusion from higher offices need not have prevented political training, had the subordinate administration been allowed a measure of independent development. But the duties of the subordinate officers of the most local nature were meticulously prescribed and regulated by the omnipotent

3. H.H. Bancroft, History of Mexico, IV, p. 5.

Laws of the Indies.

As to the political experience of the American it is scarcely necessary to state that his training in self government was centuries old and reached back beyond the dawn of English constitutional history. Training in self government and aggressive opposition to arbitrary rule had been the habit of all English people for centuries. The most aggressive and liberty loving descendants of the English were the pioneers of successive generations.

With such contrasting differences in the political experience and temperament of the two people, it is not surprising that apprehension and distrust should have developed.

This apprehension of the Mexican government was further increased by the reflection upon the story of American expansion and the attempts of the United States government to extend her boundary to the Rio Grande.

Jefferson and others believed that Texas was a part of the Louisiana purchase. John Q. Adams professed to believe the same and in spite of accusations to the contrary he probably tried conscientiously to obtain Texas.

Professor McElroy in his book, "The Winning of The Far West," states that:[4]

> In an article in the Charleston "Mercury" of April 25, 1844, John Randolph makes the charge that Adams had deliberately and knowingly given away the territory which Spain stood ready to confirm to us, designing thereby

4. Loc. cit. p. 2.

to consummate his own far-reaching and perfidious design, to emasculate the South of all its progressive political strength, and leave Missouri to the tender mercies of the political fanaticism which assailed her almost simultaneously with this treacherous and atrocious surrender of Texas."

McElroy also quotes the following letter of Jackson's:[5]

> In 1829-1830 . . . Mr. Irwin (Minister to Madrid when negotiation respecting the boundary of Louisiana and the cession of Florida was transferred to Washington) placed in my hands a copy of the correspondence between him and the Spanish minister at Madrid, which shwd. that he had negotiated a treaty by which Spain recognized the ancient limits of Louisiana to the Rio Grande and ceded Florida for the sum paid for it - that he had wrote to Washington for powers to close this Treaty at Madrid; instead of our executive sending him power, he received an order to transfer the negotiation to Washington, where Mr. Adams closed the negotiation confining the western boundary of Louisiana to the Sabine.
>
> I at once knew that Mr. Adams' object was to keep down the growing political ascendancy in the South and West.

Whether there ever was such a treaty as Jackson speaks of in this letter is doubtful. Adams denied that such a treaty was ever made and apparently worked diligently to secure Texas during his administration. In any event, the attempts to buy Texas during Adams' administration as well as the heated controversy between Jackson, Randolph, and others on one hand and Adams and others on the other, must have aroused Mexican apprehensions.

The heated controversy also indicates that Jackson's personal enmity to Adams and his desire to restore to the United States, territory which he believed had been lost

5. The Ford Collection, Cited by R.M. McElroy, The Winning Of The Far West, p. 2.

through the perfidy of his enemy, were stronger motives than any wicked desire to add to the power of the slave states.

The treaty with Spain was concluded in 1819 but was not ratified by Spain until 1821. At the same time Mexico gained her independence and in December 1822, the first Mexican envoy to the United States reached Washington with instructions to propose the marking of the boundary in accordance with the Florida treaty. He found the Monroe government noncommittal and became convinced that there was a disposition on the part of many of the representatives to reclaim Texas.

In 1824 Adams became President, and in spite of the accusations that had been made against him, the Mexicans could not forget that in the negotiations with Onis, he had repeatedly asserted that the Louisiana Purchase carried the boundary of the United States to the Rio Grande. Furthermore the facts that Henry Clay, who had bitterly opposed the renunciation of Texas in the Florida Treaty, was Secretary of State, and Thomas H. Benton, who had invoked woe upon all statesmen who should dare to mutilate the Mississippi valley, was now in the Senate, did not allay the apprehensions of Mexico.

With apprehensions in this state of affairs, Clay instructed Poinsett, our first minister to Mexico, to sound the Mexican government upon the subject of a line more suitable to the United States.

The day before the official reception of Poinsett,

President Victoria had received H.G. Ward, the British charge d' affairs. Ward had been in Mexico for six months and had been diligently arousing the apprehensions of the Mexican government against the United States.[6]

The work of Ward during the six months preceding the arrival of Poinsett had greatly increased British popularity. He had been sent to Mexico in 1824 to report on the advisability of recognition and after only three weeks in the country he had reported a stable government in spite of the fact that a formidable revolution was then in progress.

In 1825 Canning announced intention of recognizing Mexico and on the same day prepared instructions for a commission to negotiate a commercial treaty. This treaty was completed and, although it was later refused by Canning because it was too favorable to Mexico, it caused the Mexicans to become decidedly partial to England. At the same time the influence of the United States was decidedly on the wane.

On the fifth of May, shortly after Poinsett's arrival he wrote:[6]

> The British government has anticipated us. . . . Their treaty is made, and . . . has been ratified by the lower house. . . . It is now before the Senate . . . no doubt appears to be entertained of the result.

Ward wrote Canning on September 30:[7]

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6. J.F. Rippy, "British Role in Early Relations of United States," Hispanic American Historical Review, VII, p. 5.

7. Ibid, p. 6.

> Mr. Poinsett upon his arrival here, found His Majesty's Government in possession of that influence to which it has so just a claim. He found the President and ministers, satisfied with the conduct of England, and her character standing high with the generality of the people. . . . Although the idea of an intimate union between the former colonies of Spain had long been entertained, nothing was further from the wishes of the Mexicans than to see the United States included in this fraternal bond.

Poinsett quickly saw the condition of things in Mexico and immediately began to try to build up a more friendly feeling in Mexico. His success was furthered by a cabinet revolution favorable to the United States. A spirited contest was then begun between Ward and Poinsett. The conduct of neither of these men was beyond reproach, but Ward's seems to have been most aggressive and uncompromising. His own correspondence shows that he expended funds on a map showing the location of American settlers in Texas and in reprinting the abusive Onis memorial, and this solely with the view of adding fuel to the flame of Mexican suspicion toward the United States.[8]

The Onis memorial had been published in 1820 by Don Luis de Onis, an agent of the Spanish government in the United States. This memorial had represented both the government and citizens of the United States as entertaining the desire to expand southward immediately to Panama and ultimately to all regions of the New World.

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7. Ibid, p. 6.

8. Ibid, p. 9.

Ward used his influence in persuading President Victoria to send General Teran to Texas to make a report of conditions there because he knew that Teran was strongly anti-American.[9] The following letter was then sent to Canning:

> I have little doubt that the affair will now be very speedily arranged. The President has given General Teran the manuscript map of Texas which I left with him. . . . If General Teran goes to the frontier, there will be no occasion for any further interference on our part, as he will, I know, send in a report which will open the eyes of the Congress, and make them fully aware of the danger with which they are threatened.

General Teran did go to the frontier and his report was the direct cause of the issuance of the Mexican decree of April 6, 1830.[10] This decree as we shall see later was one of the immediate causes of the Revolution.

Poinsett was quite cognizant of the Mexican apprehension that had been aroused by Ward and convinced after a few tentative overtures that the Mexican government would not consent to move the boundary westward, he dropped the boundary question and concentrated on the negotiation of a commercial treaty. Ward's machinations were successful in bringing about a delay in this treaty.

Ward was recalled by his government at his own request at the end of 1826, but he remained in Mexico long enough to point the moral of his frequent warnings with the example of the Fredonian rebellion, which he considered the first step of the new inhabitants of Texas toward throwing off the Mexican rule.

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9. Ibid, p. 14.
10. Alleine Howren, op. cit.

The Fredonian rebellion afforded the first concrete cause of Mexican anxiety from the action of the colonists. On April 15, 1825, Haden Edwards obtained a contract to settle eight hundred families in East Texas. Some of the territory granted him had been settled since 1716 but many of the old settlers there had never completed title to the lands they occupied. These old settlers were threatened with eviction unless they paid Edwards $520. The claimants who had been dispossessed formed an opposition party and began to send complaints to the political chief at Bejar. The Edwardses also began a correspondence with the political chief and seemed to have conducted it with great imprudence. Finally President Victoria intervened with an order for the annullment of Edwards's contract and his expulsion from the country.

The next move of Edwards was to form an alliance with some chiefs of the neighboring Cherokee Indians and proclaim on December 16, 1826, the independence of the Fredonian Republic.

