

ELLIOT TO JONES.^aGALVESTON *July 24th. 1843.*

SIR,

I have the honor to acquaint you for the information of the President that I have this day received a despatch from Her Majesty's Chargé d'affaires at Mexico, dated on the 8th. Instant, in reply to my despatch of the 21st. Ultimo, in which I had transmitted an authentic copy of the proclamation issued by His Excellency on the 15th. Ultimo.^b Those papers were duly communicated to the Government of Mexico, and General Santa Aña informed Mr. Doyle, that with respect to the duration of the armistice He thought that was a matter which could best be decided by the Military Authorities of either party, that hostilities would immediately cease on the part of Mexico, and that General Woll who is in command of the army of the North would receive full powers to treat at once with whatever officer might be sent to him for that purpose by General Houston; that the Commissioners were at liberty to come to Mexico as they thought fit, either by Sea or Land, but He trusted they would be sent with full powers to treat upon the terms of which Mr. Robinson, one of the late Texian prisoners was the Bearer.^c

You will observe that the Government of Mexico still adheres to the demand for the acknowledgment of the Sovereignty of Mexico on the part of Texas. But possible as it may be that time, and reflection, and the good offices of Powers friendly to both parties may lead to a different temper; it is still incumbent upon me to state what I collect from very recent advices to be the impression of Her Majesty's Government, under the assumption that this demand is indeed as fixed, as it is declared to be; impressions, founded no doubt, upon their opinions of the present temper of the Government and people of Mexico.

In offering these considerations and remarks, I cannot too distinctly disclaim any intention upon the part of Her Majesty's Government, to offer any advice to the Government of Texas upon such a point; neither, however, must I omit to repeat their continued readiness to interpose their good offices, in an entirely neutral and impartial sense, in order to facilitate the termination of this dispute.

It certainly appears to Her Majesty's Government that the propositions of General Santa Aña go far to establish the virtual independence of Texas, although by the first of those propositions Texas is required to acknowledge the Sovereignty of Mexico. And Her Majesty's Government has had recent reason to consider that it is not at all probable General Santa Aña will recede from this demand,

^a A. L. S.

^b Of an armistice. See *Niles' Register*, LXIV, 307.

^c See *Niles' Register*, LXIV, 97.

since, even were He disposed to do so, which He does not seem to be, public opinion would probably effectually oppose him in carrying out that inclination.

Under these circumstances it will be for the Government of Texas to determine what course to pursue. By admitting the nominal concession required of them, peace would be immediately secured, and with peace, commerce and agriculture would flourish, and the foundations of daily increasing wealth and power would be laid.

And if both parties enter upon the task of endeavouring to bring about an adjustment with good faith, and prosecute that task with temper, and a full determination to bring it to a satisfactory issue, Her Majesty's Government, do not perceive in the terms of accommodation proposed by Mexico, suitably modified, any insurmountable obstacle to the conclusion of an agreement on equitable grounds, between the parties.

The President will of course remark that these are the views Her Majesty's Government have formed for themselves, upon the possibility of any early settlement of this contest. But I must repeat that Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to offer any advice to the Government of Texas in this matter, whilst they will very readily lend their good offices, whenever called upon, in order to facilitate the termination of the dispute.

I cannot but express the sincere hope that the President will think himself in a situation to conclude the proposed armistice, and despatching Commissioners to Mexico, endeavour to improve a state of truce, into a state of lasting peace.

With sentiments of the highest consideration, I have the honor to remain, Sir,

Your most obedient
Humble Servant

CHARLES ELLIOT

To
The Honorable
Anson Jones
etc. etc. etc.
Washington

[Copy.^a]

Basis of an armistice which General Woll is said to have been authorized to make with an officer sent to him by the Governor of Texas.

^aThe date of this copy, together with certain other evidence, indicates that it contains the propositions of Santa Anna referred to in Elliot's letter; but its place in the file is uncertain, and the references to those propositions in Elliot's letter make their identity still more uncertain. On the whole, a likelihood appears to be that this document was, at any rate, an inclosure in the letter of Elliot. *Cf. Niles' Register, LXV, 34.*

1. El armisticio se sometra á la aprobacion del Gobierno Supremo en perjuicio de que se suspendan inmediatamente las hostilidades.

