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MORRIS TO ROBERTS.^a

SAN ANTONIO *Sep. the 13th. 1841.*

Hon.

SAMUEL A. ROBERTS
Acting Secy. of State.

DEAR SIR

Your communication sent by the hands of Major Ganatz suggest-
ing the necessity of the presence of either Mr. Van Ness or myself,
"immediately" at Austin has just been received and we regret ex-
tremely that its call cannot be so promptly responded to as you seem
to wish and we would desire.

As you are aware, our court is now in session in which we both
have many cases, of importance, which cannot be neglected but at
great loss to ourselves and clients. My own disposition, and in fine
many other circumstances render it utterly impossible to leave town
at present.

We however hope that this communication which will be sent by
Mr. Chevallia will be all sufficient to enable you to treat fully with the
Commissioners from Yucatan and enter into any negotiation, which
may be deemed fit with that Gentleman.

It is not my intention to enter into a full detail of all the trans-
actions connected with our mission for time will not allow, and we
shall be in Austin so soon as the Court adjourns at this Place, which
will be on friday or saturday next, when a full exhibit of our cor-
respondence and communications with Gen. Arista will be made. I
only deem it necessary at this time to state that no treaty or stipula-
tion has been entered into by Gen. Arista, with us, which can in the
slightest degree clash with any arrangement which may now be made
with the commissioner from Yucatan—whether of a hostile or pacific
character towards the government of Mexico, and that the Republic
of Texas, so far as our Mission is concerned, is perfectly free and open
to pursue any course which it may deem fit towards that Country.
No stipulation has been entered into restraining the movements of
Texas in any manner whatever, and so far we stand in the same posi-
tion towards Mexico, which we have always occupied.

I will add in conclusion from many circumstances which came
within the scope of my observation, that whilst Mexico has not the
most remote idea of ever invading Texas Yet she has no stronger
inclination to recognize our independence than when Santa Anna
first marched against us with his invading army.

With the highest regard I
remain Your friend and Servt.

JOHN D. MORRIS

^aA. L. S.

MORRIS TO ROBERTS.^a

SAN ANTONIO 30th. of Sep. 1841.

To the Hon. SAMUEL A. ROBERTS

Acting Sec of State

SIR—

In compliance with your request that a full and correct statement be made of our acts and proceedings whilst acting as commissioners of this government, with General Arista, we respectfully submit the following statement.

We left San Antonio with Dr. Rafael Uribe, the Commissioner sent out by Arista, and on the tenth day afterwards, arrived at the town of Guerrero, situate ten miles [from the border] on the west side of the Rio Grande. Here being received and treated with the most marked attention, we determined to remain a few days until our horses should be sufficiently recruited for the travel to Monterrey, at which place we were informed Arista was then quartered. During the stay at the above mentioned place, a communication was received by Mr. Uribe from Gen. Arista, the purport of which inasmuch as we have no copy, you can readily conceive from the following note, which we addressed to Mr. Uribe.

[JULY 18, 1841.^b]

To Dr. RAFAEL URIBE—

SIR—

We have been informed this morning by Col. J. N. Seguin that you have received a communication from Gen. Arista, expressing some surprise that he (Col. Seguin) should have visited this frontier in the character of a commissioner from the Republic of Texas, and requiring him not only to communicate to you the object of his mission, but to remain here until further intelligence from Gen. Arista should be had.

Of the object of Col. Seguin's visit we presume he will himself inform you. That he is charged with a commission from the Gov. of Texas, is an error, for the undersigned as you will see by the accompanying passport are the bearers of that Commission.

We do not hesitate to say that the Communication of Gen. Arista has surprised us, for with every confidence in his well established Character for ability and honor, we could not otherwise than suppose that the same courtesy and protection extended in Texas to his Commissioner would have been reciprocated to us, not do we yet doubt it, when he should be correctly informed upon the matter.

Gen. Arista cannot for a moment presume that we have in view or intend to broach the question of the recognition of the independence of Texas, or that of peace between the two Governments. These are

^a A. I. S.^b See Arista to Van Ness and Morris, August 8, 1841.

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[JULY 18, 1841.]

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subjects alone for the consideration of the high powers of the Nation. The business entrusted to us by the Gov. of Texas relates exclusively to the affairs of the frontier under the Command of Gen. Arista and will be laid before him at such time and place as he may see fit to appoint. Far would it be from us or from the Government we represent to propose to Gen. Arista or expect of him aught that would be inconsistent with or in the least compromise the high character he sustains as an Officer of the Mexican Government, and we cannot but regret that he should have been induced by an erroneous impression to delay a more immediate and direct communication with him. When he shall facilitate to us the means of a fair understanding and full exposition of our instructions, he will find that any propositions we may make will be within the scope of his authority dictated by honor, and not only compatible, but consequent to a state of honourable hostility. In the meantime we will await at this place further intelligence from Gen. Arista.

We will here take occasion to say that the rumours of the approach of a Texan force, to attack this frontier are entirely groundless. Nor will any party authorized by the Government of Texas make an exhibit or commit any act of hostility during our visit. Should any depredations be committed, we can assure you that this will proceed from unauthorized banditti.

With the highest regard we remain

Your Obt. Servts.

C. VAN NESS

J. D. MORRIS

Before receiving a reply to the above communication, and whilst we were still in Guerrero, Col. Jose Maria Carrasco, an officer of the Mexican army, arrived at that place bearing despatches from Gen. Arista, together with letters written by Arista to Carrasco. In which after enjoining upon Col. Carrasco, to treat the Texan Commissioners, with the most marked attention and politeness, he authorizes him to enter into a formal negotiation with us, ascertain the object of our mission and give us our final answer—expressing at the same time his full confidence in the skill and ability of Col. Carrasco and his intimate acquaintance with his (Arista's) plans in relation to this Country. Col. Carrasco waited upon us at our quarters, and after a long and on his part, as it seemed to us, very confidential communication, he desired that we should reduce to writing the main features of our mission, that we might more fully understand each other, which was done.

Before giving you those written communications, I will premise by a short history of the impressions made upon me by repeated conversations with Colonel Carrasco.