The attempts of Benjamin Edwards to gain recruits were in vain. He appealed to Austin's colony but Austin called for volunteers to aid the government, and secured a large force while Edwards received none. Austin then used his influence with the Cherokees and persuaded them to remain neutral. Edward's plea for help from the United States likewise proved futile and the rebellion collapsed.

It would seem that the action of Austin and his colonists would have reassured the Mexicans as to the loyalty of Texas, but such was not the case. In the course of the correspondence leading to the annullment of the Edwards contract the political chief, at San Antonio, had dinned into the ears of the governor the suspicion that Edwards's ultimate aim was to secede and carry his grant into the United States. Meanwhile Ward, the British minister, pointed to the events as a confirmation of his prophetic warnings.

The effect of the Fredonian rebellion on Mexico was exactly opposite to what Clay and Adams supposed. They believed that the rebellion might have weakened Mexico's determination to hold Texas and in 1827 rennewed Poinsett's instructions to press for a revision of the boundary.

Poinsett found that the Mexicans would not yield on the matter and on January 12, 1828, he signed a treaty marking the boundary in accordance with the Florida Treaty of 1819. The following letter from Poinsett to Clay explains how well Poinsett understood the situation in Mexico.[11]

> This government and people have been kept purposely in a continuous state of excitement upon this delicate question. We have been represented by the agents of certain European powers as the natural enemy of Mexico; and our desire to make alterations in the treaty of limits concluded with Spain and to deprive them of a portion of their territory was constantly urged in proof of our bad faith and insatiable ambition.

11. Manning, Early Diplomatic Relations With Mexico.

Jackson took up the subject of extending the boundary less promptly than Adams had done. Nearly six months after his innauguration, Van Buren wrote Poinsett to renew the overtures to Mexico. The instructions sent to Poinsett were largely based on a report prepared by Colonel Anthony Butler, a man who had personal interest in Texas. It is not known whether Jackson knew of this personal interest of Butler. Poinsett was directed to offer four million dollars for the most desirable of four suggested lines and varying amounts for any one of the other three.

Poinsett had made many enemies during his four years in Mexico and was therefore not the man to carry through a negotiation of this kind. Consequently he was recalled and Butler was sent to Mexico in his place.

On October 19, 1829, Jackson wrote Butler and notified him of his appointment. He was sure, he said, that if Texas was not purchased, it would create jealousy between the United States and Mexico, on account of the Americans settling there; they would declare independence as soon as their numbers justified, and the United States would be accused of instigating it, though all "constitutional powers would be exercised to prevent."[12]

Butler arrived in Mexico at an inopportune time. The public was very suspicious, and the press chose to regard the proposition to purchase Texas as a national insult.

12. Barker, "Jackson and The Texas Revolution," American Historical Review, XII, p. 791.

On April 6, 1830 the decree which has already been mentioned was passed and Butler decided to wait and say nothing. It was not until the middle of 1831 that he began to work actively to carry out his mission.

Butler was quite cognizant of the Mexican need of money and placed his hopes of carrying through his mission with pecuniary inducements and even contemplated open bribery.[13] On June 23 he wrote President Jackson that:

> As the influence of money is as well understood and as readily conceded by these people as any under Heaven, I have no doubt of its doing its office.[14]

On February 10, 1833 he wrote:

> . . . Suppose it is perceived that an absolute sale at this time will not be made, but that a mortgage on the territory of T__ would be given as security for the payment of money advanced on loan: then, I ask, would it be expedient to advance as a loan that sum which we are willing to pay for the purchase, and secured by a lien on the territory as far west as the middle of the desert; and if so shall the lien be accepted <u>with</u> or <u>without</u> receiving possession of the country? I am convinced that a loan on such terms would be tantamount to a purchase, because in the present condition of the public treasury, years must elapse, under the most economical and judicious management . . . before they will be in a state to meet existing engagements; . . .

On March 20, Edward Livingston at the President's request replied that there was no constitutional authority for such a transaction on the part of the United States government, and that therefore it was impractical. He added an admonition, saying:[15]

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13. <u>Ibid</u>, p. 791.
14. 25 Cong., 2 sess., House Exec. Doc., XII, p. 466.
15. Barker, <u>op. cit.</u> p. 793.

> The situation of affairs in the State of Texas y (and) Coahuila makes it important that your negotiation on that subject be brought to a speedy conclusion. It is at least doubtful whether in a few weeks any stipulation could be carried into effect.

Professor McElroy says that Jackson knew a cheaper and more direct method than that suggested by Butler and instructed Livingston "to reject . . . the loan, and write forthwith to Butler to bring his negotiation (for purchasing Texas) to a close, for that on the 1st of April the American colonists in Cochuita are to hold a convention and declare their independence, after which it will be useless to treat with Mexico for Texas."[16]

John Q. Adams said that:[17]

> This precise knowledge of Jackson, to a day, of the intended design of the colonists to declare their independence as early as April, 1833, was suppressed in the document communicated to the house in 1833.

Where did Jackson get his information? Professor McElroy quotes the following letter from Sam Houston to Jackson dated at Natchitoches, Louisiana, February 3, 1833:[18]

> . . . I am in possession of some information which will doubtless be interesting to you and may be calculated to forward your views, if you should entertain any, touching the acquisition of Texas by the Government of the United States. That such a measure is desired by nineteen-twentieths of the population of the province, I cannot doubt. Mexico is involved in civil war . . . The Government is essentially despotic. . . . The rulers have not honesty, and the people have not intelligence. My opinion is that Texas, by her members in convention will, by 1st April, . . . form a State constitution. I expect to be present at the convention, and will apprise

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16. Adams', Memoirs, XI, p. 367-368.

17. Adams', op. cit. p. 368.

18. McElroy, op. cit. p. 16.

> you of the course adopted. . . . It is probable that I may make Texas my abiding place. In adopting this course I will never forget the country of my birth. I will notify from this point the commissioners of the Indians at Fort Gibson of my success, which will reach you through the war department.

It was no secret that Jackson wished to acquire Texas, and it seems altogether probable that Houston would have written him concerning the affairs of that country even though there was no collusive understanding between them. The letter is apparently a casual one and if viewed from an unprejudiced standpoint it would hardly suggest that there was a collusive understanding between Jackson and Houston.

Butler's next scheme for extending the boundary was to have Jackson apply pressure by occupying a strip of land then in dispute between the Sabine and the Neches. This strip of land lay in the junction of the two rivers where they ran into the same lake and Butler urged that the Neches was the larger of the two and was therefore the river contemplated in the treaty as the boundary. He argued that occupation by the United States would lead the Texans, who would not consent to see the country divided, to revolt and Mexico would then accept his offer.

No reply from Jackson is found to this letter, but Butler's next move drew an indignant rejoinder from the President. On October 28, Butler wrote that a high official had recently opened the subject by asking if he had "command of money."

I remember that you (President Jackson) had instructed me to use the money at my discretion and answered, yes. He then said that two or three hundred thousand dollars would be required to get the support of an important person, without whose aid nothing could be done, and that three or four hundred thousand might have to be distributed to others. I replied that I could arrange for the money if assured of the object; and the official left, saying that he would continue the subject as soon as Santa Anna returned to the city.

Jackson replied to this November 27, 1833, with considerable animation:[19]

All the U.S. is interested in is the unincumbered cession, not how Mexico applies the consideration. . . . Therefore I repeat the best means to secure the object is left to your discretion - but I admonish you to give these shrewd fellows no room to charge you with tampering with their officers to obtain the cession through corruption. . . . We are deeply interested that this treaty of cession should be obtained without any just imputation of corruption on our part.

On March 7, 1834, Butler wrote that there was no hope of gaining Texas without taking forcible possession of that part which already belonged to the United States.[20]

If you will withdraw me from this place and make the movement to possess that part of Texas which is ours, placing me at the head of the country to be occupied. I will pledge my head that we have all we desire in less than six months without a blow for the price we are willing to pay for it.

On this letter the president wrote the following endorsement:[21]

A. Butler What a scamp.
Carefully read. The Secretary of State will reiterate his instructions to ask extension of the treaty for running boundary line, and then recall him, or if he has received his former instructions and the Mexican government has refused, to recall him at once.

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19. Barker, op. cit. p. 795.
20. Ibid, ~~op. cit.~~ p. 796.
21. Ibid.

