

THE EVOLUTION, CHARACTER, AND
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OLNEY DOCTRINE

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OLNEY DOCTRINE

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I

On December 2, 1823 President Monroe sent to Congress his annual message. The parts of that message which formulated a foreign policy for the United States have become the famous Monroe Doctrine. President Monroe had two main situations in mind. First, in regard to our northwest coast where Russia was proposing to extend her control, he declared:

...the occasion has been judged proper for asserting, as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers. 1

The second situation was that with reference to the Spanish colonies in the Western Hemisphere which had thrown off the Spanish yoke and as to which there was some agitation in Europe for cooperation among certain European powers to resubject these Spanish colonies to Spain or other monarchical rule. In regard to this the President wrote:

...With the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States. 2

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1. J. D. Richardson, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897, V. 2, p. 208.
 2. Ibid., p. 218.

According to the Monroe Doctrine, future colonization by European powers was to be regarded as antagonistic or detrimental to the free and independent condition of these continents; the extension of the allied "system" to any part of this hemisphere was considered dangerous to our peace and safety; interposition by any European power, for the purpose of oppressing or controlling the destiny of the rebelled Spanish colonies which we had recognized was to be regarded as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States; the true policy of the United States was to leave Spain and her rebelled colonies to adjust their difficulties between themselves.³

In this Doctrine, the principle of non-colonization was based primarily on the commercial interests of the United States,⁴ but the remainder of the document was a doctrine of self-preservation for the United States. As far as the South American states were concerned, fellow-feeling in a struggle for liberty and independence was a far more important element than any hope of material gain.

It was logical that in due time the question of the validity of the principle would arise. Such a non-colonization principle could be logically valid only if based on the fact that "the two continents consisted of several sovereign and independent nations, whose territories covered their whole surface."⁵

3. J.R. Clark, Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine, p. 6.

4. D. Perkins, The Monroe Doctrine, 1823-1826, p. 17.

5. J.D. Richardson, op. cit., p. 334.

Such an assertion was clearly contrary to fact. There is a second argument in favor of such a doctrine. "With respect to the whole of the remainder of that continent not actually occupied, the Powers of Europe were debarred from making new settlements, by the claim of the United States, as derived under their title from Spain."⁶ Such a claim, however was based on ex parte evidence of Spanish authorities and was plainly contradictory to international law and the practice of nations which stated that discovery alone could not be made the legal basis of territorial claims.

But what of the attitude of other governments towards the President's declaration? In the Russian negotiations, it may safely be asserted, it played no important part. In other European governments there was a cold reception in official circles. Chateaubriand declared that such a doctrine "ought to be resisted by all the powers possessing either territorial, or commercial, interests in that Hemisphere."⁷ Metternich wrote a crushing criticism, but the extraordinary language of Monroe called forth no formal representations from any European court. Most conservative European diplomats do not seem to have reckoned very seriously with the President's declaration as a factor in European policy.

In South America there was a tendency to minimize the danger of reconquest, but even when the danger was felt,

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6. R. Rush, Memorandum of a Residence at the Court of London, pp. 628 f. quoted, D. Perkins, op. cit., p. 22.
 7. W. S. Robertson, "The Monroe Doctrine Abroad, 1823-24" in The American Political Science Review, V. 6, p. 551.

there was more reliance upon British recognition than upon Monroe's declaration. His message was, however, by no means disregarded. "It was almost everywhere assumed by South American statesmen that Monroe meant what he said, and that the aegis of North American protection had been extended over the new republics. And in the years following its enunciation...more than one appeal was made to the message of 1823 by the rising nations of the New World."⁸

Thus in 1826, the Monroe Doctrine was of slight influence in Europe, as well as in South America. It was merely a principle whose legality and expediency was questionable. But through the nineteenth century fairly continuous application of that principle strengthened its prestige and defined its scope until it became the outstanding aspect of American foreign policy. Some examples of such applications follow.

In 1838 France blockaded the ports of Mexico as an act of redress for unsatisfied demands. There was no interference by the United States for the Monroe Doctrine has not been construed to "guarantee any state against punishment if it misconducts itself, provided that punishment does not take the form of the acquisition of territory by any non-American power."⁹ In other words, the United States does not intervene in wars between European and American states, "if they are not pushed...to the political point."¹⁰

8. D. Perkins, op. cit., p. 161.

9. J. B. Moore, International Law Digest, V. 6, p. 596.

10. Ibid.

This same delimitation of the Doctrine was evident in 1842 and again in 1844, when Great Britain blockaded the port of San Juan de Nicaragua. In 1851 the same power laid an embargo on traffic at the port of La Union, in Salvador, and blockaded the whole coast of that country. In 1862 and 1863 the same power seized Brazilian vessels in Brazilian waters in reprisal for the plundering of the bark Prince of Wales on the Brazilian coast. Thus, as has been indicated, there is nothing in President Monroe's message even remotely touching the possibility of a prohibition of European powers from employing force against an American republic for the purpose of collecting a debt or satisfying a pecuniary demand. The American republics have not been supposed to enjoy so desirable an exemption.

Again in 1861, when naval vessels of England, France, and Spain sailed for Vera Cruz, with the avowed intention of seizing Mexican customs-houses and forcibly collecting the money needed to satisfy their claims, the United States remained unmoved. But when, after the retirement of the English and Spanish, the French, desirous of realizing in a new way her ancient ambition of a French empire in the western hemisphere, remained, that coldness vanished, and the United States formally notified the French Government that, "unless France could deem it consistent with her interest and honour to desist from the prosecution of armed intervention in Mexico to overthrow the domestic Republican Government existing there, and to establish

11. J.B. Moore, "The Monroe Doctrine" in Political Science Quarterly. V. 11 (March. 1896) pp. 25-8.

upon its ruins the foreign monarchy which has been attempted¹² to be inaugurated in the capitol of that country," the traditional Franco-American friendship would be brought into imminent jeopardy.

