

## D. SOCIAL SCIENCES

### I. ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE MONROE DOCTRINE DURING THE PERIOD 1792-1823

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As early as 1792 Thomas Jefferson manifested an intense interest in Cuba, Porto Rico, the Floridas, and other possessions of the King of Spain. According to Jefferson, our first Secretary of State, these islands were natural appendages to the North American Continent, and one of them, Cuba, was almost within sight of the United States. (1). Among other things, he said that it was scarcely possible to resist the conviction that Cuba and Porto Rica were necessary for the security and integrity of the United States.

A few years later, President Monroe wrote to Jefferson concerning a joint recognition of the South American Colonies (2). In this letter he confesses his interest in Cuba, Porto Rica, and other Spanish colonies which were in revolt at this time. His correspondence gives his exact words of the South American situation: "I candidly confess that I have ever looked on Cuba as the most valuable addition to our system of States." (3). He recalled its geographical position, its rich tropical production, its spacious harbors and control of the Gulf of Mexico, sugar and tobacco, which might be exchanged for our agricultural and manufactured products. Due to these interests, according to Jefferson, the United States should go to war with any European power rather than permit a transfer of the islands to any nation (4).

Fear of British and French seizures of Cuba and Porto Rica was general during the period from 1792-1823. This would amount, in case of war, to British or French control of our commerce from Cuba as a vantage point (5). Since the commerce of the Mississippi Valley and the Gulf area was equal in value to the whole of our foreign trade, this would constitute a grave menace to the United States (6). For these reasons, Jefferson manifested an interest in Cuba, Porto Rica the free navigation of the Mississippi, going so far as to want annexation of Cuba, but for the fact that it meant war with Britian (7).

From what one has heard concerning the correspondence of our first Secretary of State, he observes that early American Foreign Policy was rather aggressive. One or two more statements of Jefferson will indicate what our attitude toward Spain was during the formative period. During the presidency of Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe was sent to Paris to help Livingston try to buy the Island of New Orleans (8). In 1809 he wrote to Madison, President of the United States at that time, that Britian should conciliate our good will, as we could be such an obstacle to the career then opening before her in Spanish colonies (9). He also desired the Floridas, which we afterwards obtained. Should Spain concede these valuable colonies, we would not ai the remaining colonies in their revolt against Spanish Colonial Policy (10). "That would be no price, and I would

erect a column on the southern most limit of Cuba and inscribe on it "A plus ultra" as to us in that direction (11). The reason for this policy was that this territory could be defended without a navy. According to Jefferson, this was the principle which should guide us in our territorial expansion. Other leading statesmen manifested a similar interest in the Floridas, the Island possessions, Panama, and in South American trade.

For instance, at a meeting held in 1798, dealing with the South American situation, American delegates asked to be guaranteed in the possession of Louisiana and Cuba (12). This conference between the United States and Great Britain dealt with the coming revolution of the Spanish American Colonies. The United States was to assist the Spanish Colonies in a revolt against the Mother Country. For this aid the United States was to be given territorial considerations, while England was to be paid in commercial privileges. Mr. Gallatin, Minister in London, impressed on Canning's mind that the United States would not permit a transfer of the islands to a strong power (13). In 1818, Henry Clay, made a speech which will illustrate his attitude toward the South American Colonies. According to Mr. Adams, the most important part of Clay's speech was not his gesture toward "eighteen million struggling for liberty," but his remark:

"We may safely trust to the daring enterprise of our merchants. The precious metals are in South America, and they will command the articles wanted in South America, which will purchase them. Our navigation will be benefitted by transportation, and our country will realize the mercantile profits. They go chiefly to the West Indies and to the Spanish America. This item is constantly augmenting." (14)

According to this statement, Clay represented interests similar to those represented by Canning, the British Minister. Both wanted an independent South America in order that the two countries might trade with Spain's former colonies. Calhoun advocated peaceful penetration as a means of adding more territory to the United States (15). John Quincy Adams, the able secretary of state during the administration of James Monroe, shows a keen interest in the economics of American diplomacy.