On July 2, 1834, Forsyth informed Butler that the President was determined that no measure "of even an equivocal character" should be employed in the negotiations, and that no confidence was felt in his ability to accomplish anything further. However since Butler himself seemed hopeful, he might return to Mexico and make a final effort. But he must act quickly and return in December so that a report could be made to Congress.[22]

Butler did return but accomplished nothing and in October the Mexican government requested his recall, on the ground that there were imputed to him "intrigues unbecoming a diplomatic agent."[23]

The President complied, and appointed as Butler's successor Mr. Powhatan Ellis.

Jackson's correspondence with Butler was of course not known in Mexico, nevertheless this tortuous policy helped to increase the Mexican apprehension. The purpose of relating this account was to show that Mexican apprehensions were kept alive at this time and at the same time to show that even though Jackson was eager to acquire Texas he was determined to maintain the dignity and honor of the United States.

Enough has been said to show that Mexican apprehensions were very great before the decree of April 6, 1830 was passed.

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22. MSS Department of State, Despatches from Agents to Mexico, VI, Cited by Barker, on. cit. p. 797.

23. Ibid.

Professor McElroy says that all that was necessary at this time to precipitate a revolution was the appearance among the colonists of a leader and it is his belief that Jackson connived with Houston to go to Texas with this object in view.

Mention has already been made of Houston's letter to Jackson informing him of the convention that was to meet on the first of April 1833. The casual nature of this letter does not indicate that there was any understanding between Houston and Jackson, but the course of following events does indicate that Houston probably foresaw that the clash was coming and that without any encouragement or understanding with Jackson, he went to Texas with the hope expressed to a friend:[24]

> I am going (to Texas) and in that new country I will make a man of myself again . . . I shall yet be President of a great Republic. I shall bring that nation to the United States.

The Texas convention which met at San Felipe de Austin, April 1, 1833, appointed two committees. One of which Houston was chairman, was to frame a constitution. The second committee, composed of Stephen F. Austin, Wm. H. Wharton, and James B. Miller, was to draft a memorial to the Supreme Government of Mexico, asking that Texas be separated from the state of Coahuila, and organized as a state upon the basis of her new Constitution.

Austin assumed the task of carrying this memorial to

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24. Alexander Hynds, "General Sam Houston," Century Magazine, XXVIII, p. 13.

Mexico. Realizing immediately upon his arrival in Mexico, that Santa Anna would not grant the request for a separate state, he sent a letter back to friends in Texas advising them to organize a State without waiting to receive Santa Anna's formal denial of the Memorial.

This letter was intercepted, and Austin was seized as a dangerous conspirator, and secured in solitary confinement, where without accusation, trial or hearing of any kind, he remained for months, and his petition was disregarded.

For two years following the convention of 1833, there was no serious outbreak, but when in 1835, Santa Anna, having concentrated in his own hands the civil and military power of Mexico, issued a decree for disarmament of Texas, the Texans resisted and the revolution was begun.

The immediate cause of the revolution, then, was the overthrow of the nominal republic and the substitution of Santa Anna's corrupt and centralized government; but the background of distrust and apprehension, augumented by the attempts of the United States to obtain Texas and the resistance of the colonists against the caprice and instability of state and federal politics, magnified and distorted mutual annoyances to such a degree that resistance was inevitable.

This background had been built up and had practically reached its climax before Sam Houston came to Texas. He simply saw that the thing was coming and went to Texas with

the hopes of making the most of the situation; and there seems to be no evidence that his influence hurried on the beginning of the revolution or that there was any conniving between him and Jackson.

British Policy and Annexation

The interest of Great Britain in the Spanish-American colonies was strongly evident in the period between the revolutions against Spain and the issuance of the Monroe Doctrine. This interest had its inception in the commercial interests with the Latin American countries.

British diplomacy of this period indicates that England desired independence for the Spanish possessions and that she feared that some of this territory might fall into the hands of France or the United States. In a letter to Sir Charles Stuart, British ambassador at Paris, March 31, 1823, Canning intimated that England would not allow France to acquire by conquest or cession any of the Spanish colonies.[1] In his proposal to Rush, regarding a joint declaration, Canning stated that England aimed at the possession of no portion of the colonies for herself; and that she could not see the transfer of any portion of them to any other power with indifference.

The issuance of the Monroe Doctrine as a purely American policy, while hailed with enthusiasm by the liberals of England, was probably a cause of chagrin to Canning. He saw the bearing of the clause against European colonization in America, and was no doubt a little taken aback because the declaration had not been made jointly with England and with the declaration on the part of the United States that they

1. J.H. Latane, A History of American Foreign Policy, p. 182.

2. Ibid.

aimed at the possession of no part of the colonies for themselves. However, there was nothing left for Canning to do but adopt a policy of supporting a barrier against the United States. This he did, and the policy was steadily followed by British ministers after his time.[3]

In one of Canning's memoranda urging British recognition of the Spanish American States he said:[4]

> I believe we now have the opportunity (but it may not last long) of opposing a powerful barrier to the influence of the United States by an amicable connection with Mexico, which from its position must either be subservient to or jealous of the United States. In point of population and resources it is at least equal to all the rest of the Spanish colonies; and may naturally expect to take the lead in its connections with the powers of Europe. . . .

After he had converted the British cabinet to his viewpoint he wrote his friend John Hookam Frere:[5]

> The thing is done. . . . The Yankees will shout in triumph but it is they who lose most by our decision. The great danger of the time - a danger which the policy of the European system would have fostered, was a division of the World into European and American, Republican and Monarchical; a league of worn-out Governments, on the one hand, and of youthful stirring Nations, with the United States as their head, on the other. We slip in between; and plant ourselves in Mexico. The United States have gotten the start of us in vain; and we link once more America to Europe. Six months more and the mischief would have been done.

This plan of Canning's to detach the South American states from alliance with or dependence on the United States was continued to include Texas and it marks the inception of

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3. E.D.Adams, British Interests and Activities in Texas, p.15.

4. Harold Temperley, "The Later American Policy of Canning," American Historical Review, XI, p. 781.

5. Ibid, p. 782.

British interest in Texas. Until well into the administration of Aberdeen, the British interests were evidently favorable toward the Mexican government. British commercial interests in Mexico were extensive and a large part of the Mexican debt was held by British bond holders. It was, therefore, natural that the British government should hope for a speedy reconquest of Texas.

The activities of H.G. Ward, the first British minister to Mexico, have already been discussed and it was easy to see that his activities were in line with the policies of Canning.

British policy against slavery was a second cause of interest in the Texas question. In May 1836 Texas had adopted a constitution recognizing slavery. This constitution annulled all previous legislation of Mexico relating to the extinction of slavery in Texas.[6]

On August 5, 1836, Mr. Barlow Hoy introduced in the House of Commons a motion instructing the government to take such measures as might be necessary to secure the fulfillment of existing treaties with Mexico "and prevent the establishment of slavery and traffic in slaves in the province of Texas." In support of this motion he emphasized the interests of Great Britain in Mexico by pointing out the British investments in Mexico; and the danger of annexation of Texas by the United State; and the probability of permanent establish-

6. J.H. Latane, op. cit. p. 241.

ment of slavery. He urged Palmerston to aid Mexico in recovering the province of Texas. Other speakers urged that action was necessary in order to defend the commercial interests of Great Britain, and that England could not "allow the United States to pursue a system of aggrandizement.[7]

The delay of the United States in recognizing the independence of Texas probably influenced Palmerston's reply to Hoy. He called the motion partly premature and unnecessary. He did not believe that the United States intended to annex Texas, but added that if in the future, there should be any evidence of such an intention, it "ought seriously to engage the attention of the House and of the British public."[8]

The Hoy motion was the only definite reference to Texas made for several years by the House of Commons. But it indicated the two main elements of later British opposition to American annexation of Texas.

In the summer of 1839, Pakenham, the British minister to Mexico, became a firm believer in the future of Texas and attempts to bring about pacification and recognition began.

Most of these schemes for bringing about recognition of Texas involved a payment of $5,000,000 to Mexico for recognition with the Rio Grande as the southern boundary for Texas; and it was the hope of the English that Mexico could be induced to satisfy the claims of English bond-holders to the

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7. Adams, op. cit. p. 17.

8. Ibid.

extent of $5,000,000 by locating lands for them between the Nueces and Rio Grande, accepting the $5,000,000 from Texas, and then agreeing to the line claimed by Texas.