He is a young Officer of great popularity and promise in the Mexican army, and was engaged in the past year in negotiating the treaty with Canales and the Federals, and is suspected by many of being strongly inclined to the liberal side. He told us that the whole country North of the Sierra Madre was then and had been in a state of violent Commotion and agitation, that the federal cause far from being smothered and destroyed by the events of the past year had only been depressed for the moment, in order that it might break out in a form which would give a greater guarantee of success, and from many observations which dropped from him, from the high stations, which Canales and Cardines^a now occupy, both as officers of that country, and in the estimation of Gen. Arista our conclusion was that the treaty with Canales was simply an arrangement between him and Arista, that the federal cause which was then rather desperate, should be depressed for a while again to rise at a more favourable opportunity, under the guidance and with the assistance of Gen. Arista. Such are our impressions in relation to that treaty, but whether the result contemplated by the Federalists in its negotiation will ever be accomplished is, so far as I could ascertain a doubtful matter. The two principal and prominent characters now in Mexico, are Gen. Santa Anna and Gen. Arista, both men of much military fame, both men of unbounded ambition, both aiming at the presidential Chair, and two more violent opponents both personal and political, perhaps never lived. It is thought that the power and influence of Santa Anna even by the friends of Arista, is much greater than that of Arista, and that should no unforeseen event take place, that he will be the next president and of course Arista be immediately crushed. But in the many changes, and revolutions which almost daily transpire in the Country, Arista's chance with but one single opponent is considered to be good. Such is the position in which Arista stands, with but one single opponent to the presidential chair, and this peculiar position may account [for] certain matters in relation to our mission which might be otherwise difficult to explain. Col. Carrasco unhesitatingly declared, that he himself was a Federal, and Arista would head the party, in the revolution, which would break out at the very first moment when a favourable opportunity presented itself—that he was most anxious to conciliate the friendship and perhaps assistance of the Texans, etc. etc.

We were constantly enjoined to the greatest secrecy whilst treating with both Carrasco, and Arista, and great fears seemed to be apprehended least something connected with our mission might transpire, and we were requested by Col. Carrasco and Gen. Arista in our

^a Cárdenas.

written communication to Mexico to be as much as possible permitted, and by the public to concede that negotiation might take place, might be carried out in the world, and more so the authorities at Mexico. All our propositions to ourselves who have should comprehend that thing is carried out adopted, but one attempt to explain the reasons are most in with Texas, and whatever capacity in the eyes of that Carrasco, was anxious but at the same time fore privately entered his utter refusal is the whole Mexico of a great revolution.

Arista is still doing revolution, and with side, should he admit of his being elevated to espouse the Federal cause of affairs Arista is conciliating the Citizens to the Federal party inclines to their side reach to Government and devoted Central and the Texans, and more especially hence his refusal popularity which frontier and his position Commissioners on

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written communications, which would of course be transmitted to Mexico to be as mild and conciliating as the nature of things would permit, and by the former that it would be impossible openly and publicly to concede to our propositions, but that whilst a secret negotiation might take place in which all our propositions and plans might be carried out, Still that the answer which appeared to the world, and more especially that which would be sent to Government authorities at Mexico, should contain a flat and positive refusal of all our propositions. (By the way it is difficult that a people like ourselves who have always been governed in an openhanded way, should comprehend the Mexican mode of doing business, where every thing is carried on in the dark and where no public measure is ever adopted, but one of duplicity and deceit.) In a few words I will attempt to explain. The Supreme authorities in Mexico, for many reasons are most inveterately opposed to any thing like conciliation with Texas, and even the favourable reception of any Texian in whatever capacity he might go, would be considered as a high crime in the eyes of that Government. Gen. Arista, or rather his agent Col. Carrasco, was anxious to conciliate, and to accede to our propositions, but at the same time wishes to hoodwink his government. He therefore privately entered into an agreement with us, and publicly declared his utter refusal to comply with our propositions. The truth is the whole Mexican country is in a perfect ferment, and on the eve of a great revolution.

Arista is still doubtful as to the probable result of this impending revolution, and with a fair prospect of the Presidential chair on one side, should he adhere to the Central cause, and the absolute certainty of his being elevated to the highest station in the nation should he espouse the Federal cause, and in case of their success. In this state of affairs Arista is halting, as to his decision, he is privately conciliating the Citizens, all of whom with but few exceptions belong to the Federal party, and inducing among them the belief that he inclines to their side, whilst all his public acts which he knows must reach to Government, would declare him the most uncompromising, and devoted Central. Hence arises the unmitigated abuse of Texas and the Texans, which daily emanates from all the newspapers, and more especially that one which is paid and supported by himself, hence his refusal to accede to our propositions, and hence the great popularity which attaches to him amongst the liberal party on the frontier and his polite and kind reception and treatment of the Texas Commissioners on that frontier.

You will find in the Copy of our Communication, to Col. Carrasco which immediately follows, the propositions which are made by us.

GUERRERO *July 25th. 1841.*

Col. CARRASCO

In compliance with your wishes as expressed in the interview of this morning, we will proceed to communicate to you frankly and explicitly the business entrusted to us by the President of Texas.

The Government of Texas has witnessed with regret the sectional and border war now existing and which has existed several years past on the adjoining Frontiers of Mexico and Texas, and which, of late, divested of almost every feature of national contest between the two countries has become little better than a system of predatory incursions and foray, attended with no other results than the pillage and ruin of unoffending citizens and settlements. This state of things is not only destructive to the interests of important sections of both Countries, but is derogatory to the character of enlightened and honourable people, and should not be allowed to continue any longer. Degrading the profession of arms into robbery and murder, it can only lead to crime and individual suffering, without tending in the least degree towards the adjustment of the difficulties between the two nations. When either party shall choose again to enter the arena of war, the contest ought to be a national one, and should be conducted in a manner consonant with the characters of the contending parties. Texas on her part will never vary from that course unless driven from it in self defense by some intolerable conduct of her adversary. Entertaining these views and believing that Gen. Arista is actuated by the high and honorable feelings which always belong to a soldier and a gentleman, and that it is only necessary to call his attention to the evils alluded to, to secure his co-operation in putting an end to them, we now propose to you a suspension of all hostilities for the present, or at least the abolishment of that petty warfare, which is calculated to engender personal feuds and revengeful feelings that may linger upon the border long after peace has been established. Should we meet with the same worthy feeling which has induced our visit and our suggestions [be] considered in a spirit of justice and liberality we presume some arrangement could be entered into which would place the relations and intercourse between the two frontiers (even though hostile) upon a higher and more honourable footing; and which while advancing the interests and conciliating the situation of many, will not compromit the character or dignity of ether nation. War open and honourable war, we neither shun nor invite; but preferable and far more creditable it is, than the species of hostility now conducted. If hostile let our animosity be exhibited in a manner worthy of the advancement of the age, in which we live.