2. Se estipulará en el armisticio que el llamado Gobierno de Tejas mandará Comisionados á esta Capital de la Republica, que hagan á su Gobo. Las proposiciones que estimen convenientes sobre la base de las proposiciones que llevo el Abogado Robinson, y que debirán ser la materia de discusion.

3. El armisticio durará todo el tiempo necessario para aquel objeto; pero se acordera un termino prudente para la renovacion de las hostilidades, cesando fuere resuelta por alguna de las partes interesados, dandose el aviso previo, segun es costumbre practicarlo en casos semejantes.

4. Los Comisionados disfrutaran de las mismas seguridades acórdadas á los que envia el departamento de Yucatán, en su vienta; permanencia, y regreso serán protegidos por las leyes, v Autoridades des Mexicanas.

GALVESTON *July 25 1843*^a

JONES TO ELLIOT.

STATE DEPARTMENT
Washington July 30th 1843

SIR,

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your communication to this Department under date of the 24.th. Inst transmitting information received by you from Mr. Doyle H B. Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Mexico through his despatch of the 8th. Inst, concerning the pending negotiations for peace between Texas and Mexico; and also advising this government of the views which her Majesty's Government entertains in relation to this interesting subject.

This communication was immediately submitted to his Excellency the President, who has instructed me to return the expression of his kindest thanks for the same and to inform you that concurring in the views entertained by Her Majesty's Govt. he will accede to the proposition made by Gen. Santa Anna, and dispatch Commissioners to treat with Gen Woll upon the terms and conditions of the Armistice and should these be satisfactorily adjusted he will forthwith send Commissioners to the City of Mexico (as mentioned in my despatch of the 15th Ultó.) for the final settlement of existing difficulties.

On the 26th Inst. Lieutenant Galan of the Mexican army arrived at this place with a communication from Gen. Adrian Woll, Com-

^a The date of the copying.

mander in Chief of the Army of the North to the President. A copy of this communication together with the reply of the Secretary of War and Marine I have the honor to enclose you in order that Her Majesty's Govt. under whose auspices friendly negotiations between Texas and Mexico have been commenced and thus far successfully prosecuted may be properly informed of the course which Texas proposes to herself to pursue, in order to allay all causes of irritation, which might endanger or defeat the final successful issue of those negotiations.*

Should the Govt [of] Mexico be animated by a like sincere desire for removing all obstacles to a successful and happy termination of existing difficulties between the two countries, I cannot but express the hope that our unfortunate prisoners now detained in captivity will be forthwith released. So long as they are detained, and accounts of their sufferings (perhaps exaggerated) continue to reach their friends and countrymen here a state of public feeling will be constantly kept alive, which I much fear will be fatal to every effort at pacification. The President of Mexico has it now in his power to perform an act of justice and humanity towards these men, and at the same time, to evince desires corresponding with those which this Government have shown on so many recent occasions, by obviating this most unhappy cause of irritation and thus removing the only obstacle which now remains to a calm and dispassionate discussion of the points at issue with a view to the attainment of the great and dignified object which the two parties propose to themselves, the establishment of an honorable and a lasting peace. Should you deem it not inconsistent with your public duty I beg leave to request that you will cause these views to be communicated to the Mexican government accompanied with such further representations, as might be deemed proper and consistent with the friendly interest which Her B. Majesty's Govt. has taken in facilitating by her good offices the attainment of this object.

Be pleased to accept on this occasion renewed assurances of the profound respect of

Your very Obt Humble Servt

Signed ANSON JONES

To

Capt CHARLES ELLIOT.
H. B. M. Charge d'Affaires
etc. etc. etc.

* Neither Woll's letter nor the reply has been found, but for the substance of Woll's see *Niles' Register*, LXIV, 400.