Pakenham worked diligently in these attempts but found that although "reconquest was admitted to be impossible, a feeling of mistaken pride, foolishly called regard for national honor, deterred the government from putting an end to a state of things highly prejudicial to the interests of Texas and attended with no sort of advantage to Mexico."[9]

On the 14th of October, 1840, Hamilton, the Texan agent to London, wrote to Palmerston that he was authorized to sign a treaty of commerce and navigation if Great Britain would recognize Texan independence, and at the same time he set forth the reasons why Great Britain ought to recognize the independence of Texas and form a treaty with her. His arguments are quoted below:[10]

> 1st. The future & rapidly increasing value of the trade with Texas, under a judicious commercial Convention.
> 2nd. By this means she secures a great Cotton producer and important consumer of her Manufactures, as her customer and a friendly neutral in the event of a war with the United States -
> 3rd. The recognition of Texas by Great Britain inevitably Superinduces peace between Mexico & Texas.
> 4th. Peace at this moment between Mexico & Texas will inevitably insure the payment of a portion of the Mexican debt by Texas.
> 5th. It likewise insures under the friendly mediation of England a permanent Boundary Line between Mexico & Texas, & repress the spirit of future conquest on the part of the Anglo-American race -

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9. Ibid, p. 28.

10. F.O. Texas, I. Cited by Adams, op. cit. p. 53.

In case England does not recognize the following consequences are likely to follow -

1st. In sixty days from this day Vera Cruz, Tampico & Matamoras will be blocaded by the Texian Squadron, which consists of one Corvette, two Brigs, three Schooners & one naval Steamer, now off the Coast of Mexico, while Mexico is destitute of all naval force whatsoever.

2nd. If Texas is informed that Great Britain will not recognize her Independence & that consequently there is no hope of peace with Mexico, she will forthwith join the Federalists, revolutionize the northern provinces of Mexico & make such additions to her Territory as the laws of war would justify under the usage of civilized nations.

3rd. Great Britain has no obvious interest in avoiding a discriminating duty which will be levied against the productions of all nations which have not recognized Texas & formed Commercial Treaties with her on or before the 1st of Feby. next.

4th. If Her Majesty's Government should decline recognizing I must avail myself of the present situation of public affairs in Europe & make the most beneficial arrangement I can with some continental nation giving it exclusive commercial advantages for a valuable equivalent.

5th. Texas greatly prefers a friendly alliance with England from all those considerations which are connected with a common origin - But if Great Britain refuses all international companionship with her, she will be driven to seek friendly and profitable associations elsewhere.

Respectfully submitted
J. Hamilton.

On October 18, Palmerston replied that Great Britain was ready to negotiate the desired treaty if Texas would sign a slave-trade treaty giving to Great Britain the right of search. Hamilton stated his approval of the British proposal on October 22 and three treaties soon followed. The first, signed on November 14, was a treaty of commerce and navigation. The second, signed November 14, was a "Convention Containing Arrangements Relative to the Publick Debt." In this Texas agreed to assume one million pounds of the foreign debt contracted by Mexico before January 31, 1835,

provided Mexico accepted mediation within six months and a treaty of peace was signed. The third, signed November 16, was a treaty for the suppression of the African slave-trade which provided mutual right of search.

Apparently Palmerston believed that there existed no immediate danger of an American annexation of Texas. There was also in Palmerston's mind a desire to bring pressure upon the United States in order to secure from that government at least a limited right of search. Palmerston hoped to use the slave-trade treaty with Texas as an example of what the American government ought to be willing to concede.

Although Hamilton had offered no objection to the treaty providing for mutual right of search, it seems that he feared that his government would not ratify, and it soon appeared that he had sent the first and second treaties by one messenger while entrusting the slave-trade treaty to another. As a result the first and second treaties were received and ratified by the Texas government without knowledge of the third which did not arrive in Texas until after the legislature had adjourned.

If this action of Hamilton was a ruse to secure the first two treaties without the slave-trade treaty, it failed to secure results, for both Palmerston and later Aberdeen refused to ratify the treaties, and further attempts of Hamilton to secure a new treaty were also rejected by Aberdeen.

Soon after Aberdeen refused to negotiate another treaty with Hamilton, a book written by an Englishman named William

Kennedy appeared. He had spent a large part of the year of 1839 in Texas and had an extensive knwoledge of the new state. His book attracted considerable attention in London. It argued the advantage to Great Britain of the independence of Texas on the basis of national power and commercial advantage; Great Britain should extend relations and check American expansion. Kennedy asserted that anti-slavery sentiment in the United States was not the only hindrance to American annexation, but that the high-tariff faction in the North opposed it. Texas herself would have to adopt free trade principles, and might become, in the hands of England, a weapon to break down the protective policy of America.

Kennedy offered his services for the furtherance of British interests in Texas and early in November 1841 was sent to Texas in an un-official capacity.

Although Kennedy was sent to Texas in an un-official capacity and apparently for the sole purpose of securing useful information, he seems to have represented himself at Austin as a representative of the British government and urged a policy upon the Texan government, which he said would be sanctioned by Aberdeen. During Kennedy's residence in Texas the slave-trade treaty was ratified, and he claimed much credit for having brought this about. In his letter of April 20 he also vaunted his influence in thwarting an annexation scheme in Texas:[11]

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11. Adams, op. cit. p. 65.

> I do not think I arrogate too much to myself in saying that the condidence reposed in me by the government and people of Texas materially contributed to allay the excitement in favor of an immediate annexation to the United States. . . . I obtained at all events, a suspension of the question until the disposition of Great Britain could be known.

Under Palmerston, Great Britain favored an independent Texas, openly, and occasionally at some risk to English-Mexican relations. Aberdeen, on the other hand, was much more cautious. He had a greater belief in the inherent strength of Mexico and a conviction that British interests were conserved where a reinvigorated Mexico could oppose itself to the United States. This greater consideration for Mexico is manifested in the reports of Pakenham, British minister in Mexico, who was always careful to reflect the attitude of his government at home.

During Palmerston's conduct of the Foreign Office, Pakenham had been an ardent believer in the future of Texas and he was decidedly lacking in confidence in the Mexican government. But in 1842 Great Britain's pressure upon Mexico to induce her to recognize Texas became more gentle.

This inclination of Aberdeen to strengthen Mexico rather than Texas continued until after the Webster-Ashburton treaty. Aberdeen had hoped that all matters of dispute with the United States would be settled with the Webster-Ashburton treaty. When the treaty failed to do this, Aberdeen was more ready to become active in preventing annexation and to aid in the establishment of a powerful and independent Texan state.

On June 28, 1842, the British recognition of Texas was ratified and on July 1, Pakenham was instructed to notify the Mexican cabinet:[12]

> . . . it is the earnest desire of Her Majesty's government to see peace permanently established between Mexico and Texas, that considering the support with which Texas is likely to meet from the People - I speak not of the government - of the United States, and the unlimited means of recruiting her forces both by land and sea, which are within the reach of Texas by reason of her proximity to that country, the sentiments of whose citizens in general are strongly in favour of the Texians, H.M. Govt. can not but perceive all the difficulties which are likely to surround Mexico in her renewed attempt to recover possession of the sovereignty of Texas.

Thus, Aberdeen acquitted the United States government of any duplicity in connection with Texas. But a second instruction to Pakenham on July 15 indicates that Aberdeen was anxious on the subject of annexation. In the second instruction he added:[13]

> . . . even supposing the Mexicans should be able to overcome the difficulties which would be opposed to them by this increased assistance on the part of the People of the United States, the result, after the most brilliant successes of the Mexican Arms, would probably be, that the Texians would be compelled to incorporate themselves with the United States.

In conclusion Aberdeen warned Mexico that Great Britain would not assist her in any contest in which she became engaged with the United States:[14]

> Nor should they allow themselves to suppose that they can at any time count upon succour from Great Britain in their struggles with Texas, or with the United States. Great Britain is determined to remain strictly neutral.

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12. Adams, op. cit. p. 104.
13. Ibid, p. 108.
14. Ibid, p. 109.

On August 23 Charles Elliot arrived in Texas under an amended commission as consul-general and charge d' affaires. His first instructions from Aberdeen required him to make demands on Texas in regard to certain acts of the Texian navy and the Texian blockade. Thus Elliot's first activity was far from conciliatory and indicates Aberdeen's indifference toward Texas. However Elliot soon found Houston quite amiably inclined. In acknowledgement of Elliot's report of his interview with Houston, Aberdeen expressed pleasure at Houston's attitude and statements, and assured the Texan government that England would exert herself to secure peace from Mexico.