And we must take occasion to say that unless some measures are adopted which will relieve our border settlements from the continued apprehensions they are under, Texas will be forced to take retaliatory

steps. Self defence will compel her to a menace, but it is our duty to apprise you from an adherence

You cannot but be able commerce in the tiers, and notwithstanding made by the authorities, it continues, it cannot be denied, unless at an end beyond any benefits protecting, instead of results of the measure. And as it must enable you to derive from it.

Such sir, are the Government and proceeded to by you if you deem the course to console ourselves with the knowledge that them. Such an and shall remain evidently beneficial

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July 25th. 1841.

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steps. Self defence and the imperious calls of her suffering frontier will compel her to adopt that course, nor do we use this language as a menace, but in complying with our instructions. At the same time that we propose to avoid the necessity of such an event, we deem it our duty to apprise you of the consequences that will inevitably result from an adherence to the system hitherto pursued.

You cannot but be aware that even at the present time, a considerable commerce is carried on between the inhabitants of the two frontiers, and notwithstanding the vigorous efforts which have been made by the authorities both military and civil to put an end to this trade, it continues to exist. That it is beneficial to both countries cannot be denied, nor do we believe it possible effectually to check it unless at an enormous expense and trouble—an expense entirely beyond any benefits to be expected. By authorizing that commerce and protecting, instead of persecuting it we entertain no doubt but that results of the most important character could be realized by you. And as it must exist why not place it upon that footing that will enable you to derive the great benefit which must necessarily arise from it.

Such sir, are the propositions which we make on the part of our Government and for their complete fulfilment should they be conceded to by you every effort will be made on our part. But should you deem the course we propose to be unwise and impolitic, we will console ourselves during the evil consequences which must arise, with the knowledge that every thing has been done on our part to prevent them. Such an event we do not however for a moment contemplate, and shall remain,^a until convinced by your reply, that matters so evidently beneficial the Frontier of Mexico, will be immediately adopted.

We have etc etc

C. VAN NESS and J D MORRIS

In answer to the foregoing we received as we had been led to expect from our consultations with Col. Carrasco, a note the original of which is herewith transmitted, expressing his inability and unwillingness to enter into any negotiations upon the subject. But an absolute verbal pledge that so soon as the matter could be secretly arranged, the ranging parties who are now stationed on the frontier to intercept traders, and by whom our frontier has been continually harrassed, should be removed, every effort should be made to prevent any hostile movements by the citizens and that so far as they were concerned the trade should proceed free and uninterrupted.

As to the proposition in relation to the cessation of hostilities, we found no difficulty upon that point. But on the subject of the trade we found him difficult to persuade. He stated that during the last

^a Some words are omitted.

two years, the trade from the frontier limited and crippled as it had been, had reduced the Government revenue to a large amount, that the town of Matamoras which up to that time had been a flourishing and improving city had dwindled away to almost nothing and that very little more than one fourth of the revenue formerly accruing from the Customhouse at that place could now be obtained, and that hence the operations of the army had been much restricted for their principal support had been derived from this source. And it does seem to me that there is no course which this government can now pursue so well calculated to annoy and distress the Central party, on that frontier as an encouragement and promotion of the Contraband trade. For at the same time that we are ourselves receiving an immense benefit, our friends too are on the other side reaping a harvest, whilst the strength and resources of the Mexican army are being curtailed to a large amount.

We however eventually prevailed upon Col. Carrasco to concede this point, and started on our way to Texas. We had recrossed the Rio Grande, when we were overtaken by an express from Gen. Arista, bearing passports and a note requesting us to proceed immediately to Monterray.

An escort of eight men we found in readiness at Guerrero and in five days reached Monterrey where we were received by Gen. Arista with the most marked attention, and politeness.

The following is a copy of a communication which we sent to Gen. Arista after our arrival.

MONTERREY *August the 6th, 1841*

To H. E.

DR. MARIANO ARISTA

SIR

We presume that ere this you have received the note directed by us under date of 25th ult to Col. Dn. Jose Ma. Carrasco, communicating to him the subjects encharged to us by the Govt. of Texas.

We will now respectfully call your attention to that note, believing that it is unnecessary to add anything to the points therein suggested. And although the answer of Col. Carrasco was different both in tone and tenor from what as friends of Justice and humanity we had expected, we must be excused from any reply.

While we may be fully sensible of the unjust and incorrect grounds he assumes, yet as it is not our purpose to engage in an angry and recriminating discussion, which far from tending in the least towards the accomplishment of our views, would not otherwise than aggravate existing evils, we will without further comment submit the propositions to your enlightened judgment. None but sentiments of the noblest Character and a disposition to avoid if possible an exterminat-

ing warfare, which are fast bringing on appeal.

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I was particularly paper and public G abuse against the T Government and peo ican arms lost at Sa Yucatan and Talisco

During our sojourn every attention from

ing warfare, which continued and repeated agravations and injuries are fast bringing on have induced the President of Texas to make this appeal.

What were the causes or origin of the present unfortunate state of things on our adjoining frontiers, it is useless now to enquire. Suffice it to say, that that crisis has arrived, which requires the immediate and remedial influence of intelligence and chivalry, or the most disastrous effects of unbridled and revengeful passions will be felt upon the border. To avoid, if possible, this result, is our present purpose and that our efforts will be reciprocated we will not not permit ourselves to doubt.

We remain with the highest respect
Your Obt. Servts.