SMITH TO JONES.^a

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LEGATION OF TEXAS, PARIS

July, 31, 1843

HON ANSON JONES
Secretary of State,

SIR,

I reached my post in this city the 24th Instant on my return from London.

Previously to leaving London, I had a long interview on the 20th Instant with the Earl of Aberdeen Secretary for the Foreign Department, concerning the affairs of Texas. I think it proper here to state that I had reason to be pleased with the full and frank manner in which his Lordship discussed the affairs in question. As a matter of course, he treated the subject mainly and almost exclusively in reference to British policy and interests.

Some time before this interview with Lord Aberdeen, Mr J.^b P. Andrews whom I have mentioned in former despatches as being in London on an abolition mission requested me to present him to Mr Addington. After some reflection I consented to do so, the introduction being in no degree official, as I stated to Mr Addington, and as this course put me fairly in possession of the abolition schemes which had already been presented to the British Government. On this occasion I expressed my utter dissent from and opposition to all operations then carrying on in London, having for their object the abolition of Slavery in Texas.

In my interview with Lord Aberdeen on the 20th Instant, I stated that Mr Andrews' coming to London about abolition was his individual act wholly unauthorized by the Government of citizens of Texas; that tho' there might be some individuals in our country disposed to abolish slavery, I had no reason to believe they were numerous; but on the contrary that I had reason to think no disposition to agitate this subject existed either on the part of the Government or any respectable portion of the citizens of Texas. I also stated to Lord Aberdeen that I was informed representations would be sent out to Texas based on statements made by members of the Antislavery Convention who had called on his Lordship touching this matter, to the effect that Her Majesty's Government would afford in some way the means of reimbursing or compensating the slave owners, provided slavery were abolished in our country. I inquired what ground there was for these assertions.

His Lordship replied in effect, that it is the well known policy and wish of the British Government to abolish slavery every where; that

^a A. L. S.

^b This initial should be S.

its abolition in Texas is deemed very desirable and he spoke to this point at some little length, as connected with British policy and British interests and in reference to the United States. He added, there was no disposition on the part of the British Govt to interfere improperly on this subject, and that they would not give the Texian Govt any cause to complain; 'he was not prepared to say whether the British Government would consent hereafter to make such compensation to Texas as would enable the Slaveholders to abolish slavery, the object is deemed so important perhaps they might, though he could not say certainly.' I here remarked to his Lordship, that any compensation received by Texas from a foreign power for the abolition of slavery would be derogatory to our national honor and degrade and disgrace us in the eyes of the world. He observed such things can be so done as not to be offensive etc., but I believe his Lordship was of my opinion.

Lord Aberdeen also stated that despatches had been recently sent to Mr Doyle the British Chargé d' Affaires at Mexico, instructing him to renew the tender of British Mediation based on the abolition of slavery in Texas, and declaring that abolition would be a *great moral triumph for Mexico*. Your Department will not fail to remark that this dispatch to Mr Doyle appears to introduce a new and important condition into "mediation."

Lord Aberdeen also repeated an opinion he has heretofore expressed that the mediation of foreign Powers as hitherto presented, offered no hopes of success.

Other subjects connected with the affairs and relations of Texas were discussed at some length but they do not require to be mentioned here.

At the close of the interview I mentioned again to Lord Aberdeen that Texas will not make any change in her institutions concerning slavery. His Lordship requested I would communicate to the Government such opinions as he had expressed, to the exclusion of such as the enthusiastic imaginations of the antislavery conventionists might attribute to him. He inquired whether he should continue to see these persons on this subject. I could not answer his Lordship, as they have no connection with the Govt of Texas.

The British Government greatly desire the abolition of slavery in Texas as a part of their general policy in reference to their colonial and commercial interests and mainly in reference to its future influence on slavery in the United States. I do not attribute to them any sinister purposes towards Texas in this matter; British policy in relation to slavery is declared to the world, and the good or ill consequences to Texas are not taken at all into consideration.

The abolition of slavery in Texas would not have any good effect in promoting emigration from Europe. Emigrants would wait for

years to see what relations are to subsist between Texas and the adjoining slave holding States, after abolition; and the agitation of this subject among us would have a pernicious influence upon any anticipated European emigration, which would more than counter-balance any advantages likely to result from its accomplishment.