For some months after his arrival Elliot was in ill health and displayed no great activity. In his early reports he expressed his disbelief that Mexico would ever be able to reconquer Texas. In these reports he did not even mention the topic of annexation.

By November his health had much improved, and a voluminous correspondence with Addington, a personal friend and permanent under-secretary in the foreign office, was begun. These letters to Addington, though nominally personal letters were devoted to urging a definite plan of campaign in Texas. In the first, dated November 15, Elliot expressed great confidence in Houston. He considered Houston the only man in Texas capable of dealing with the situation there and stated that Houston aspired to be the founder of a great and independent state.

Elliot considered the corroding element in the promising state to be the institution of slavery. His plan bore especially upon the extinction of slavery, and combined with the philanthropic measures certain great practical advantages that might be secured for British commerce. His fantastic scheme emphasized the commercial advantages to Great Britain that would result from the establishment of a powerful and independent Texas. He pictured a state with perfectly free trade which would probably be joined by the northern and north-eastern parts of Mexico. These parts of Mexico would soon find it to their interests to join a state founded upon such principles, or at least constrain their own government into the adoption of an equally liberal scheme of commercial policy.[15]

Elliot believed that his ideas could be carried out by the use of money to compensate the slaveholder in Texas, but he stated that this was but his private plan, and that officially and publicly he would of course take the ground that while Great Britain abhorred the institution of slavery for herself, she had no desire to interfere with it in other countries.

Just what knowledge and interest Houston had in this scheme is not known. But in light of the intimate relations existing between Elliot and Houston it seems reasonable to suppose that Elliot had discussed the plan with Houston.

15. Adams, op. cit. p. 111.

Various interpretations have been given of Houston's shifting policy. Most historians believe that after the rejection by the United States of Houston's renewed overtures for annexation in 1841 and 1842 he definitely dropped the plea for annexation and embarked upon a policy in which Texas should no longer apperar as a suppliant. The historical inference is that he used the suggestion of interference by England to frighten the United States and at the same time urged England to interfere to force Mexico to peace.

On January 24, 1843, Houston wrote to Elliot and urged that England force Mexico to make peace. He said:[16]

> There is a subject now mooting in Texas which it seems to me will appeal directly to Her Majesty's Government. I mean that of annexation to the United States. Some of our journals are much in favor of the measure. I find from the uncertitude of our situation that nine-tenths of those who converse with me are in favor of the measure upon the ground that it will give us peace. Upon this point of our national existence I feel well satisfied that England has the power to rule.

He further asserted that annexation would soon be the policy of both political parties in the United States:[17]

> Annexation is to be a question with the political parties in the United States. My own opinion is that both parties will advocate the policy. To defeat this policy it is only necessary for Lord Aberdeen to say to Santa Anna, "Sir, Mexico must recognize the independence of Texas."

When the end of March brought no reply to his letters advocating a live British campaign in the affairs of Texas, Elliot began to be anxious and decided to shift the emphasis

16. F.O. Texas, 6. Cited by Adams, op. cit. p. 125.

17. Ibid.

and to urge the necessity for the exertion of pressure upon Mexico by England.

On March 29, Elliot learned of the Robinson plan which was intended to secure an armistice between Mexico and Texas as a forerunner of ultimate peace. This plan was formulated by a Texan prisoner in Mexico who reported to Santa Anna that a large party in Texas desired reannexation to Mexico on terms of local self-government and nominal Mexican sovereignty. Santa Anna released Robinson and commissioned him to make overtures to Texas.

Pakenham had been succeeded by Percy Doyle at Mexico City. The Robinson plan was presented to Doyle by Santa, and Doyle, with some hesitation, consented to suggest an armistice to Elliot and to ask him to put the matter officially before Houston.[18]

In reporting the Robinson scheme to Aberdeen, Elliot included comments on rumors of annexation, and Aberdeen's reply on May 18, treated of these and not of the armistice. Aberdeen wrote:[19]

> With regard to the project for the annexation of Texas to the United States, which has formed the subject of some of your recent communications to this office, Her Majesty's Government do not think it necessary to give you any instructions at the present moment on that subject, further than to desire that you will assure the President of the continued interest which the British Government takes in the prosperity and independence of the State of Texas: and of their full determination to persevere in employing their endeavours, whenever they see a reasonable hope of success, to bring about an ad-

18. F.O. Mexico, 162. Cited by Adams, op. cit. p. 134.

19. Adams, op. cit. p. 136.

> justment of the differences still existing between Mexico and Texas, of which they so much lament the continuance.

Thus it seems that Aberdeen was not very much impressed by the Robinson scheme and that the British agents in Texas and Mexico aided in the negotiations rather reluctantly. Doyle acted in the matter rather as an agent for Santa Anna than a British diplomat. He neither originated nor urged the plan.

However, on June 13, Houston issued his proclamation of cessation of hostilities, and when the news of the affair reached official circles in the United States it caused considerable disturbance and aroused distrust toward England.

In July further suspicions were aroused through reports coming from London. In that month a committee of Texans and Americans convened in London to discuss the abolition of slavery in Texas. Among the delegates (though not an accredited delegate from Texas) was a certain S.P. Andrews, from Houston, Texas. Andrews, it is reported, made a proposition to Aberdeen that Great Britain should advance a loan to Texas to be applied to the purchase and emancipation of Texan slaves.

Aberdeen informed the committee that if the State of Texas should confer entire emancipation on all persons within its territory and make the decision permanent and irrevocable, Her Majesty's Government would not fail to press the circumstances upon the consideration of the Mexican

government as a strong additional reason for the acknowledgement by Mexico of the independence of Texas.

Aberdeen's instructions to Doyle, on July 31, 1843, directed him to urge the Mexican government to waive the condition of nominal supremacy over Texas which they have included in the proposition submitted by them through Mr. Robinson to the Government of Texas, and rather to substitute for it that of the absolute abolition of the principle of slavery and properly regulated emancipation of slaves in Texas.

Exaggerated reports of Aberdeen's actions were sent out from England to both the United States and Texas and were received with popular indignation in both countries.

Duff Green, a general in the United States Army, and a Southerner, was in England at the time and promptly made use of an opportunity where British interference could be charged. He wrote Upshur and made the unwarranted statement that the project of a loan noted in the conference between Aberdeen and the anti-slavery committee referred also to moneyed support to be given in order to prevent the annexation of Texas to the United States.[20] Green's letter had the desired effect in arousing excitement in the United States.

This excitement in the United States was augmented by a "confidential" letter from Ashbel Smith, the Texas representative in London, to Van Zandt, the Texan Charge in Washington, which was probably communicated to some member of Tyler's

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Reeves, op. cit. p. 127.

Cabinet for the purpose of arousing American interest in annexation.[21] In this letter Smith said:

> It is the purpose of some persons in England to procure the abolition of slavery in Texas. They propose the accomplishment of this end by friendly negotiation and by the concession of what will be deemed equivalents. I believe the equivalents contemplated are a guarantee by Great Britain of the independence of Texas - discriminating duties in a loan, or some means by which the finances of Texas can be readjusted. They estimate the number of slaves in Texas at 12,000 and would consider the payment for them in full, as a small sum for the advantages they anticipate from the establishment of a free state on the southern borders of the slave holding states of the American union.

Not long after this an extract from one of Ashbel Smith's letters to Anson Jones, Secretary of State of Texas, was placed in Calhoun's hands. This letter reported Lord Aberdeen as having stated that "it is the well known policy and wish of the British government to abolish slavery everywhere, and that its abolition in Texas was deemed very desirable not only from the standpoint of British interest, but also with reference to its future influence in the United States."[22]

Formal instructions were sent to Edward Everett, the American minister to London, to obtain a statement from Aberdeen relative to his conference with the anti-slavery committee, and, if possible to get from him an announcement of British plans.

On November 16, Everett reported to Upshur:[23]

> The subject of domestic slavery was not so much as mentioned or alluded to by the British minister to the

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22. Ibid, p. 245.

23. Reeves, op. cit. p. 133.

> government of Texas, except to disclaim in most emphatic terms any intention on the part of England to interfere with it here. Indeed, that constituted no part of the policy of that far reaching nation. She might be willing to tickle the abolitionists (a somewhat venomous but very respectable or influential class of her citizens) but had no idea of going in a crusade with them to abolish slavery in Texas, or anywhere else. Her Texas policy was to build up a power independent of the United States who could raise cotton enough to supply the world; of which power slavery would be a necessary element. And this not primarily to injure the United States, but to benefit herself, not from enmity to Brother Jonathan, but love to John Bull, and so with France.