Although Secretary Seward did not evoke the Monroe Doctrine by name, yet certain phrases which occur in his dispatches, as well as the logic of the situation, suggest that this doctrine was not altogether unconnected with his opinion that the French usurpations in Mexico were a menace to his country. Prominent Mexicans were grateful for the influence thus exerted by their northern neighbor...Opinions may differ regarding the exact amount of influence which the policy of the United States had upon the French débâcle in Mexico, yet the truth remains that in the eyes of many publicists the Monroe Doctrine had scored a triumph. 13

Secretary Seward's well-considered policy had to some extent calmed the latent fear in the Latin American states that the United States was preserving their independence for its own advantage, but the ill-considered expressions of President Johnson again aroused their resentment. In his fourth annual message, dated December 9, 1868, he included these surprising opinions:

Comprehensive national policy would seem to sanction the acquisition and incorporation into our Federal Union of several adjacent continental and insular communities as speedily as it can be done, peacefully, lawfully, and without violation of national justice, faith or honor....The conviction is rapidly gaining ground in the American mind that, with the increased facilities for inter communication between all portions of the earth, the principles of free government as embraced in our Constitution would prove of sufficient strength and breadth to comprehend within their sphere and influence the civilized nations of the world. 14

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12. MS. Instructions, France, V. 17, p. 489; J.B. Moore, International Law Digest, V. 6, p. 501.
 13. W.S. Robertson, Hispanic-American Relations with the United States, p. 104.
 14. J.D. Richardson, op. cit., V. 6, p. 688.

This was either a most extraordinary extension of the Monroe Doctrine, or else the promulgation of a new and all-embracing Pan-American doctrine, with the United States as the chief beneficiary.

The Monroe Doctrine, however, is not a self-denying ordinance, although it does deny certain rights to European powers. The United States has followed an imperialistic policy as have all countries that have attained great development. This imperialistic policy has created a fairly general belief in Central and South America that all those events that have caused the aggrandizement of the United States are directly attributable to the Monroe Doctrine. As a matter of fact, the Monroe Doctrine is not responsible for those events and indeed it has nothing to do with them. For example, the annexation of Texas in 1845, the Mexican War, 1846-1848, and the territorial cessions agreed upon as a consequence thereof would have occurred regardless of the Monroe Doctrine. These events, however, did arouse suspicion in various countries of South America. Since then the Monroe Doctrine instead of being considered as a guarantee of independence by the Latin American countries, was regarded as a menace to their very existence.¹⁵

Again in 1870 President Grant demanded the seizure of San Domingo as a measure of national protection, a new corollary of the Monroe Doctrine. The purpose proposed

15. A. Alvarez, The Monroe Doctrine, p. 242.

also came under the head of imperialistic policy; but a part of the declaration is a case of development of the Monroe Doctrine; in effect he declared that no European Power can acquire by any means whatsoever, be it war, colonization, or annexation, any part of the American territory, even when the interested people demands it.¹⁶

The first American Secretary of State seriously to turn his attention to Latin America was James G. Blaine, who occupied that office from 1881 to[?] 1885 and again from 1889 to 1892. His interests were twofold, first political and second economic. Blaine tried to continue Clay's foreign policy of "America for the Americans." Like Clay, Blaine was dissatisfied with the purely negative features of the Monroe Doctrine; to him the United States' function was greater than merely being the guarantor of the territorial integrity of the nations of the Western hemisphere against European aggression. He wished to unite the peoples of America into a loosely defined political group with our country acting as "elder sister"; he would maintain peace among them through the continuous exercise of the good offices of the United States; he would have them meet regularly in a formal conference for the purpose of planning policies to their mutual advantage. That Blaine had already some ideas of America's imperial¹⁷ might is not to be overlooked.

In 1889, the first Pan-American conference was finally

16. Ibid., p. 210.

17. L.M. Hacker and B.B. Kendrick, The United States since 1865, p. 108.

held. Blaine's doctrine of "America for the Americans" was listened to courteously, but it did not receive general approval. Saenz Peña, for Argentina, advanced the opposing doctrine which, today, is still commonly accepted in Latin America----"America for Mankind."¹⁸

What was the status of the Monroe Doctrine in 1894? It had been especially noticeable with Blaine in the State Department from 1889 to 1893 that the United States in general sought to play the role of the "elder sister" to the South American Republics. In fact Blaine was most anxious to have the United States act as mediator in South American disputes in order to preserve peace. In the Tacna-Arica dispute following the War of the Pacific, 1879-1884, Blaine showed too much sympathy for Peru and as a result minimized his influence by incurring the undying hostility¹⁹ of Chile. In spite of Blaine's aggressiveness in entering Latin American affairs there were many persons who believed that the Monroe Doctrine lapsed when the Latin American States had outlived the possibility of colonization and the danger of Russian aggression along the Northwest Pacific coast of North America ceased.²⁰ A considerable element had come to accept the Monroe Doctrine and its further appli-²¹cation as merely an academic matter by 1894. The Monroe

18. Ibid., p. 109.

19. G.H. Stuart, Latin America and the United States, pp. 340-343.

20. J.S. Bassett, Expansion and Reform, 1889-1926, p. 55.

21. J.S. Bassett, op. cit., p. 55.

Doctrine, as Dr. Shepherd of Columbia University has so well stated, was at this stage of its evolution "mainly dubious". To European powers there was nothing in the phrasing of the doctrine to permit a widening of its scope. In it were to be found no provisions for the hegemony of the United States over the disputes of the Latin American States.

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Nor had the Monroe Doctrine ever been recognized as a part of international law. It is quite likely that most foreign diplomats regarded it in the same light as Bismarck-- "a bit of international impertinence." In our own country the courts had never recognized the doctrine as constituting public law and therefore had at no time based court decisions on it.

The durability of this executive pronouncement had been due largely to its flexibility. It was Grover Cleveland and Richard Olney in 1894 who saw in it something more than an outworn doctrine in the pending Venezuelan crisis.

II

The Evolution of the Olney Doctrine

Cleveland's second administration brought to the forefront of world diplomacy an issue involving the traditional principle of no European interference in America. Few incidents in the whole history of Anglo-American relations have been the subject of more controversy than the Venezuelan boundary dispute.

in the Venezuela dispute Secretary of State Richard Olney was projecting himself and the United States straight into a contest with the strongest nation in the world. He was entering a field which had for more than a century been a bone of contention and the cause for more political and electionary eloquence than any other, for twisting the British lion's tail had long been a well-recognized way to obtain public approval in displays of oratory without offending any constituents. ²³

In 1815 England acquired a part of Dutch Guiana, ²⁴ "the establishments of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice."