#### *The Holy Alliance and South American Colonies*

Among the topics discussed at the various European Congresses was the relation of Spain to her colonies. The Holy Allies intended to suppress the colonies, but George Canning opposed European intervention in South America. By 1822 Spain's colonies had gained de facto independence. During the period of the revolution in Europe Spain lost control of the commerce of her colonies. This trade went chiefly to the United States and Great Britain, the greatest naval and commercial powers of that time. Canning did not intend that the Holy Alliance should assist Spain in her effort to re-impose the ancient restrictions on the valuable trade that had sprung up from 1789-1823 (16). Britain would oppose re-conquest by the Holy Allies, France, or any other power for that reason (17). British trade with the Spanish Colonies was considerable at the time of recognition. For instance, witness the panic of 1818, which was caused in part by spec-

ulation in these colonies (18). Napoleon stated that South American trade saved England from bankruptcy. While this statement is not entirely true, it suggests the significance of the economic factor in British diplomacy. Canning refers to his recognition of the Republics of South America, Dec. 17, 1824. He said, "The deed is done: the nail is driven; Spanish America is free, and if we do not mismanage our affairs badly, she is English" (19). The recognition by England was very effective, due to the fact that she had a navy which might be used against any group of nations that attempted to interfere with those colonies.

Due to the above consideration, Canning, the British Prime Minister, proposed joint action with the United States, in recognizing the revolted colonies. Monroe's cabinet, including his unofficial advisors, the aged Jefferson and Madison, was in favor of joint action, but the wily Adams refused to join in such an agreement because, as he stated, the British Nation not only wanted to prevent the Holy Allies from intervening in Spanish America, but they wanted some public pledge that the United States would not acquire any portion of the former Spanish empire (20). At this time England promised not to attempt to take any portion for herself (21).

President Madison in 1811 attempted to secure a commercial treaty with Colombia (22). During the period from 1810 to 1822 consuls were sent to Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Columbia, and Central America. The object was to open trade relations with those countries when the independence movement, beginning in 1810, threatened to sever the colonies from Spanish control.

The commerce between the former Spanish colonies and the United States amounted to \$101,000,000 in 1822 (23). Calhoun stated that the United States had increased by spreading and growing out into unoccupied regions, assimilating all they incorporated. Monroe, at the first session of the Seventeenth Congress, referred to the Spanish American Revolution, noting the effect on this valuable commerce (24). In spite of the advantage of the English in having a powerful navy, our trade with the Latin-American Colonies increased during the revolution for independence. By 1825 this commerce had increased to \$180,000,000 (25). In this connection it must be remembered that \$180,000,000 at that time would amount to three or four times that amount now. It was this valuable commerce, as well as the rich lands to the southwest, that moved the American statesmen to demand an independent South America, because we had more to gain from an independent Latin America than we might hope from a dependent one, as Spain consistently excluded foreign trade with her colonies. Clay, in 1818, said that Spain's colonies were a rich domain. In the same year he wanted recognition (26). According to Clay's speeches, as found in his works, our interests were commercial, political, and that of navigation. The exports to these colonies in 1818 amounted to \$81,000,000. Of these exports more than three-fourths were of the precious metals (27). The residue was in coca, coffee, and sugar. No nation ever offered richer articles for exchange. As a statesman he appealed to Congress to look forward to the time when

the United States would have millions of people and when our produce would need this market. These economic considerations are found throughout Clay's speeches. As a result of the series of speeches made by Clay, from 1818 to 1822, the Congress of the United States recognized the former Spanish Colonies as independent nations (1822) (28).

Reference to Jefferson's works show that he dropped the seeds of the Monroe Doctrine long before 1800. Washington's addresses, especially the Proclamation of Neutrality, strikes the key-note of isolation; but, as I have shown by quoting correspondence from American State Papers and other original sources, the doctrine had been formulated long before 1823. Charlie Beard says, "The doctrine originated partly as a result of fear of the Holy Allies and their despotism, but more especially as the result of an attempt of American traders and merchants to gain a large share of the economic advantages to be gained from the independence of the Latin Colonies (29). Spain had systematically excluded the two foremost trading nations of the world from a share in Spanish Colonial commerce, by monopolizing this trade herself. When the Spanish American revolution started, American and British traders were quick to seize the opportunity presented, for independence meant severing of the bonds which connected the colonies with Spain. Spanish America was interested, also, after three centuries of Spanish monopoly, which made Spanish goods very high as compared to British and American prices. The value of this trade, according to the English merchants, was equal to that of the Continent of Europe which England had lost as a result of wars during the Revolutionary epoch (30). American statesmen have held to similar territorial and commercial interests in South America (31).