C. VAN NESS
J D MORRIS.

In answer to the above communication, an answer was Handed us by Arista, the original of which inasmuch as I have no correct translation, is herewith transmitted, from which you will perceive that he declares his inability, as an officer of the Mexican Government to entertain any conversation with us on the subjects set forth in our Note. We had however long and confidential conversations with Gen. Arista, in which he stated that the regular troops ranging on the frontier had always received his express orders, not to pass the Rio Nueces, which he alluded to as our boundary; and never to molest any unoffending citizens, and that these orders should be enforced. But he said that for his own protection he should be compeled to use every means in his power to put a stop to the trade. He informed us, that at present, and for a long time to come, no hope need be entertained by Texas of a recognition of her independence by Mexico, not only on account of the inveterate animosity entertained towards us, but because a Texas Campaign was always a sure means of raising money, when required by the Government. But that we might be well assured that no hostile operations would or could be made against Texas for the present.

I was particularly struck with one thing that whilst every newspaper and public Gazette in the whole country were turning with abuse against the Texas robbers, as we are called, and urging the Government and people to unite and restore the honor of the Mexican arms lost at San Jacinto, not one word was ever said about Yucatan and Talisco,* two provinces now in a state of open revolt.

During our sojourn, some twelve days, in Monterrey, we received every attention from Arista, his officers, and all the people, and

* Tabasco.

when we departed were escorted as far as the Rio Grande by an officer and eight soldiers.

I feel no hesitation in believing that in a very short time there will break out a terrible revolution in throughout the whole of Mexico, and the result will be the creation of a government at first purely democratic.

With this slight history of our transactions and the impressions made by our observations in that country,

I remain Your Obt. humble Servt.

JNO. D. MORRIS.

I feel it further incumbent upon me to add, that whilst we were in Monterrey two Mexicans who had been taken by a party of Texans near Goliad, and made their escape, came into town. The occurrence produced a great excitement among the liberal party, the friends of Texas, and two Americans, Drs. Tower and Cottle were in a day or two afterwards placed under arrest. The Effect of hostile movements on our part upon the frontier could so far as I could perceive result in no beneficial effect, but would render many who are now firm friends, in self defence, our most inveterate foes. Could Matamoras be destroyed, good might result for these all are Centrals, and all most bitter enemies to Texas.

Ys etc.

JNO. D. MORRIS.

Cuerpo
de Egército del Norte
General en Gefé.

MONTEREY Agosto 8. de 1841.

Sres. Dn. C. VAN NESS y Dn. T. MORRIS.

Particular.

MUY SRES MIOS.

Cuando he permitido á Vdes. venir hasta mi Cuartel General, ha sido en virtud de la protesta que hicieron en la carta dirigida á Dn. Rafael Uribe, con fha. 18. del pasado, de que el asunto que traían era ageno enteramente de la cuestion que se versa entre el Supremo Gobierno y sus Colonias sublevadas.

Veo qe. en la carta de Vdes. fecha de ayer,^a que contesto, se tocan puntos que sin duda afectan aquel principio, y naturalmente debo no investigarlos, reduciendo mi contestacion á lo siguiente.

La contienda de que se trata, tiene el caracter de intestina: no cabe duda alguna en que Tejas pertenece á Mejico y en que los habitantes de aquel territorio se han alzado contra el Gobierno legítimo. Claro es, que, no debe presumirse que existen derechos que las Naciones respetan cuando se hacen la guerra entre sí; ni menos debe acudirse á las reglas del derecho internacional.

^aThe date was the 6th.

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^a See Records

^b Allende.

Sentados estos principios, ninguna clase de relaciones ni convenios pueden entablarse, sinó tienen por base, *la sujecion de esos paises al Gobierno de Mejico.*

Los males y calamidades que trae consigo una guerra, son seguramente terribles, ya sea por que se hagan las hostilidades parciales y estacionarias, ya por que sean energicas y decisivas: no puede esperarse, por tanto, que tal situacion sea á gusto de las partes contendientes y esto explica el estado actual de la frontera, de que se lamenta Tejas.

Sin embargo, aseguraré á Vdes. que el General que manda las tropas Mejicanas en la frontera, conoce las leyes de la guerra, y obrando con arreglo á ellas, á las instrucciones de su Gobierno, y al espíritu del siglo, jamas ataca á los Ciudadanos inocentes, y respeta los derechos de la humanidad; tanto mas, cuanto que está persuadido que en Tejas existe gran numo. de individuos pacificos, que, en el fondo de su corazon, desean volver á la obediencia de la Republica.

Veo pues, de lo escrito y de lo que hemos hablado, que nada se adelantará en este asunto, que las hostilidades seguirán y que quizá pronto vendrá el día en que esta cuestion tenga el desenlace que deseamos todos los Mejicanos pa. honor de nuestra patria.

Juzgo que hemos concluido nuestras conferencias y que Vdes. pueden regresar á Tejas, seguros de que sus personas no seran molestadas en su transito y de que en lo particular me ofrezco, como su mas atento y afmo. ser[vid]or. q. b. ss. mm.

MARIANO ARISTA
(Rúbrica)

BRENHAM AND COOKE TO SECRETARY OF STATE [ROBERTS].^a

ALENDE^b STATE OF CHIHUAHUA, *Mexico Novr 9th 1841*
to the SECRETARY OF STATE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

SIR

In accordance with our instructions, we avail ourselves of the first opportunity that has occurred since our departure from Austin, of reporting our situation, together with the progress and circumstances attending the expedition upon which we embarked. It is with regret that we are under the necessity of detailing occurrences so little anticipated by our Govt. and so disastrous to the Expedition in which we engaged: but a sense of duty in obedience to our instructions urges [us] to adopt the earliest means of conveying to you a correct account of the causes which led to the defeat of the Santa Fe

^a See Records of Department of State (Texas), Book 42, pp. 61-66.

^b Alende.

Expedition. Our present circumstances compel us to be brief in the narration.