Both Smith and Everett accepted Aberdeen's explanation and denials of any intention of interfering in Texan affairs. Nevertheless, there was a basis of truth in all the various American suspicions of British policy. The instructions to Doyle on July 31, 1843, referred to above, was evidently an effort to secure in a roundabout fashion what Elliot advocated in Texas.

And when these instructions were forwarded to Elliot, he was rejoiced to find in them the probable realization of his dreams. He wrote to Aberdeen that the proposal of Mexico to acknowledge the independence of Texas upon the condition to which Aberdeen had adverted would prevent any new slaves being brought in, and would quickly result in the extinction of slavery.[24] He also stressed the great advantages to England:

> If the principle of free labor can be established here, with the opportunity of procuring labor from Mexico, and by immigration from other quarters, and the increasing supply and improvement of the staple from India, there would very soon be an end of the remunerative production of cotton by slave labor in the United States.

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24. F.O. Texas, 8. Cited by Adams, op. cit. p. 149.

Ten days later Elliot wrote Doyle and outlined the object to be labored for:[25]

> I trust that Mexico will be true to the great cause of humanity and to Itself, on this momentous occasion. The mere announcement of their just and honorable determination that a land which was free under their rule should not be turned into a pen of slaves for the convenience of persons possessing such property in the exhausted Slave States of the North American Union would of itself be a very important step towards the establishment and security of the due and needful weight of Mexico in the affairs of this Continent. They have but to signify that the sine qua non conditions of the acknowledgment of Texas by Mexico are decided and approved measures for the early and final disappearance of slavery here, and formal adherence to the declaration of Mexico that the Independence is recognized and understood to be complete, whilst Texas remain a separate nation, but of non-effect in the case that it should annex itself to any other country, without the consent of Mexico.

Elliot's exuberance was short lived. On October 31, 1843, he wrote to Aberdeen, stating that Houston had shown him a dispatch from Texas agent at Washington, Van Zandt, giving the outline of an offer by the United States to annex Texas. He reported that Houston had requested him to advise Aberdeen that if Mexico would speedily recognize the independence of Texas the United States offer would be declined. Houston further assured Elliot that the terms demanded of the United States would be such as could not be granted.

Apparently Houston sincerely desired an independent Texas at this time. It is certain that he feared acceptance would alienate England, and if the treaty should then be rejected by the United States senate, Texas would be left "in an extremely awkward situation." When Upshur assured him that

25. Ibid.

"a clear constitutional majority favored the measure," Houston demanded that before entering into negotiations, the United States place forces near the Texas border and in the Gulf so as to be in a position to render aid in case of attack from Mexico. These terms were refused by Tyler but were later complied with soon after Calhoun succeeded Upshur.[26]

By the year 1844 Aberdeen was convinced that annexation was really imminent and that year witnessed England's most direct effort to prevent the United States from annexing Texas.

On January 12, Aberdeen instructed Cowley in Paris to bring President Tyler's message to Congress - in which had been outlined a policy of annexation and a hint of British interference in Texas had been made - to the attention of the French government:[27]

> It is true that no direct mention is there made either of Great Britain or of France; and it is also true, that in noticing the possibility of interference on the part of other great and powerful Nations, in the affairs of the neighbouring Republics, the President appears to have alluded solely to Great Britain. At the same time, it is sufficiently evident that the future annexation of Texas to the United States is contemplated by the President and considering that France as well as Great Britain has recognized the independence of Texas, and entered into a treaty with the Republic, and that the interests of the two countries in that part of America, are, in all respects, the same, Her Majesty's Government presume that the Government of France would not any more than that of Great Britain look with indifference upon any measure, by which Texas should cease to exist as a separate and independent State.

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26. Sen. Exec. Doc. No. 341, 28 Cong., p. 47.

27. F.O. Texas, 20. Cited by Adams, op. cit. p. 158.

> I have to desire that Y.E. will ascertain from M. Guizot whether the views of His Majesty's Government on this subject are shared by the government of France; and, if so you will propose that the representatives of the two governments at Washington and in Texas, should be instructed to hold the same language, deprecating all interference on the part of the United States in the affairs of Texas, or the adoption of any measure leading to the destruction of the separate existence of that State; at the same time, warning the Texian Govt. not to furnish the United States with any just cause of complaint, and encouraging them to look to the preservation of their independence, as the best security for the ultimate prosperity, both political and commercial.

Cowley's reply to the above was written on January 15. He had found the king of France and his minister, Guizot, in perfect sympathy with Aberdeen's ideas. The concluding words of his report indicate perfect understanding by France of Aberdeen's purpose:[28]

> M. Guizot was of the opinion that it was of importance that the designs of the Government of the United States with respect to Texas should be prevented.

The death of Upshur brought Calhoun into the office of Secretary of State on April 1. He immediately began to push the project for the annexation of Texas. It has already been noted that the "impossible" terms of Houston's instructions were complied with by Calhoun. The treaty was signed on April 22. On April 18, Calhoun addressed a reply to Pakenham regarding Aberdeen's despatch of December 26, 1843. In this despatch Aberdeen had declared:[29]

> . . . that Great Britain desires, and is constantly exerting herself to procure, the general abolition of slavery through out the world. But the means which she

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28. Ibid.

29. Latane, op. cit. p. 247.

> has adopted, and will continue to adopt, for this humane and virtuous purpose, are open and undisguised. She will do nothing secretly or underhand. She desires that her motives may be generally understood and her acts seen by all.
>
> With regard to Texas, we avow that we wish to see slavery abolished there, as elsewhere; and we should rejoice if the recognition of that country by the Mexican government should be accompanied by an engagement on the part of Texas to abolish slavery eventually, and under proper conditions, throughout the Republic.
>
> Great Britain, moreover, does not desire to establish in Texas . . . any dominant influence . . . and she has no thought or intention of seeking to act directly or indirectly, in a political sense, on the United States through Texas.

Calhoun's reply expressed the deep concern of the president at the avowal of Lord Aberdeen of the desire of Great Britain to see slavery abolished in Texas, and of her efforts to make the abolition of slavery one of the conditions of the recognition by Mexico of Texan independence. He stated that the President had felt it to be "the imperious duty" of the Federal government "to adopt in self-defense the most effectual measures to defeat" the British policy, and the President[30]

> . . . directs me to inform you that a treaty has been concluded between the United States and Texas, for the annexation of the latter to the former, as a part of its territory, which will be submitted without delay to the Senate for its approval. This step has been taken as the most effectual, if not the only means of guarding against the threatened danger.

Calhoun concluded his note with an array of census statistics showing a great increase in deafness, blindness, insanity, and idiocy among negroes in the states which had

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30. Latane, op. cit. p. 247.

abolished slavery, from which he drew the conclusion that so far as the United States was concerned the British policy of emancipation would be neither wise nor humane.[31]

Thus, Aberdeen's letter, intended to divert American attention from the projected plan for Texan annexation, was made the excuse for immediate action.

But Calhoun's bold policy was likewise to meet with unexpected results. Unfortunately for him he had overestimated his case and the people were not ready to subscribe to his broad statements of the need for slavery and for Texas. He went too far for his countrymen and he angered Aberdeen.

By the end of May, Aberdeen had resolved to collect all his forces and to put into immediate operation his plan to prevent American annexation of Texas. On May 29 he had a long interview with Murphy, the Mexican representative at London.[32] The following memorandum indicates what was said:

> Lord Aberdeen expressed a wish to see Mexico acknowledge the independence of Texas. "If Mexico," he said, "will concede this point, England (and I have reason to believe that France will join with her in this determination) will oppose the annexation of Texas and moreover he would endeavor that France and England will unite in guaranteeing not only the independence of Texas, but also the boundary of Mexico. On the other hand should Mexico persist in declining to recognize Texas, the intentions of England to prevent the annexation of that country to the United States might not be put in execution." Upon my remarking that it was not at all probable that the American Government would be willing to drop the annexation affair, even should the American Senate reject the Treaty for the present, Lord Aberdeen replied that provided that England and France were

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31. 28 Cong., 1 Sess., Sen. Doc. No. 341, p. 50.