From 1821-23, two foreign perils called forth from the administration the proclamation of the new policy, America for Americans (32).

1. The Russian demand that no nation should come within one hundred miles of the Pacific coast on the American side. This would have given Russia control of the valuable fisheries and fur-trade of that coast
2. That plan was of itself a second peril, as the United States had sent consuls to the various South American colonies, looking toward the establishment of trade relations. Now, the League of Despots had crushed the movement for independence in Spain, and by 1822 had decided to resubjugate the Spanish colonies. England stood alone in Europe for non-intervention in South American affairs, while the President of the United States and his cabinet were ready to joint England in this demand; but John Quincy Adams insisted strenuously that the United States must not come in "as a cock boat in the wake of the British man of war" and carried the cabinet and Mundoe with him in his plan for independent action (33).

Meantime Canning had acted, notifying France and the Holy Allies that a re-conquest of the Spanish colonies would mean war with England. His firm stand against intervention caused the Holy Alliance to cease talk of intervening.

The relation of the United States to the rebellious colonies was one of the most delicate questions that ever came before our republic: Too early recognition meant war with Spain and her European friends. Too late recognition meant hostility of the colonies (34).

1. 57 Congress 1 Sess. No. 26. Letter of Thomas Jefferson to President Monroe, Oct. 24, 1823.
2. Rush, My Residence at the Court of London, p. 412.
3. 56 Cong. 2 Sess. Doc. No. 231 pt. VI. Compilation of Reports of the Committee on Foreign Relations, U. S. Senate, VI (in 36 Con. 2 Sess. Senate Report 351 p. 199).
4. Jefferson's Complete Works, Vol VII, p. 288-299.
5. Moore, Digest of International Law, Vol. VI, p. 346.
6. Ibid.
7. Jefferson's Complete Works, Vol. VII, p. 288-99.
8. Lanté: American Foreign Policy, p. 102.
9. 56 Cong. 2 Sess. Doc. No. 231 p. 199.
10. Moore, Digest of International Law, Vol VI, p. 381.
11. Jefferson's Complete Works, Vol. VII, p. 288-99.
12. Life of John Adams, Vol. VI, p. 680-682.
13. Annals of Cong. 1 Sess. Vol. II, p. 1485. See also Adams, History of the Foreign Policy of the United States, p. 171-172.
14. Ibid.
15. Calhoun's Works, Vol. V, Texas Annexation.
16. Cespedes, Jose' Maria, La Doctrine de Monroe, p. 153.
17. Stapleton, Life of Canning, III, p. 7.
18. Gide and Rist, History of Economic Doctrines, p. 172.
19. Hart, A. B., The Monroe Doctrine; An Interpretation, p. 56, 62.
20. House Docs., Vol. 132, No. 551, 56 Cong. 2 Sess, Vol VI, p. 399.
21. Rush, Residence at the Court of London, p. 171.
22. American State Papers, For. Rel. IX, p. 845.
23. American State Papers, For. Rel. Vol. VII, p. 199, 696, 721.
24. 17 Cong. 1 Sess. Vol. II, p. 1402.
25. Clay's Works, Vol. V.
26. American State Papers, Vol. III, 12 Cong. 1 Sess. p. 538 Spain and the United States.
27. Priestly, The Mexican Nation, p. 163.
28. American State Papers, Vol. VII, p. 696. For. American Economic interests. See also American State Papers, Vol. 1, p. 696.
29. Beard, Chas. American Government and Politics, p. 333.
30. American State Papers, For. Rel. II, IV, 326 and 332.
31. Moore: Digest of International Law, Vol. VI, p. 381.
32. West, W. M.: American History and Government, p. 449.
33. Ibid.
34. Channing, Edward: History of the United States, Vol. V, p. 342-3.