After many unexpected delays and embarrassments, that retarded our march beyond the time anticipated for our arrival in Santa Fe, we at length on the 29th August, reached a point on the Palo Duro a tributary of Red River beyond which there was apparently no further means of progressing with the wagons accompanying the command. Previous to this time, on the 11th Mr Howland our guide, was sent forward with two men, bearing a communication to Mr. Dryden our colleague in Santa Fe; we being at the time under the impression that we were within one hundred miles of that city—judging from the information of a Mexican whom we had also employed as a guide, who was a native of Taos and appeared to be familiar with the country through which we were passing. A few days after the departure of Howland the Mexican suddenly deserted in company with a private an Italian named Brignoli. On our arrival at the Palo Duro, the commissary reported but five days rations of beef, other rations exhausted. The country in advance of us appeared impassable for waggons—and Indians in large numbers had made their appearance in the vicinity of our camp. Under these embarrassing circumstances, when further progress with the entire command and train seemed impracticable, it was concluded that the undersigned, a majority of the commission should proceed forward with one third of the escort to the nearest settlement to procure supplies and guides to furnish and conduct the troops into New Mexico. We left Camp accordingly on the 31st August with 75 soldiers under the command of Capt Sutton—who with merchants and others formed a body of 97 men. It was our expectation on leaving camp that we should arrive at settlements or strike a road that had been described to us leading to San Miguel, in five days march—but we saw no human being nor any sign of civilization until we reached the Mora a branch of Red River on the 11th Sept, where we met with some Mexican traders. They informed us that we were about 80 miles distant from San Miguel and that there was a wagon road leading from that place to within a short distance of our camp. We immediately sent back two of them with orders to Genl McLeod to destroy the baggage wagons and follow us with all despatch. We continued our march and on the 14th Mr. G. Van Ness our Secretary was despatched ahead to San Miguel to communicate with Mr Dryden whom we expected to meet there and to gain some information respecting the condition of the country. He was also directed to make arrangements for procuring supplies. He was accompanied by Maj. G. T. Howard, Capt W. P. Lewis, Mr Fitzgerald, a merchant of San Antonio and Mr Kendall of New

Orleans.^a Our horses advance but slowly. O'Connell called Anton Chico several hours after our arrival. An American officer (Capt Salas) on the opposite side of the river informed us that the Governor of New Mexico had a large force, and had obtained our business in the country. We declined holding any object of our visit, but our intentions toward the city were to lay down our arms. Anton Chico until we received the officer informed us he would be by an escort. On the 16th we were told that unless we were met by Van Ness by the next morning he would despatch a messenger in communication requiring us to state by what day he would cross the river. It was an evidence that to this time no event had occurred of hostility against the party. Our men with the utmost care had been paid for at do. The officer called on us and requested us to pause until we could march on without our arms. He had the head of five thousand men at his disposal. He left us and about noon took a position in our front in the manner of their march and we suspected their intentions were to attack us in order for battle. We took a position in a ditch on the left and have successfully repelled the attack. Our ammunition lasted. About noon we had taken his position, and the next day a Colonel crossed the river with the first party, making in

^a George Wilkins Kendall, editor of the *Western Messenger*, mentions these affairs in his work entitled "The

Orleans.^a Our horses being worn out with long marches we could advance but slowly. On the 15th we arrived on the Pecos at a settlement called Anton Chico, twenty miles from San Miguel. Several hours after our arrival at the place, we were visited by a Mexican officer (Capt Salazar) who had just arrived at a ranch on the opposite side of the river with seventy armed men. He informed us that the Governor of New Mexico was advancing towards us with a large force, and had ordered him on to intercept our march, ascertain our business in the country and require us to lay down our arms. We declined holding any communication with him in regard to the object of our visit, but informed him that we came with no hostile intentions toward the citizens of the country and positively refused to lay down our arms. We concluded however to remain at Anton Chico until we received some intelligence from Mr Van Ness, who the officer informed us had proceeded on to meet the Govr attended by an escort. On the 16th we had another interview with the officer, who was told that unless we received some information from Mr Van Ness by the next morning we should proceed to San Miguel. He agreed to despatch a courier instantly to Mr Van Ness with a communication requiring his return, and said that on the following day he would cross the river with his men and encamp in our vicinity as an evidence that he was friendly disposed towards us. Up to this time no event had occurred that could justly excite feelings of hostility against the people we had met who had been treated by our men with the utmost courtesy. The provisions we had received had been paid for at double their customary value. On the 17th the officer called on us again with an express from the Governor requesting us to pause until the arrival of that functionary or to go on without our arms. He stated that the Govr was advancing at the head of five thousand men and would be at Anton Chico the next day. He left us and about 1 O'clock P. M. commenced crossing the river about half a mile below us. After crossing he marched up and took a position in our front with about three hundred men. The manner of their march and the position they assumed caused us to suspect their intentions and Capt Sutton was ordered to put his men in order for battle. We were at this time in a very strong position in a ditch on the bank of the river, from which we could have successfully repelled an attack of a thousand men so long as our ammunition lasted. About an hour after the officer abovementioned had taken his position, another body of Troops under the command of a Colonel crossed the river above us and formed a junction with the first party, making in all about six hundred men. There was

^a George Wilkins Kendall, editor of the *Picayune*. Kendall has given a narrative of the affairs in his work entitled "The Santa Fé Expedition."

ceeded in making his way to us before Lewis arrived, our expedition would have terminated differently. We were informed that Howland was offered his life on condition that he would co-operate in the villainy of Lewis, but he refused the base proposal with scorn and contempt and died a brave and honorable man—his best eulogy is the manner of his death. We have no time to recite to you the privations and indignities we have endured together with the soldiers who have frequently on the march been treated with great brutality. We are now on our way to the City of Mexico entirely uncertain as to the fate that awaits us. We know nothing concerning Van Ness and his companions except that they were imprisoned on their arrival at Santa Fe. No respect was paid to Mr Kendall's passport. Mr Dryden was arrested in Chihuahua immediately on the reception of the documents taken with us in consequence of his name being in the commission and instructions. Messers Rowland and Workman left N. Mexico several months since for California. Orders have been sent to that country to kill them wherever found. This order has been given in consequence of a copy of the instructions sent last year to N Mexico, being found among our papers. We were informed yesterday that a courier had arrived from Santa Fe bringing intelligence of the surrender of Genl McLeod with 182 men to Gov Armijo. Genl McLeod, Mr Navarro, three Captains and Surgeon are said to be now on the route to Mexico and will overtake us in a few days. We know nothing of the circumstances or conditions of the surrender, we suspect it to have been influenced by the agency of Lewis. We here deem it proper to state that during our stay in the City of Chihuahua we were treated with great kindness by the Governor and citizens, and we are much indebted to the Americans and other foreigners residing there for the hospitality they manifested to us and the men. Whilst in that City we obtained from Dr Henry Conelley \$1339.00 on the credit of our Govt. for the purpose of supplying the men with clothing subsistence and transportation. Prisoners in this country, as far as our observation has extended, depend entirely on the charity of the people for subsistence as the Govt. makes no provision for their support. On our arrival at the City of Mexico we shall be obliged to call upon some of the friends of our Govt. for the means of subsisting and clothing the men. And we therefore respectfully suggest that Congress be recommended to make an appropriation to supply their necessities.