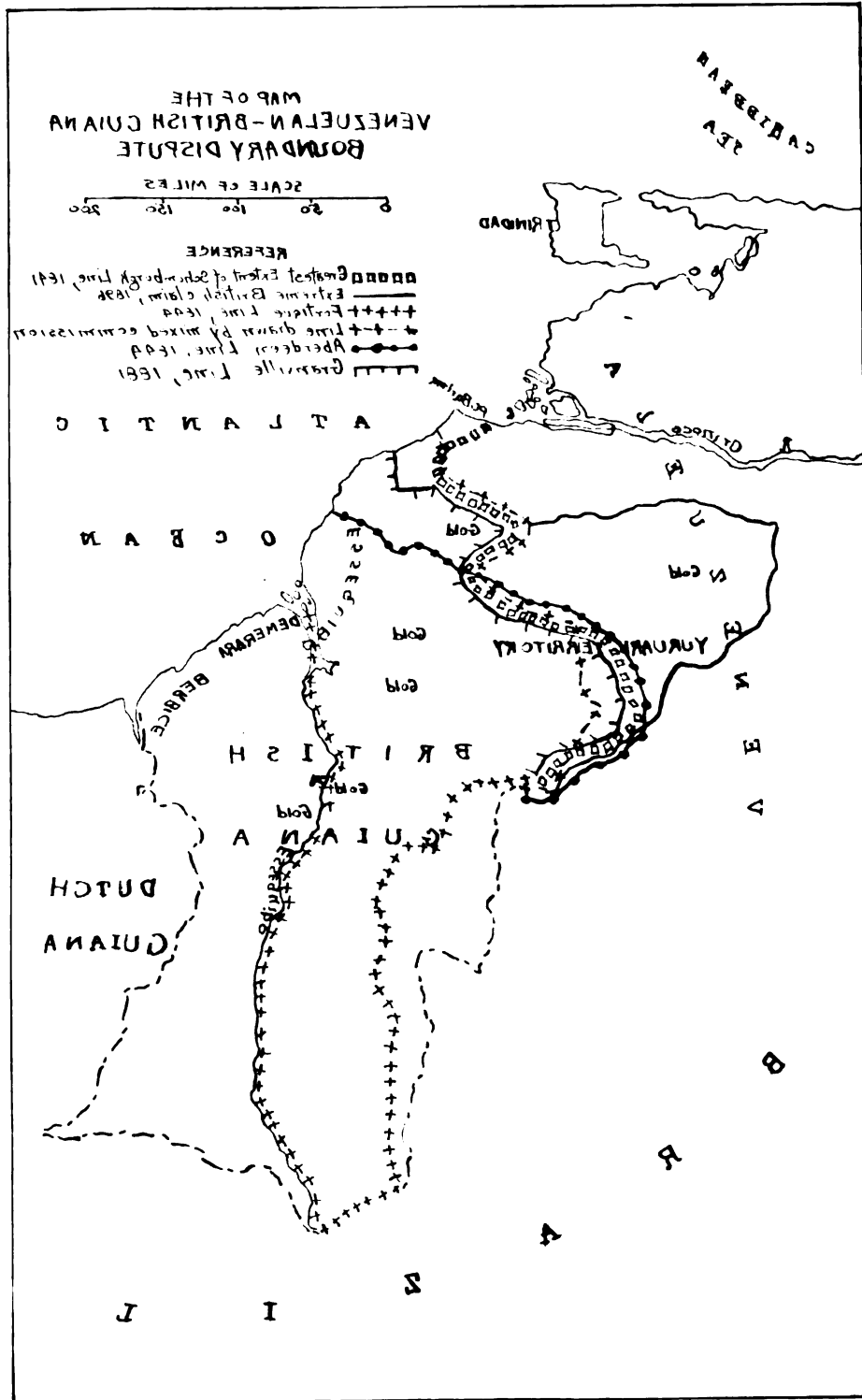
Venezuela, formerly a Spanish dependency, had declared her independence in 1810, and had been recognized as independent by the various countries. Not until 1845, however, did Spain recognize the independence of Venezuela. In all the treaties and agreements the boundaries were defined only as "the same as those which marked the ancient viceroyalty and captaincy-general of New ²⁵ Granada and Venezuela in the year 1810." Thus the boundary was never accurately fixed. England apparently remained indifferent as to the exact area of the colony until 1840 when she commissioned an engineer, Sir Robert Schomburgk, "to examine and lay down ²⁶ its boundaries." Schomburgk set up certain monuments to mark the line he surveyed which was adjacent to the Orinoco River. The Venezuelan Government protested strenuously against these markers, and the English Government gave orders for their removal, Lord Aberdeen at the time

23. Montgomery Schuyler, "Richard Olney", in S.F. Bemis, American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, V. 8, p. 291.

24. Foreign Relations, 1895, Part I, p. 545.

25. Montgomery Schuyler, op. cit., p. 292.

26. Foreign Relations, 1895, Part I, p. 546.



characterizing the Schomburgk line "as a merely preliminary²⁷ measure to further discussion." In 1844 Venezuela, through Fortique, her minister to London, claimed the Essequibo River as the true and natural frontier between the two territories.²⁸

Chiefly in consequence of civil commotion in Venezuela, negotiations remained practically in abeyance until 1876, with the exception of a declaration made by the two governments that they had no intention of sanctioning any occupation by their respective nationals of the disputed regions until such a time as the boundaries might be definitely settled.

Under such circumstances[Venezuela's lack of responsible government and inability to jeopardize British colonists who penetrated the interior] it was natural for England to let the matter drift and safe for her to assume that time and the pushing British settler, who has often advanced and has seldom receded, would determine the solution. To attribute to her any deep and deliberate design would seem gratuitous. 29

In fact, Robertson has stated that:

at root the controversy was due to a conflict between the two different principles concerning the proper basis for territorial claims: the principle inherited by Spanish Americans from Spain, that territorial claims could properly be based upon discovery, exploration, and vague royal grants; and the modern principle which rested territorial claims mainly upon actual settlements of disputed territory. 30

In 1876 Venezuela offered to accept a line drawn by Lord Aberdeen in 1844, but Lord Granville proposed instead a line

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27. P.L. Haworth, The United States in our Times, 1865-1920, p. 219.
 28. A.W. Ward & G.R. Gooch, The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, V. 3, p. 223.
 29. H. James, Richard Olney and his Public Service, p. 99.
 30. W.S. Robertson, Hispanic-American Relations with the United States, p. 106.

drawn farther to the west. In 1886, towards the close of Gladstone's third administration, a treaty was drawn up providing for the submission of the dispute to arbitration by a third state or several states, as might be arranged,³¹ but this treaty was withdrawn when Lord Salisbury came into office. In 1887 Venezuela suspended diplomatic relations with Great Britain, protesting:

before her British majesty's government, before all the civilized nations, and before the world in general, against the acts of spoliation committed to her detriment by the government of Great Britain, which she at no time and on no account will recognize as capable of altering in the least the rights which she has inherited from Spain and respecting which she will ever be willing to submit to the decision of a third power. 32

In the meantime the discovery of gold mines within the disputed territory had caused Great Britain to extend her claims still farther.