32. Smith, Annexation of Texas, p. 387.

> perfectly agreed, "it would matter little to England whether the American Government should be willing to drop this question or not, and that, should it be necessary, she would go to the last extremity in support of her opposition to the annexation; but that for this purpose it was essential that Mexico be disposed to acknowledge the independence of Texas, because otherwise an agreement in policy between her and England would be impossible.

It will be seen from this memorandum that all ideas of asking Mexico to urge Texas to abolish slavery were abandoned and that Aberdeen had practically determined to use force if necessary to prevent the annexation of Texas.

On June 24, Aberdeen proposed to Ashbel Smith a "diplomatick Act" by which England and France, acting with Texas and Mexico, and with the United States if the United States would agree, were to settle boundaries of Texas and guarantee its independence. Such an agreement would have involved a pledge upon the part of Texas not to permit herself to be annexed to the United States.

Before Aberdeen's plan for preventing annexation could be carried out conditions arose in Mexico, the United States, and France, respectively, which caused the abandonment of the plan.

To suit English purposes at this time, the spirit in Mexico should have been acquiescent. Instead, it was decidedly belligerent. Bankhead, the British Minister to Mexico, was obliged to report that Mexico, instead of acknowledging Texan independence was preparing to renew war. This would probably have meant war with United States and forcible annexation.

On June 8, the United States senate rejected the treaty for annexation of Texas. But the English government knew that this did not mean final disposal of the question for on June 11, Tyler outlined a plan of securing annexation by joint resolution of both houses of congress. The English and French ministers in Washington were watching closely the trend of events in the United States and often conferred with each other on the matter so that their reports to their respective governments were practically the same.

Pakenham's letter of June 27 shows what the attitude of the French and British minister was:[33]

> It is scarcely necessary for us to remark that, by the rejection of the late Treaty the question of the annexation of Texas must not be considered as disposed of. On the contrary it must be looked upon as the question which at this moment most engages the attention of the American People, and which will form one of the most prominent Subjects of agitation and excitement during the approaching election to the Presidency. In fact it may be said that both questions will be tried at one and the same time: that is to say, if the feeling in favor of annexation should predominate, Mr. Polk, who stands upon that interest, and who has moreover the support of the democratic party, except where anti-annexation feeling may operate against him, will be elected.
>
> If happily the party opposed to annexation should prevail, Mr. Clay, who has taken a stand in opposition to that measure, will be the man; in which case, although the project must not even then be thought of as abandoned or defeated, there would at least be a prospect of its being discussed with the calmness and dignity required by its importance, and by the interest which other powers are justly entitled to take in it.
>
> According to this view of the question it seems to us, My Lord, that the Govts. of England and France have everything to gain by the success of Mr. Clay; and accordingly that whatever might in any way unfavourably affect his prospects ought by all means to be avoided.

33. F.O. Texas, 20. Cited by Adams, op. cit. p. 178.

Now I believe, My Lord, that one thing which greatly contributed to the rejection of the late Treaty, was the absence of all interference, at least open interference, in opposition to it on the part of England and France. Any demonstration of resistance on the part of those Govts. would, I think, have had the very opposite effect to that intended, and would probably have led to the ratification of the Treaty instead of its rejection.

Following this same view of the question, it would appear that pending the Election to the Presidency, the line of non-interference on the Texian question would be the most conducive to our interests; for which reason, we humbly submit, My Lord, that it is desirable that the most important arrangement contemplated by Your Lordship's late Despatch should not be known in this Country until after the Election shall have taken place.

Other considerations suggest themselves to us, My Lord, with reference to this important Subject, which although they will probably not have escaped Your Lordship's attention, I beg leave most respectfully to submit.

For instance, we are of opinion that in any Treaty or agreement which may be concluded with a view to the attainment of the object proposed, provision ought to be made from the beginning to allow the U. States to become a party to the engagement; and that the engagement ought, as far as possible, to have the appearance of a self-restricting engagement, rather than an engagement involving opposition to the supposed designs of another Power. By this means some part of the odium which in this Country will most certainly, under the most favourable circumstances, attach to the Measure, may be got rid of.

Another consideration which we think ought not to be lost sight of is, that an arrangement for a pacification between Mexico and Texas which should not make provision for the absolute Independence of the latter Country, would at this moment be worse than useless, inasmuch as it would only facilitate the accomplishment of those designs which England and France are most anxious to frustrate: and, finally, My Lord, it is our opinion that if the arrangement contemplated by Your Lordship should be effected, that is to say, if England and France should unite in determining to secure the Independence of Texas, without the consent and concurrence of this Country previously obtained, that determination would probably not be met, in the first instance, by measures of open and declared hostility, but that Texas would be immediately annexed and occupied, leaving it to the Guaranteeing Powers to carry out the objects of the agreement as best they might.

On the other hand it is my firm belief that if either England or France were to undertake alone the accomplishment of what it is proposed that those powers should

undertake united, the announcement of such an intention would be met here by measures of the most extreme resistance. And, in whatever way the project may be announced here, I need scarcely add that it will form a crisis of the utmost delicacy in our relations with this Country.

The effect of this letter on Aberdeen is shown in his despatch to Cowley, British minister at Paris:[34]

> Mr. Pakenham's Despatches furnish much ground for serious reflection. It appears from them that both he and his French Collegue are decidedly of opinion that any ostensible interference at this moment, on the part of Foreign Govts., and especially the English Govt., in the Texian annexation Question, so far from advancing the object which we have in view, namely the prevention of the incorporation of Texas with the United States, would directly tend to defeat that object by throwing additional weight into the scale of Mr. Tyler or Mr. Polk, the annexation candidates for the Presidency, and proportionally diminishing Mr. Clay's chances of Election to the Presidential Chair.
>
> H.M. Govt. feel that this is at the present moment a very important consideration; and they are consequently disposed to defer, at all events until a more fitting season, the execution of their projected measure of combined interposition with Mexico and Texas and the frontiers of Mexico by Great Britain and France.

It is reasonable to suppose that Aberdeen had decided to abandon the plan of joint intervention and in order to prevent a loss of dignity by a withdrawal from a plan which he had originally conceived, he gracefully left the way open for a French withdrawal. Should France decline to carry out her share in the original program, as would undoubtedly happen after the receipt of the instruction to Cowley, it could easily be said that the desertion of France had caused the failure.

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34. F.O. Texas, 20. Cited by Adams, op. cit. p. 178.

Latane believes "there is no evidence that England intended to abandon the plan." He says that most of the evidence on the subject leads to the conclusion that France's withdrawal was directly responsible for the breakdown of the plan for joint action.[35] He points to the outcry of French public opinion, the opposition of the French Chamber of Deputies and of the press, and to conversations of King, American representative in France, with Louis Philippe and Guizot. In these conversations, late in July 1844, the French government did disclaim any intention of proceeding to acts of hostitlity toward the United States. But Adams in British Interests and Activities in Texas points out that these conversations occurred after Aberdeen had transmitted Pakenham's note to Cowley and after Cowley had reported on July 22, 1844 that Guizot was quite willing to postpone a decision upon the matter.

Further proof of English withdrawal from the joint action before the English government had any direct refusal from France is found in Aberdeen's instructions to Bankhead, the British minister to Mexico.

In September, Aberdeen received from Bankhead a despatch written on June 29, stating that Santa Anna proposed to attack Texas in order to prevent American annexation. Aberdeen replied at once and instructed Bankhead to make known to Mexico that if Mexico invaded Texas and became in-

35. Latane, op. cit. p. 253.

volved in a war with the United States, she must not expect aid from Great Britain. Bankhead's despatch had been written before the Murphy memorandum had reached Mexico. On October 23, after Bankhead had reported that Santa Anna had perverted the intent of the memorandum and had said, "The English Government say we must either conquer Texas or grant its independence." Aberdeen wrote again and still more emphatically. He said that Santa Anna's plan to make war on Texas was wholly opposed to the idea of English-French action, and the very existence of any such project defeated the purpose of the English-French-Mexican concert, hence this international combination ceased to exist.

It was not until December 2 that Cowley was at last able to report a definite decision by Guizot. At this time he reported to Aberdeen that Guizot had said that France would join with Great Britain to prevent invasion of Texas, but that further than that she would not go.

This ended the plan for joint guarantee of Texan independence. Aberdeen, freed from outside obligations, was now free to announce a new policy.