We have thus endeavored to give you an outline of the events that have brought us to the situation in which we are now placed in order to correct the fabulous statements put in circulation by the Mexican Authorities concerning us, and that our Govt. may adopt such measures as its judgment may dictate for our relief. Our present condi-

tion and the uncertainty precludes us from presenting an account of the Expedition as we have no information as we have

We have the honor to be very Respectfully,
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tion and the uncertainty of conveying intelligence from this country precludes us from presenting at this time a more comprehensive account of the Expedition, or transmitting to your department, such information as we have obtained in regard to this country.

We have the honor to be

very Respectfully

Your Obt. Servts.

RICHARD F BRENHAM
WM. G. COOKE

BEE TO SANTA ANNA.^c

HAMILTON TO SANTA ANNA.^b

SANTA ANNA TO BEE.^c

SANTA ANNA TO HAMILTON.^d

HAMILTON TO SANTA ANNA.^e

HOUSTON TO SANTA ANNA.^e

DAINGERFIELD TO JONES.^f

DAINGERFIELD TO JONES.^g

ORDERS TO SOMERVELL.^h

^c December 27, 1841. See Calendar.

^b January 13, 1842. See Calendar.

^c February 6, 1842. See Calendar.

^d February 18, 1842. See Calendar.

^e March 21, 1842. See Calendar.

^f April 1, 1842. See Calendar.

^g April 15, 1842. See Calendar.

^h October 3, 1842. See Calendar.

SPECIAL ORDER TO SOMERVELL.^aSOMERVELL TO HAMILTON.^bHAMILTON TO SOMERVELL.^cSOMERVELL TO HOUSTON.^dHAMILTON TO SOMERVELL.^eHAMILTON TO SOMERVELL.^fHAMILTON TO HOUSTON.^g

[JONES] TO HAMILTON.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington Decr. 26th 1842General JAMES HAMILTON
SIR,

I have the honor, by special direction of the President to acknowledge the receipt of several letters, written by you to him, during the month of Novr. on the subject of a proposed secret negotiation with Gen. Almonte, for the cession of Texas to the United States etc, with a view of the Ultimate procurement of her independence. Your communication of the 25th Novr. Ult. written at Columbus (Geo.) to this Department and contain[ing] a detaild account of your agency in the seizure of the Steam frigate Montezuma, and of its subsequent liberation by the Authorities of England, has also been recieved.

In reply to your request to be employed as an agent of Texas in a secret negotiation with Gen. Almonte, I am instructed to inform you that the Government of this Country being represented by official functionaries at the different Courts, with which it has interests or friendly relations to promote, the President declines employing your

^a October 13, 1842. See Calendar of Correspondence with Mexico.

^b November 7, 1842. See Calendar.

^c November 9, 1842. See Calendar.

^d November 14, 1842. See Calendar.

^e November 19, 1842. See Calendar.

^f November 21, 1842. See Calendar.

^g December 14, 1842. See Calendar.

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^a See the letter referred

^b February 1, 1842.

^c See Records of Depart

agency in any manner whatever. Other reasons exist for this conclusion, some of which are connected with the public policy of the country alone, and cannot at this time be properly communicated to you, and some having relevance to your individual disqualifications, which will be given you, if requested.

In compliance with an assurance therein given, the President directs me to furnish you the following copy of an extract of Mr. G. W. Terrill's letter to Mr. Ashbel Smith. This letter is dated Decr. 7th 1842, and was written while Mr. Terrill was discharging in my absence the duties of Secretary of State:

[Here follows the instruction "(Copy Extract)." This direction does not indicate how much was to be copied; but the extract was doubtless intended to include the paragraphs relating to Hamilton's share in the efforts to detain the Montezuma and Guadalupe and his request to be empowered to treat with Almonte.^a]

I have the honor to be
with the highest respect
Your Most Obt. Svt.

SOMERVELL TO HILL.^b

HOUSTON TO SECRETARY OF STATE [JONES].^c

WASHINGTON, 10th. June, 1843.

To the Honorable, the SECRETARY OF STATE:
SIR—You will say to our chargés d'Affaires that, in referring the termination of our difficulties with Mexico to the friendly mediation of the governments to which they are accredited, we have given earnest of our desires for peace.

If peace is not concluded before the next session of Congress, or Mexico informed by those powers that she must confine herself to the West side of the Rio Grande, Texas will assume an offensive attitude, with all the means she can command, and will not feel restrained from the employment of auxiliary aid in the prosecution of the War, unless she can have peace or a satisfactory armistice previous to the anticipated foray in September. Her action will be an united action and the limits of her enterprise will not be bounded by the Rio Grande nor any other point. The region of Santa Fé will be one point from which our operations will progress. Texas can and will

^a See the letter referred to—Terrill to Smith, December 7, 1842.

^b February 1, 1843. See Calendar.

^c See Records of Department of State (Texas), Book 40, p. 257.

marshal an army there which will overrun the country dependent upon that point of territory.