Venezuela continued to ask for arbitration, but Great Britain declined to arbitrate unless Venezuela would first yield all the territory within the Schomburgk line. It must be confessed that demands for unrestricted arbitration have by no means been invariably conceded, and England had too many half-civilized neighbors about the borders of her scattered empire for her ministers to want to make precedents for the arbitration of territorial claims that were largely unreasonable; but the reservations made by Great Britain embraced much territory to which her claim

31. A. W. Ward & G.P. Gooch, op. cit., V. 3, p. 223.

32. J.H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, p. 238.

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seemed questionable. Also:

since the laws and constitution of the Venezuelan Republic designated the Essequibo as the eastern boundary, no compromise line short of it would be acceptable or legal, whereas the decision of an international arbiter as to the true boundary would be binding and satisfactory...since the Constitution of the republic forbade the alienation of any part of the national territory. 34

Throughout this entire period of controversy the United States had kept an interested eye upon the problem. Even as early as 1848 it was questioned in the Senate as to whether or not the Monroe Doctrine was involved. Senator Cass appears to have thought that it was not, although he did not say specifically that real aggression by moving the boundary would affect the principle. He said that Monroe never meant to claim the right to regulate all American affairs so far as respected Europeans and that he expressly exempted exist-³⁵ing colonies. In 1876, Venezuela appealed to the United States for its good offices, but Secretary of State Fish had³⁶ shown no more than a friendly interest. In 1881 Mr. Evarts, Secretary of State under President Hayes, had informed the Venezuelan minister that "this government could not look with indifference to the forcible acquisition of such territory by England"---referring to the territory between the³⁷ Essequibo and the Orinoco;

In 1886 the British seemed inclined to take po-

33. J.B. Moore in The Cambridge Modern History, V. 7, p. 671.

34. Annual Cyclopaedia, V. 35, p. 742.

35. J.B. Moore, Digest of International Law, V. 6, pp. 533-4.

36. L.M. Hacker and B.B. Kendrick, op. cit., p. 114.

37. G.W. Crichfield, American Supremacy, V. 2, p. 405.

possession of the mouth of the Orinoco, and the Venezuelan government in consequence sent a gunboat thither with a force of engineers and artisans to construct a lighthouse on Barima Point, and thus to take actual possession of a strategic spot in the disputed zone.

At this point Bayard tendered the good offices of the United States. Then:

rumors of gold in the Orinoco valley were verified and British miners flocked into the region and refused to acknowledge the Venezuelan authority there. This brought the two countries within a measurable distance of war, and compelled the United States to take serious cognizance of what was going on....In the early part of 1888 the diplomatic correspondence in the case was called for by Congress, and much discussion followed, both official and popular, but no action was taken. 38

Blaine in 1890, and Gresham in 1894 again tendered the service of the United States as mediator, only to have their proffers rejected.

In 1895, President Cleveland began to take a personal interest in the problem. He was surprised, somewhat unduly perhaps, that the feeble and intermittent efforts of the United States (this is accounted for partially by the fact that it was the wish of the Venezuelans that the United States should be the umpire in case of arbitration, and this would be impracticable if the United States should commit herself in any degree to the Venezuelan interest at the outset)³⁹ in the past had been productive of little real good, and that their recent efforts at friendly mediation had practically been

38. W.F. Johnson, America's Foreign Relations, V. 2, pp. 108-9.

39. W.A. Dunning, The British Empire and the United States, p. 302.

curtly rebuffed. Mr. Cleveland reached the conclusion that peace would be imperilled if the boundary dispute remained longer unsettled. Venezuela continued to make shrill and frequent complaints; reports of further encroachments by the British in the gold mining regions were diligently circulated; and ominous indications appeared in the American press lest the Monroe Doctrine were threatened with infringement. President Cleveland resolved to bring the affair to a head at once,⁴¹ and Secretary Olney's dispatch was the means adopted.

Gresham's death, when he was in the midst of preparing a communication to Great Britain on the subject, left the controversy to be carried on by Richard Olney. This new Secretary of State had a clear-cut and logical mind. "He thought his problem through to the bitter end and did not have the imagination to see that the end was bitter."⁴² He studied the problem thoroughly and early in July gave the President a draft of a note to the British Government to be transmitted to the American ambassador. Olney felt the question so important that he had determined to resign his position, if Cleveland did not agree with his interpretation. Cleveland, however, wrote him from his summer home:

I read your deliverance on Venezuelan affairs the day you left it with me. It's the best thing of the kind I have ever read and it leads to a conclusion that one cannot escape if he tries---that is, if there is anything to the Monroe Doctrine at all. You show there is a great deal of that and place it, I think, on better and more defensible grounds than

40. M. Schuyler, op. cit., p. 302.

41. W. A. Dunning, op. cit., p. 307.

42. C. R. Fish, American Diplomacy, p. 391.

any of your predecessors----or mine....I propose a little more softened verbiage here and there. 43

The "softened" version of the dispatch, which reviewed the dispute, formally invoked the Monroe Doctrine in support of the United States' claim, and finally categorically inquired whether or not the British government would submit the whole question to arbitration, was later subjected to the revision of several of the more trusted of Cleveland's advisers in the Cabinet. It finally was sent to Ambassador Bayard in London, July 20, 1895. The presentation of the note to Lord Salisbury must have indeed been an unpleasant task to Bayard, who had spent his life in forwarding the policy of conciliation and in helping along the cause of Anglo-American friendship. True, he had written to Secretary Gresham that the time was ripe for the settlement of the dispute:

Great Britain has just now her hands very full in other quarters of the globe. The United States is the last nation on earth with whom the British people or their rulers desire to quarrel, and of this I have new proofs every day in my intercourse with them. Other European nations are watching each other like pugilists in the ring. 44

Yet he had not expected such an undiplomatic document as came to him. Lord Salisbury, too, remarked to Bayard after the latter had presented the dispatch that he regretted and was surprised "that it had been considered necessary to present so far-reaching and important a principle and such wide and profound policies of international action in relation to a subject so comparatively small."⁴⁵

43. R.M. McElroy, Grover Cleveland, V. 2, p. 180.

44. R.M. McElroy, op. cit., V. 2, p. 170.

45. H. James, op. cit., p. 225.

Olney ended his dispatch in the following manner:

If ne the President is to be disappointed in that hope that the conclusion will be on the side of arbitration, however----a result not to be anticipated and in his judgment calculated to greatly embarrass the future relations between this country and Great Britain----it is his wish to be made acquainted with the fact at such early date as will enable him to lay the whole subject before Congress in his next annual message. 46

According to diplomatic usage, this was in the nature of an ultimatum, whose importance was increased by the fact that a joint resolution of Congress had quite recently urged the determination of the dispute by friendly arbitration. Even then Lord Salisbury failed to realize the seriousness of the situation, perhaps because he had often before seen American Secretaries of State vigorously "twist the lion's tail" yet prove to be amenable in the end.⁴⁷ He had not forgotten his correspondence with Secretary Blaine over the Bering Sea fisheries in which Mr. Blaine had used undiplomatic language, but at the critical moment had yielded rather than take the responsibility for an open rupture with Great Britain.⁴⁸ He referred the matter to the Law Officers of the Crown, and delayed answering until November 26, which meant that President Cleveland did not receive the reply until after his annual message had been sent to Congress.

This delay was not due, as perhaps Cleveland supposed, to discourtesy, or to any British desire to procrastinate the question. The Prime Minister was immersed in the Near Eastern problem, while his subordinates permitted him to make an error as to the date when Congress sat. 49

46. Foreign Relations, 1897, Part I, p. 562.

47. P.L. Haworth, op. cit., p. 220.

48. H.T. Peck, Twenty Years of the Republic, 1885-1905, p. 421.

49. A. Nevins, Grover Cleveland, p. 637.

If, as seems to have been the case, Cleveland was laboring under the impression that England's Venezuelan policy was one of delaying a settlement, this slowness in answering must have tended to confirm his peremptory mood; And the answer, when it came, was not such as to calm his feeling. The reply came in two notes transmitted through Sir Julian Pauncefote, British Ambassador to the United States. The first note was a denial of the application of the Monroe Doctrine to the dispute, and the second a discussion of the boundary dispute per se. He declared that:

The dangers which were apprehended by President Monroe have no relation to the state of things in which we live at the present day....Great Britain is imposing no "system" upon Venezuela, and is not concerning herself in any way with the nature of the political institutions under which the Venezuelans may care to live. But the British Empire and the Republic of Venezuela are neighbors, and they have differed for some time past, and continue to differ, as to the line by which their dominions are separated. It is a controversy with which the United States can have no apparent practical concern. 50

Salisbury went on to develop Olney's theses to their inevitable conclusions. If the United States was to stand in the role of protector over the Latin-American nations, then: "Such a claim would have imposed upon the United States the duty of answering for the conduct of these States, and consequently the responsibility of controlling it." ⁵¹ He admitted that "Mr. Olney expressly disclaims such an inference" and goes on to list the disadvantages of arbitration as a means of settlement. He denied that the Monroe Doctrine

50. Foreign Relations, 1895, Part I, p. 564.

51. Ibid., p. 565.

was international law.

The Government of the United States is not entitled to affirm as a universal proposition, with reference to a number of independent States for whose conduct it assumes no responsibility, that its interests are necessarily concerned in whatever may befall those States simply because they are situated in the Western Hemisphere. 52

Particularly vigorous was his answer to Olney's statement "That distance and 3000 miles of intervening ocean make any permanent political union between a European and an American State unnatural and inexpedient."⁵³

Her Majesty's Government are prepared emphatically to deny it on behalf of both the British and American people who are subject to her Crown. They maintain that the union between Great Britain and her territories in the Western Hemisphere is both natural and expedient. 54

In his second dispatch Lord Salisbury claimed: that Mr. Olney's narration of what has passed bears the impress of being mainly, if not entirely, founded on ex parte statements emanating from Venezuela; 55

and went on to controvert the arguments of the earlier part of Mr. Olney's dispatch. He concluded by stating that:

a portion of that claim, however, they have always been willing to waive altogether; in regard to another portion, they have been and continue to be perfectly ready to submit the question of their title to arbitration. As regards the rest, that which lies within the so-called Schomburgk line they do not consider that the rights of Great Britain are open to question. 56

In short, the whole reply stated that Great Britain could not recognize the applicability of the Monroe Doctrine;

52. Ibid., p. 566.

53. Ibid., p. 556.

54. Ibid., p. 567.

55. Ibid., p. 568.

56. Ibid., p. 575.

asserted complete title as far as the Schomburgk line; agreed to arbitrate:

large tracts of territory which from their auriferous nature are known to be of almost untold value ⁵⁷

beyond that line, but declined to admit or arbitrate:

claims based on the extravagant pretensions of Spanish officials in the last century, and involving the transfer of large numbers of British subjects, who have for many years enjoyed the settled rule of a British Colony, to a nation of different race and language, whose political system is subject to frequent disturbance, and whose institutions as yet too often afford very inadequate protection to life and property. ⁵⁸

He seemed to intend to close the incident as far as the United States was concerned. This impression was further confirmed by an inquiry which the British Ambassador sent to Olney on the tenth asking if the United States would object if Her Majesty's Government published the correspondence. Olney's answer may be imagined from the fact that the British Government did not publish it.