I am clearly of opinion founded on conversations had with members themselves of the British Anti-Slavery society, as well as with other persons, that the most we could look for from this class of individuals in England would be a glorification in one of their Exeter Hall reports and annual notices of our progress in abolition afterwards; and that no substantial good whatever would accrue to the country. I am induced too to believe that the purpose is entertained by some of that body to lead Texas by intimations of promises, to take steps in reference to slavery from which we cannot well recede. It is proper to add that the Anti Slavery society does not enjoy in any considerable degree the respect and confidence of the British public.

It is an important fact in connection with this subject that the marriage of the Prince de Joinville with the Princess Francisca of Brasil changes, as I have been well informed the feelings and policy of the French Government in relation to slavery, and that they will dis sever themselves from that crusade which Great Britain has been waging against slavery in favor of her commercial and colonial interests

Allow me to impress most respectfully on our Government that in order to procure an European emigration we must look to *peace* with Mexico and not to the abolition of slavery. Persons here desirous to remove to our country are afraid of *war*, not of negro slavery. The class of persons in England *likely to emigrate* care very little about this institution, and those of the continent care still less.

Allow me also to express my deliberate conviction that the vague promises which Mr Andrews will send or carry to Texas will prove false and illusory. Texas must depend upon honesty and industry for a good reputation abroad. The sacrifice of one of her institutions to buy good opinions here would be fruitless; and if paid for by Great Britain must render us contemptible even in that country which makes the purchase.

I saw Mr Guizot on my return to Paris a few days since, when he said to me he saw no reason to hope for peace between Texas and Mexico through the mediation of foreign Powers.

Day before yesterday the mail of the Great Western Steamer arrived bringing the President's Proclamation as copied from a New Orleans newspaper, of the cessation of hostilities. I forthwith sent a copy to Mr Guizot. From the frank and explicit observations of Lord Aberdeen I know he did not, any more than Mr Guizot, anticipate this glorious news. It has had a favorable effect on Mexican

Bonds in London which have already risen upwards of 10 per cent and are advancing in value. This circumstance must strongly dispose the Bondholders there in favor of peace on a permanent basis. If the armistice shall result in permanent peace the most solid advantages will forthwith accrue to Texas. International relations can be readily established with the different Powers of Europe, and emigration and commerce will be directed immediately to our country. Under such circumstances the agitation of abolition would impede emigration hence, as showing our institutions to be still unsettled and as likely to put us in an unfriendly or hostile attitude towards the neighboring states on the North.

It has been mentioned to me, but I do not permit myself to credit the assertion, that Mons. de Cramayel has given very unfavorable accounts of us to his Govt. There is however some reason to apprehend that unfriendly representations of us have been transmitted to this country. One Mr Guilbo,^e Vice Consul I believe at San Antonio, I was told has written very unfavorably of us.

I saw King Louis Philippe this evening he congratulated us cordially on the establishment of peace and wished us much prosperity. His remarks were not only kind but showed that he understood our country and watched its progress.

My former despatches have represented the internal condition of Spain as so unsettled that it has not seemed advisable to attempt to open negotiations with that country. A revolution has just been accomplished there so far as affects parties, whereby Espartero the Regent seems to have lost his power and to have very little prospect of regaining it. The influence England was supposed to possess in Spain appears for a time at least, to be destroyed.

Col Daingerfield is now in Paris. He will leave in a few days for his post. His stay here has been prolonged by his waiting for my return from London where the public interests detained me longer than I had anticipated.

Touching the Colonization Contracts I will state:

The Red River Company seemed to be on the eve of commencing efficient operations when I left London.

Mr Castro is absent from Paris making arrangements with reference to emigrants. There is reason to think he will find some obstacle in the opposition of the French Government, to which he is not acceptable.

Mr Bourgeois has not yet commenced operations.

I have the honor to be

Very respectfully

your most obedient servant

ASHBEL SMITH.