Mexico, or at least the North Eastern portion of it, is subject to constant and most destructive inroads from powerful tribes of Indians. They make their forays beyond Monclova, Saltillo and near to San Luis Potosi and on the Lower Rio Grande in sight of Matamoros. In our treaties with the Indians we have not sought to stimulate them to the massacre of the Mexicans, but, on the contrary, have sought to inculcate a different course. Mexico has waged a savage war against us, and in their forays they have associated with their regulars untutored savages. If war is begun by Texas it will necessarily be a war of *retaliation*. If another foray is made by Mexico, it will not be possible to restrain the people of Texas. And though I have heretofore sought a pacific policy, under the most annoying circumstances, if the war is necessarily begun again, I will use all my energies in sustaining it and ensuring success to our arms.

The feeling of Texas is decidedly in favor of war. I have deferred the measure with due respect to the powers to whom we have protested against the course of Mexico, thus long, with the hope that another resort to active war would not be necessary and that their mediation would be successful. I yet hope it may not fail.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, Your obt. servt.,

MEXICAN PROPOSITIONS FOR PEACE MADE THROUGH JAMES W. ROBINSON.^a

HILL TO HOCKLEY AND WILLIAMS.^b

HOUSTON TO HOCKLEY AND WILLIAMS.^c

WASHINGTON, *February 3d, 1844.*

To Messrs. HOCKLEY and WILLIAMS,
Commissioners, etc., etc., etc.

GENTLEMEN,—I have had the pleasure to receive your communications and to peruse with attention their contents. I regret very much that matters had not been consummated; but we can not have things always as we desire.

^a March 27, 1843. See *Niles' Register*, LXIV, 97; *The Red-Lander*, April 15, 1843; *The Morning Star*, April 1, 1843.

^b September 26, 1843. See *Calendar*.

^c See *Records of Department of State (Texas)*, Book 40, pp. 328-329-330.

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war. I have deferred to whom we have pro- ng, with the hope that necessary and that their may not fail.

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OUGH JAMES W. ROB-

LIAMS.^b

LIAMS.^c

N, February 3d, 1844.

receive your communi- contents. I regret very d; but we can not have

ed-Lander, April 15, 1843; The

pp. 328-329-330.

I trust that the additional instructions that will be forwarded to you from the War Department will lead to a consummation of your efforts to effect a truce.

If it be possible so to arrange it, as to obtain the admission of the fifth article, as presented by you, I entertain no doubt but that you will do so, agreeably to the suggestions of the Secretary of War.

I can not perceive any reasonable motive that the Mexicans could have in passing troops over the Nueces river. The very fact of that concession being made, would be calculated to irritate our people and render the duration of the truce more precarious than it other wise would be. And as it is the desire of this government to maintain the most perfect good faith in relation to any stipulations that may be entered into, I am anxious to obviate every impediment to the attainment of that object. But if nothing else can be done, and it should be necessary so to do, you will admit the article in question as presented by the Mexican Commissioners, and as communicated by you to this government.

In stipulating for commissioners to go to the city of Mexico, you will embrace *one or more* commissioners; for it might so happen that the amount appropriated by Congress would not authorise the employment of more than one.

Another subject, which you are aware is of deep concern to the people of this country, is that of the liberation of our prisoners. You will perceive, and the Mexican commissioners ought also, that negotiations for a general peace, under an armistice, would progress much more agreeably if the prisoners were restored to their homes. You know that there are many men in every community who seize upon every pretext for keeping up excitement, which is always unfavorable to the attainment of the ends of peace.

At the present moment there is a better foundation on which to establish friendly relations with Mexico, than has heretofore existed. You are aware, and I presume Mexico is likewise, that influences from abroad are rather calculated to excite a spirit of war in this country than to calm the troubled waters. If our prisoners were restored without further delay, it would to a great extent counteract these influences and produce a desire for reconciliation with Mexico.

So far as the government of Texas was concerned, the Mexican prisoners in Texas were all released. There is not a Mexican held in bondage in the Republic. There are many engaged in voluntary employments, but they cannot be constrained to serve for a single day beyond their own inclination. Several of them are married and settled in this country; and you know very well that we have not the power of disfranchising such as may choose to become citizens. Our constitution guaranties to Mexicans the same rights it does to Anglo-Saxons.

Furthermore, forty odd Mexicans were captured by Snively and received immediate liberty. Mexicans have not only been treated by this government with liberality, and lenity, but when our government was very poor, there were no less than two cartels sent to Matamoros, at considerable expense.

These are facts within your knowledge, Gentlemen; and it cannot be supposed that the Mexicans who were prisoners, and placed at liberty, by this government, could now be compelled to leave this country, after voluntary domiciliation. My proclamation offering convoy to all such as wished to exercise their liberty in returning to Mexico, was based upon an assurance through the British Chargé d'Affaires that corresponding liberty would be given as well as convoy, to all Texians held as prisoners by Mexico. The guaranty of England to this effect, I presume will be verified by the correspondence upon the subject.

It is my earnest desire, as you well know, to see harmony established between the two countries. They have everything desirable to gain by it. By a renewal of hostilities and continuance of war, Mexico might obtain temporary advantage, but ultimately she would ascertain that she had everything to lose and nothing permanent to gain. It would be as reasonable to suppose that the waters of the gulf would slumber unagitated by the winds as to imagine that Texas could be subdued and remain in a state of quiescence.

After years of toil and suffering, and when millions of treasure had been lavished, the power of Mexico would be impaired; while Texas, (by the influence of immigration and the attraction which her peculiar situation would present to military enterprise, with feelings embittered by protracted war and its attendant calamities), would be a much less desirable neighbor to Mexico than were we now to establish and cultivate amicable relations between the the two countries. I still hope for peace; more for a love of it, and a desire to see communities as well as individuals happy, than from a dread of war.

Congress has adopted a resolution to-day to adjourn on the 5th. instant. I need not attempt to give you the detail of their proceedings.

The revenues of the last year have more than supported the government; and though the President receives very little thanks for it, he will nevertheless endeavor to render the next year equally available to the interests of the country.

There is said to be much excitement in the United States in relation to annexation; and I doubt not that you have seen the United States President's message on the subject of the relations of Texas, Mexico and that government.^a

^a See Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, IV, 260-262.

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You will oblige me and assure him of my gentleman; and express never be less courteous in New Orleans.