The effect on President Cleveland of Salisbury's dispatch was not favorable. "The irritating character of Salisbury's logic----because it was so sound----was not calculated to soothe Cleveland's ruffled feelings." ⁵⁹ An English authority suggests that some less flexible and conciliatory mind than Lord Salisbury had influenced his reply, while Mowat takes the opposite view point----that:

the even-tempered dispatch which he sent on November 26 is in his best style, because the subject suited him exactly: he was the judicious

57. Ibid., p. 575.

58. Ibid., p. 575.

59. L.M. Hacker and B.B. Kendrick, op. cit., p. 115.

historian, particularly well read in international affairs of the nineteenth century. 60

Be that as it may, the tone of the dispatch sounded didactic and patronizing to the United States. It seemed to Washington as if Lord Salisbury said, "Listen while I explain to you the law and usages of nations, then you will understand your errors." 61

Professor Dunning has remarked:

If in substance and spirit Olney's note was startlingly new, the response of Salisbury was discouragingly old. If the changed position and aspirations of the United States were by one put in so high a relief as to be somewhat coarse and repulsive, they were by the other left wholly out of the modelling. If Olney brusquely voiced the feeling of the youth who had reached his majority and claimed a grown man's estate, Salisbury sounded the old Tory note of querulous impatience with the restless and innovating spirit of the immature. 62

When Pauncefoot brought his Government's reply, Cleveland was on his vacation. Olney, with whom Cleveland had left instructions, wrote out the draft message to Congress, and had it copied by his Boston clerk on December 13. Cleveland returned to the White House on Sunday afternoon, the 15th, and held a conference with Olney and Lamont. He sat up all night rewriting Olney's document. When he finished at dawn, as he said later, he could not tell which sentences were Olney's and which his own. 63

On December 17, after he had sent a routine message at the opening of Congress a few days earlier, he startled the

60. R.W. Mowat, Diplomatic Relations of Great Britain and the United States, p. 263.

61. H. James, op. cit., p. 118.

62. W.A. Dunning, op. cit., p. 308.

63. A. Nevins, op. cit., p. 639.

world with a special message on the Venezuelan situation. Even before Cleveland's message came, Congress was in a pugnacious mood. The House of Representatives had opened on December third with the prayer: "Heavenly Father, let peace reign throughout our borders. Yet may we be quick to resent any thing like an insult to our nation." ⁶⁴ Cleveland's message merely accentuated the attitude of the House. He reaffirmed the Monroe Doctrine and its application to the present dispute, and asked Congress to provide for a Commission to determine the boundary line, closing his message with these words:

When such report is made and accepted it will in my opinion be the duty of the United States to resist by every means in its power as a willful aggression upon its rights and interests the appropriation by Great Britain of any lands or the exercise of governmental jurisdiction over any territory which after investigation we have determined of right belongs to Venezuela.

In making these recommendations I am fully alive to the responsibility incurred, and keenly realize all the consequences that may follow.

I am nevertheless firm in my conviction that while it is a grievous thing to contemplate the two great English-speaking peoples of the world as being otherwise than friendly competitors in the onward march of civilization, and strenuous and worthy rivals in all the arts of peace, there is no calamity which a great nation can invite which equals that which follows a supine submission to wrong and injustice and the consequent loss of national self-respect and honor beneath which are shielded and defended a people's safety and greatness. ⁶⁵

This was a startlingly bold message which rent the air like a thunderbolt. ⁶⁶ There was no doubting the gravity of the situation after reading those grimly measured sentences.

64. Congressional Record, 53 Congress, 2 Session, V. 28, Part I, p. 26.

65. Foreign Relations, 1895, Part I, p. 545.

66. E.B. Andrews, History of the Last Quarter Century in the United States, V. 2, p. 317.

In them there was no touch of bluster, no suggestion of anything like jingoism. An unfaltering sense of duty, a profound conviction of right, and a note of inflexible purpose----these were what men found in the words which an English writer described as being 'full of stateliness and force.' 67

The Senate, casting tradition to the winds, received it with applause in which the Republicans seemed to take an even more hearty part than the Democrats. The Commission was provided for at once, by an act unanimously passed in both houses, neither pausing to refer it to a committee. 68 69

While the President's belligerency met with immense popular applause, it was fiercely criticized in influential quarters. It was cheered by the belligerent sections of the populace, including the large Irish groups in New York and Boston, but papers and persons hitherto always friendly to the President now denounced him. Undoubtedly one cause for the wide-spread consternation was that up to this time the country had been ignorant of the peremptory demands which the administration had made in the earlier correspondence. There was, too, the opinion, based on Cleveland's previous pacific administration of foreign affairs, that the President stood for concession rather than aggression or even a firm upholding of the nation's rights. Although he had given an intimation of a "more vigorous policy" in his annual message of December, an insufficient time had elapsed to prepare the public mind for the grave consequences which were now laid bare. "Instead

67. H.T. Peck, op. cit., p. 426.

68. R.M. McLroy, op. cit., V. 2, p. 190.

69. E.B. Andrews, op. cit., V. 2, p. 317.

a time-worn curiosity, the Monroe Doctrine, was a sharp-edged tool ready for immediate use."⁷⁰

Republicans charged that his message was only a partisan trick to strengthen his administration, while the Populists believed that it was part of a Wall Street conspiracy, and that the temporary panic which followed the news of the message was deliberately planned for the benefit of speculators.⁷¹ Cleveland himself later remarked that those who refused to support him were actuated by financial motives and feared losses on the stock market.⁷² Certain it is, however, that the panic was a definite factor in the move towards peace, (it was estimated that American securities fell in value about \$400,000,000 and the Treasury's gold reserve lessened ominously) although a leading economist has stated that as a matter of economic history it is now clear that the break in the market which followed this message registered a depression which was due to occur for other reasons and upon any pretext;⁷³ but it acted none the less as a danger signal to the country.

Although the President seemed at first to have the approval of members of both houses of Congress, the best international lawyers were against him, and his Ambassador in London was deeply perturbed.⁷⁴ Bayard had written in a private letter on May 25, 1895: "There is no question now open between the United States and Great Britain that needs any but frank,

70. D.R. Dewey, National Problems, p. 308.

71. F.L. Paxson, Recent History of the United States, p. 210.

72. G. Cleveland, Venezuelan Boundary Controversy, p. 110.

73. A.D. Noyes, Thirty Years of American Finance, pp. 250-1.

74. B. Willson, America's Ambassadors to England, 1785-1928, p. 407.

amicable, and just treatment." Edward J. Phelps, his first minister to England, noticed that, "No advocate of the President's proclamation has undertaken to point out how it can affect us whither a line through a jungle of bushes and water which makes up most of the territory really in dispute, is drawn a few inches one way or the other."⁷⁵ Too, the clergy were almost unanimously opposed to war with Great Britain, and their sermons helped bring Americans to their senses.