The new program called for English influence to secure Texan independence and to persuade Mexico to recognize that independence. At the same time it committed the government to avoidance of war with the United States at all costs.

Regardless of whether the abandonment of the old plan of joint intervention was given up by Aberdeen because of

the French withdrawal or French withdrawal followed Aberdeen's abandonment of the plan, it seems certain that Pakenham's despatch calling attention to the necessity of preventing any embarrassment to the election of Clay was the prime factor in bringing about the abandonment of the plan. Aberdeen had placed his hopes in the election of Clay and he was soon to see that he had backed the wrong horse.

The election of James K. Polk on an open policy of annexation was a clear indication of the wishes of the people of the United States. Tyler determined to act at once in order that the acquisition of Texas might date from his presidency and be his final claim to fame. In his message to congress of December 1844, he proposed that Texas be annexed by joint resolution.

The annexation resolution was passed by the House in January 1845 and by the Senate on March 1.

Soon after the passage of the resolution, the British and French ministers in Mexico and Texas were making their last efforts to prevent annexation. Early in March, Ashbel Smith withdrew from his European post to become Secretary of State under Jones. Smith immediately sought Elliot for conference. Smith proposed that Texas voluntarily pledge herself never to annex to any other country provided Mexico promptly recognized her independence and England consented to act as arbiter in any boundary dispute between Texas and Mexico.

On March 29, 1845, the following document was drawn up by Ashbel Smith, Savigny, the French minister to Texas, and Elliot:[36]

> 1st The signature and seal of the Secretary of State or any other Minister of the Republic of Texas duly authorized by the government thereof, to be procured to the preliminary conditions now submitted to the Representatives of the two powers, and the Government of Texas pledges itself forthwith after the same shall be placed in the hands of the President to issue a Proclamation announcing the conclusion of the preliminaries of peace with the Republic of Mexico.
>
> 2nd Texas for a period of ninety days from the date of the Memorandum agrees not to accept any proposals, nor to enter into any negotiations to annex Herself to any other Country.
>
> Conditions preliminary to a treaty of peace between Mexico and Texas.
>
> I. Mexico consents to acknowledge the Independence of Texas.
>
> II. Texas engages that she will stipulate in the Treaty not to annex herself or become subject to any Country whatever.
>
> III. Limits and other conditions to be matters of arrangement in the final treaty.
>
> IV. Texas will be willing to remit disputed points respecting territory and other matters to the arbitration of umpires.
>
> Done at Washington on the Brasos on the 29 of March, 1845.

Elliot offered to carry these documents to Mexico, secretly, and to use his personal influence with the government there. On May 19 the signature of Mexico was affixed to the document. Elliot returned with the documents and delivered them to the Texan government. President Jones immediately declared peace with Mexico and soon after summoned a convention in order to lay before that body both the proposals of Mexico and the offer of the United States.

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36. Adams, op. cit. p. 210.

Thus, the people of Texas had a chance to choose between independence and union with the United States. The Texas congress unanimously rejected the proposed treaty with Mexico, and when the Convention met early on July 4, 1845, it committed Texas to annexation. When the news reached England, the whole matter was regarded as finally and irrevocably settled.

Summary and Conclusions

The colonization of Texas was a natural continuation of the westward movement of Anglo-American pioneers spurred on by the economic hardships of the panic of 1819 and lured by the liberal land policy of Mexico.

Texas was adapted to cotton culture and the necessity of labor for Texian development caused the best men of the province, both native Mexican and Anglo-American, to work for the right of bringing slaves, even though they were strongly opposed in sentiment to the institution. As a result many slaves were introduced, but the slave-holder with many slaves was kept out of Texas by the shifting policy of the Mexican government and the uncertain status of slavery. The majority of immigrants were men of small means with everything to gain and no slaves to lose. The few slave-holders who did go to Texas had no purposeful intention of affecting the political history of slavery in the United States.

The agitation for the right of the colonists to own slaves was engendered by a desire to further the prosperity of Texas. It was one cause, among many, of mental unease and apprehension in the minds of the Mexicans, but it was not an active cause in precipitating the revolution.

Mexican apprehensions of the Texans developed naturally from the contrasting temperaments and differences in political training of the two peoples. This apprehension of the Mexican government was augmented by reflection on the history

of expansion of the United States and the repeated attempts of the United States to extend her western boundary beyond the Sabine. Negotiations for this purpose were carried on under John Q. Adams and Andrew Jackson alike. Both conducted their negotiations with prudence and dignity. The accusation of Jackson that Texas was lost through the perfidy of Adams and the accusation of Adams that Jackson conspired with Houston to steal Texas, were unjust and unfounded in facts. Both accusations were engendered more by personal enmity of the two men than by a desire on the part of either to strengthen their respective stands on the slavery question. And both succeeded in their negotiations only in increasing the apprehension of the Mexican government.

The revolution was precipitated by the attempts of the corrupt oligarchy of Santa Anna to extend its tyrannical centralization over Texas.

Sam Houston saw the approaching storm and went to Texas to retrieve his fortunes. His influence in precipitating the revolution was negligible; his success in securing Texian independence was decisive; his personal ambition was realized; his policy toward annexation was enigmatic and probably decided by expediency for the best interests of Texas.

English interests in the Texan question had its inception in the policy of Canning to maintain a barrier against the United States and in commercial interests. The activities of H.G. Ward to further Canning's policy were not carried on

in a way that might be considered beyond reproach. He worked unscrupulously and successfully to rouse Mexican apprehensions against the Texans and the United States, but the outcome, instead of strengthening Mexico and preventing expansion of the United States, was the revolution and annexation of Texas, the Mexican war, and expansion of the United States to the Pacific.

The policy of Canning favored Mexico but when British agents called attention to the possibilities of the new country of Texas, Palmerston looked into the matter. He saw an opportunity to assist a new state inhabited by men of Anglo-Saxon blood; a new state with which relations would be much more satisfactory than with Mexico. He realized that relations with the United States, while friendly, were not entirely reliable at this time, and a virile friendly nation to the south would be valuable to Great Britain.

These considerations led to the Hamilton treaties and Palmerston was definitely committed to a policy of support of Texas as a barrier to the United States, even at the risk of Anglo-Mexican relations.

The duplicity of Hamilton in the Slave-Trade Treaty and the natural conservatism of Aberdeen led to a more cautious support of Texas, and a renewal of earlier relations with Mexico. Aberdeen directed British diplomacy in support of the Mexican Republic.

With the failure of the Ashburton treaty to settle all matters between England and the United States, Kennedy's

report, and Ashbel Smith's arrival in London, Aberdeen modified his policy toward maintaining the friendship of both Texas and Mexico. But he took no official notice of Texas until the Abolition Convention of 1843.

With the revival of the anti-slavery agitation in England, Aberdeen was induced to press for abolition through Mexico and he seconded the armistice plan.

These steps solidified American support of plans for annexation which were being laid at this time by Tyler and Upshur. Aberdeen was angered by the use made of the interpretation made of his statements regarding the British policy of desiring abolition everywhere and at the same time became convinced that the United States was definitely planning to annex Texas.

Aberdeen's proposal of joint action to France in January 1844, outlined a well balanced, well developed plan to which he trusted for success. In its application, the use of force was implied, but British confidence in British powers of prohibition was such that force was not contemplated.

Aberdeen was soon to see how difficult a thing it was to carry through a policy of maintaining peaceful and friendly relations with the United States and at the same time restrict them to their existing boundaries. Pakenham's letter indicated that war was certain to follow the plan of joint action. Aberdeen suggested postponement to Guizot and prepared the way for French withdrawal. Santa Anna's blustering

threats to reconquer Texas opened another avenue of escape and Guizot's statement that France would not go to the point of war led Aberdeen to a settled conviction that annexation could not be prevented. His only remaining hope was that Texas would refuse annexation. With this idea in view, Elliot's enterprise of 1843 was permitted.

The decision as to whether Texas should become a part of the American union or remain an independent state was left to the free opinion of its inhabitants. And, although, Aberdeen's plan for joint intervention implied the use of force it did not contemplate force but did require consent of Texas, whose independence the United States had been the first to recognize. England's privileges in Texas were just such as she had in Mexico or in any other independent republic. In so far as Texas stood upon her own feet uncompromised by pledge or agreement with any other nation, England's efforts to secure influence beneficial to British trade were perfectly legitimate. Neither was there any violation of international ethics in a straightforward attempt to bring about abolition in this young republic.

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