I am, gentlemen
Very truly

ARTICLES FOR A

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SIR:

I have the honor to the President of this Re 19th. June 1844," announce Excellency, the President hostilities against Texas month etc. etc., a reply to Excellency General Anderson may be transmitted patible with convenience

Accept assurances
high regards
have

To General ADRIAN V

^a February 15, 1844. See *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, IV, 260-262; *Telegraph and Texas News*, 10, 1844.

^b June 19, 1844. See *Calendar*.

^c July 29, 1844. See *Calendar*. Many other letters calendared Mexico and Texas.

^d The reply was from President *Calendar*.

You will oblige me by presenting my salutations to Gen. Woll, and assure him of my high appreciation of him as a soldier and a gentleman; and express a desire on my part that our relations may never be less courteous than when we dined together at Col. Milton's in New Orleans.

I am, gentlemen, with my regards,
Very truly your friend,

ARTICLES FOR ARMISTICE BETWEEN MEXICO AND TEXAS.^a

WOLL TO HOUSTON.^b

HOUSTON TO SANTA ANNA.^c

HILL TO WOLL.

DEPARTMENT OF WAR AND MARINE
Washington, Texas, July 29th. '44.

SIR:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt, by His Excellency, the President of this Republic, of your communication dated "Mier 19th. June 1844," announcing to this Government the fact that His Excellency, the President of Mexico had declared a renewal of hostilities against Texas to take date from the 11th. of the same month etc. etc., a reply to which is herewith enclosed addressed to His Excellency General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna,^d which it is desired may be transmitted to him with as little delay as may be compatible with convenience.

Accept assurances of the
high regard with which I
have the honor to be
Your Obt. Servt.

Signed G. W. HILL
Sec. War and Marine

To General ADRIAN WOLL
Matamoras

^a February 15, 1844. See *Niles' Register*, LXVI, 97-98; *The Morning Star*, April 23, 1844; *Telegraph and Texas Register*, April 24, 1844, inclosed with Neill to Jones, March 10, 1844.

^b June 19, 1844. See Calendar of Correspondence with the United States in Part I.

^c July 29, 1844. See Calendar of Correspondence with the United States in Part I. Many other letters calendared in that correspondence deal with the relations between Mexico and Texas.

^d The reply was from President Houston and it bore the same date as Hill's letter. See Calendar.

SHANNON TO REJÓN.^a

REJÓN TO SHANNON.^b

SHANNON TO REJÓN.^c

REJÓN TO SHANNON.^d

SHANNON TO REJÓN.^e

POTTER TO SMITH.

WASHINGTON —
18th March 1845.

To the Hon
ASHBEL SMITH
Secretary of State

SIR,

A resolution was passed by the House of Representatives during the last session of Congress for publishing the correspondence which took place in carrying out a secret act of the previous session for the Relief of the Texian Prisoners, with the suppression however of the names of those persons who aided in the business and are still residing in Mexico.^f

The suppression merely of the name of Mr. Hargous would I think avail but little in keeping his agency in the matter unknown, since every circumstance mentioned as occurring in Vera Cruz would point to him so plainly that the authorities there could not err as to the individual referred to. As Mr. Hargous made it an express condition with me, when he accepted the agency that his doing so should not be made public, I think our Government would be acting in bad faith by carrying out the resolution of the House; and some remarks in the correspondence are so pointed against the indiscreet use of the press, too common in Texas, that the very letters would condemn their own publication.

^a October 14, 1844. See Calendar of Correspondence with the United States in Part I.

^b October 31, 1844. See Calendar of Correspondence with the United States in Part I.

^c November 4, 1844. See Calendar of Correspondence with the United States in Part I.

^d November 6, 1844. See Calendar of Correspondence with the United States in Part I.

^e November 8, 1844. See Calendar of Correspondence with the United States in Part I.

^f For the resolution, see *House Journal*, 9th Tex. Cong., 1st Sess., p. 381.

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MEMORANDUM OF COM
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ADDITIONAL DECLARAT

^a March 29, 1845. See
^b March 29, 1845. See
closed with De Cyprey to
^c March 30, 1845. See
^d March 31, 1845. See
^e May 19, 1845. See
with De Cyprey to Jones
^f May 19, 1845. See
De Cyprey to Jones, May
^g May 20, 1845. See
^h June 3, 1845. See

I have therefore to request that the resolution referred to may not be carried into effect, not only for the reasons above stated, but because I do not consider it binding on the Govt. or at this time necessary for the satisfaction of the public.

I have the Honour to be
Very Respectfully
Yr. obdt. Servt.

REUBEN M. POTTER
Late Secret Agent to Mexico.

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE BETWEEN SMITH, ELLIOT, AND SALIGNY
FOR ADJUSTMENT OF TROUBLES BETWEEN MEXICO AND TEXAS.^a

CONDITIONS PRELIMINARY TO A TREATY OF PEACE BETWEEN MEXICO AND
TEXAS.^b

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN SMITH, ELLIOT, AND
SALIGNY.^c

JONES TO ELLIOT.^d

ACCEPTANCE BY MEXICO OF CONDITIONS PRELIMINARY TO A TREATY WITH
TEXAS.^e

ADDITIONAL DECLARATION OF MEXICO AS TO CONDITIONS PRELIMINARY
TO A TREATY WITH TEXAS.^f

DE CYPREY TO JONES.^g

JONES TO DE CYPREY.^h

^a March 29, 1845. See Jones, *Memoranda and Official Correspondence*, 473-475.

^b March 29, 1845. See *Senate Journal*, 9th Tex. Cong., 2d Sess., pp. 89-90; copy inclosed with De Cyprey to Jones, May 20, 1845.

^c March 30, 1845. See Jones, *Memoranda and Official Correspondence*, 475.

^d March 31, 1845. See Calendar.

^e May 19, 1845. See *Senate Journal*, 9th Tex. Cong., 2d Sess., pp. 90-91; copy inclosed with De Cyprey to Jones, May 20, 1845.

^f May 19, 1845. See *Senate Journal*, 9th Tex. Cong., 2d Sess., p. 92; copy inclosed with De Cyprey to Jones, May 20, 1845.

^g May 20, 1845. See Calendar of Correspondence with the United States in Part I.

^h June 6, 1845. See Calendar of Correspondence with the United States in Part I.