On the other hand, Theodore Roosevelt, Chauncey M. Depew, William C. Whitney, Andrew D. White, John W. Foster, all publicly applauded the President for his courage. Of twenty-eight governors questioned by the New York World, twenty-six supported the President.⁷⁶ Newspaper sentiment was divided, although it generally judged Cleveland's stand strong and "American."⁷⁷ Dana of the Sun carried the headline "War if Necessary", while Godkin, who had supported him in the Nation thus far now turned against him and characterized his action as "criminally rash and insensate", "ignorant and reckless", "impudent and insulting."⁷⁸⁷⁹

Perhaps the most important single influence in the cause of peace was Joseph Pulitzer, who through the medium of his popular New York World, worked unceasingly to bring American and English public men to their senses. He cabled, for example, to those Englishmen whose opinions carried weight in

75. J.F. Rhodes, History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850, V. 3, p. 453.

76. L.M. Hacker & B.B. Kenarick, op. cit., p. 116.

77. C.R. Lingley, Since the Civil War, p. 300.

78. F.L. Paxson, Recent History of the United States, p. 210.

79. C.R. Lingley, op. cit., p. 300.

the United States, obtained from them messages of peace to the American public, and printed these prominently in his paper. The Prince of Wales cabled to Mr. Pulitzer that he could not "but believe that the present crisis would be arranged in a manner satisfactory to both parties" and Lord Rosebery absolutely disbelieved in the possibility of war on such an issue for "it would be the greatest crime on record."⁸⁰ Such expressions did much to disarm suspicion in the United States and to overturn the prevailing tradition that Great Britain was seeking for opportunities to annoy the United States.

In the meanwhile Englishmen, contemplating their nation's foreign relations, suddenly awoke to the fact that their country had permitted itself to become isolated in world politics.

In the Nile and Niger valleys, in Persia and China, in South Africa, Englishmen found themselves actively opposed by Frenchmen, Russians, and Germans, and their schemes of empire thwarted and hampered. Certainly it was not desirable to add the United States to this hostile array.⁸¹

At first, the British press considered it preposterous that an American commission should alone decide a British boundary dispute, and that the President of the United States should propose to support its decision by force. The London Times contended that the concessions which England was "imperiously summoned to make are such as no self-respecting nation could submit to."⁸² The London Chronicle, the great mouth-piece of the Liberals, was firm though a bit more

80. Public Opinion, V. 20, p. 8 quoted in D.R. Dewey, op. cit., p. 311.

81. L.M. Hacker & B.B. Kendrick, op. cit., p. 116.

82. London Times, Dec. 10, 1895, as quoted in J.F. Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 117.

moderate.

There is one answer to President Cleveland and America,

it declared.

If the enlarged application of a neglected doctrine is to be enforced with all the might of the United States, at least let us be assured that the United States will make itself responsible for the foreign policy of all the petty, impetuous, little states on the two continents. There is no international right without a corresponding duty....Unless the United States formally proclaims a protectorate over all the South American Republics, we are bound to protect our citizens. 83

Then the Chronicle sent Henry Norman, of its editorial staff, to Washington for the purpose of investigating the state of feeling on the Venezuelan matter. His reports were as influential in England as was Mr. Pulitzer's work in the New York World, here. Through him came the news that Cleveland's intention was amicable; that many who approved the President's policy did not understand it to mean war; that the churches were pleading for peace; but that a national sentiment had sprung up in support of the course outlined by Cleveland and Olney, which it would be madness for England to disregard or underestimate.

The Americans believe that their attitude of demanding arbitration is one with which civilized men must sympathize. In support of this the whole Union will speak with absolutely one voice. But at the same time there is an infinite desire to see an immediate amicable settlement. I repeat with every ounce of influence I possess that everybody here worth considering desires peace.

Moreover, Norman reported information, which he had gained

from access to documents in the State Department, that Salisbury's stand was far more uncompromising and dogmatic than had been that of his predecessors in the Foreign Office. He pointed out, in fact, that Lord Granville had agreed to arbitrate the entire question which Salisbury had declared impossible of arbitration under any condition.⁸⁴

Moreover, Olney was able to inspire a number of dispatches sent by the American correspondent of the London Times, which had practically the same force on Lord Salisbury----who was told of their origin by Buckle, editor of the Times----as did the formal diplomatic notes.⁸⁵ It has also been confidently stated, by those who were in a position to know, that the venerable Queen, then approaching the sixtieth anniversary of her accession to the throne, exerted her personal influence directly and effectively towards conciliation.

Another factor helping to peace was the Commission itself. This, as appointed by President Cleveland was an able body, composed of Justice Brewer, of the United States Supreme Court; Judge Alvey, of the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia; Andrew D. White, ex-minister to Germany and Russia; Frederick R. Coudert, formerly the counsel of the United States in the Bering Sea arbitration; and Daniel C. Gilman, president of Johns Hopkins University. At the suggestion of President White, historical experts were attached to the commission----thus establishing a precedent which was con-

84. The Norman dispatches, in the New York Times, January 4-6, 1896, as quoted by J.F. Rippy, op. cit., p. 118.

85. H. James, op. cit., pp. 128-129.

spicuously followed at Versailles in 1918 and 1919. There was no trace of jingoism in its membership, and the advocates for peace were encouraged to believe that war might be averted.⁸⁷ It became apparent even to the most panicky that war could not come immediately, for this Commission must first report.⁸⁸

The first act of the Commission, after its organization, was to address a letter to Mr. Olney through its president, Justice Brewer, setting forth its peaceful and non-partisan character and the desirability of securing the co-operation of Great Britain and Venezuela in obtaining evidence. In concluding his letter, Mr. Brewer wrote:

The purposes of the pending investigation are certainly hostile to none, nor can it be of advantage to any that the machinery devised by the government of the United States to secure the desired information should fail of its purpose.

This statement was communicated to Great Britain as well as to Venezuela, and both governments promptly responded to the appeal.⁸⁹

Thus the stage was set for a peaceful settlement. Andrew D. White has commented in his Autobiography that, "During the period taken by the commission for its work, both the Americans and British peoples had time for calm thought. Lord Salisbury, especially, had time to think better of it."⁹⁰ Then came Dr. Jameson's ill-starred raid into the Transvaal which evoked the Kaiser's truculent telegram. The situation as it concerned the United States had already been saved by the various factors

86. L.M. Sears, History of American Foreign Relations, p. 430.

87. D.R. Dewey, op. cit., p. 310.

88. C.R. Fish, The Path of Empire, p. 85.

89. J.B. Moore in A. Alvarez, The Monroe Doctrine, p. 484.

90. A.D. White, Autobiography, V. 2, p. 130.

mentioned above, but this telegram roused the British people to a fear of Germany. The years 1895 to 1900 marked the rise of German commercial, military, and naval power as a future menace to Great Britain's dominion of the seas and colonial empire. The growth of the German merchant marine and the agitation for a greater navy caused the British to stir in what Lord Salisbury himself grandiloquently had called her "splendid isolation."⁹¹ The Kaiser's indiscretion merely emphasized the difference between the British attitude toward Germany and toward the United States. "After Cleveland's deliverance there had been a rush of peace messages in both directions across the Atlantic....After the Kaiser's step there were war-like preparations, shouts of defiance, and⁹² appeals to jingo sentiment." Ambassador Bayard wrote confidentially to Olney on January 15, 1896 that:

there has been a welcome and unmistakable difference observable in the manner in which the possibilities of conflict with the United States----and with Germany----were discussed and treated in this country.

In regard to a possible collision with the United States, amazement, disappointment, genuine distress, and a manifest unwillingness to accept such a possibility were chiefly discernible, but as to the German Emperor's interference in Transvaal, a prompt joinder of issue was tendered, and a readiness for the contest was almost universally expressed by the general public.⁹³

The British government, however, was not inclined to act with undue haste. For a time Lord Salisbury hoped that Congress would not support the President. Then he played with the idea that the matter might be delayed until Cleveland's term

91. M. Schuyler, op. cit., p. 313.

92. A. Nevins, op. cit., p. 646.

93. M. Schuyler, op. cit., p. 314.

expired, in the hope that he might have the opportunity of dealing with a less strenuous successor.

In the summer of 1896, however, John Hay, an intimate friend of Major McKinley, the probable Republican candidate for the presidency, was in England. There he met privately Arthur J. Balfour, representing Lord Salisbury, and Sir William Harcourt, leader of the opposition, and convinced them that a change in the Administration of his country would involve no retreat from the existing American position.⁹⁴

The British government thereupon determined to yield.

They were able to see that the United States was interested in two considerations: the policy of arbitration which had only recently been consecrated by the signing of a dozen treaties among American states and the settlement of half as many boundary disputes in the Western Hemisphere, and the Monroe Doctrine which was rapidly becoming an American fetish. Moreover, whatever it may have been formerly, the main interest of British statesmen now was the protection and preservation of English subjects in the disputed area. These basic facts having once been recognized, it was possible to propose a compromise.⁹⁵

On January 13, 1896, Bayard had sent a cipher telegram to Olney:

Suggests as a solution, the United States should propose a conference with the United States, of European countries now having colonies in the Western hemisphere----Great Britain, France, Spain, and Holland, to proclaim the Monroe Doctrine ----that European powers having interests in America, should not seem to extend their influence in that Hemisphere. If the United States would propose this, Great Britain would accept the Monroe Doctrine, and it would become international law between the countries named.⁹⁶

94. C.R. Fish, op. cit., pp. 85, 86.

95. J.F. Rippey, op. cit., p. 119.

96. R.M. McElroy, op. cit., V. 2, p. 199.

Cleveland and Olney decided they preferred to deal with Great Britain alone. Then the British government proposed to merge the question with one of general arbitration, but this, too, was rejected.

On March 3, 1896, Lord Salisbury wrote to Ambassador Bayard, "I have empowered Sir Julian Pauncefote to discuss the question either with a representative of Venezuela or with the Government of the United States acting as a friend of Venezuela."⁹⁷ This little sentence conceded the whole question at issue. It recognized the United States as entitled to interfere on behalf of an American Republic as against a European power, and it tacitly withdrew the prior British declaration that such interference had no warrant in the law of nations. In other words, Great Britain accepted President Cleveland's new interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine as a principle to be recognized there-after in Anglo-American relations.⁹⁸ Finally, on May twenty-second, the British government proposed :

a more authoritative Commission, to consist of four members, two appointed by each country, to ascertain the historical facts of the question. The finding of the majority of the Commission was to be binding on both Governments, and on the basis of its report the Governments of Great Britain and Venezuela were to endeavor to agree upon a boundary-line. Failing agreement, the whole question was to be referred to a Tribunal of three members, one nominated by Great Britain, one by Venezuela, and the third co-opted by these two, who should fix the boundary-line finally. It was proposed, however, that the Tribunal should not have the power to assign to either Great Britain

97. Foreign Relations, 1896, p. 241.

98. H. T. Peck, op. cit., p. 434.

or Venezuela territory which was bona fide occupied by the subjects of the other State on January 1, 1887, though it might make reservations regarding such territory.

Against these reservations the American Government strongly protested as being intended to operate to the advantage of the British claim, and as ruling out of Court a discussion of the rights which had been disputed for decades by Venezuela. 'Venezuela is not to be stripped of her rightful possessions,' wrote Secretary Olney on June twelfth, 'because the British Government has erroneously encouraged its subjects to believe that such possessions were British.' Recognizing that the time had come for finality in the matter, Lord Salisbury wisely withdrew his reservations in their uncompromising form, and agreed to the dispute being submitted to unconditional Arbitration, provided America were prepared to stand in Venezuela's place for that purpose. There was still some stickling for 'national honor'; but the Foreign Office was now sensible of the indignity as well as the danger of an unseemly wrangle over a few square miles of territory. The urgency of definite settlement had also been emphasized by a further irritating incident---the arrest by Venezuelan authorities in June of a British official, while engaged within the Schomburgk line, an act speedily repudiated by the Central Government. 99

On February 2, 1897, a treaty of arbitration, based upon the agreement of 1896, and negotiated by Great Britain and the United States, was signed by Great Britain and Venezuela. The predominant feature of the treaty was the application of the principle of prescription, under the definite rule that fifty years adverse holding of a district, either by exclusive political control, or by actual settlement, should suffice to constitute national title. "The adoption of the principle of prescription, on which the arbitration would necessarily have acted, even if it had not been incorporated into the

treaty, at once rendered nugatory the greater part of the Venezuelan claim."¹⁰⁰ The tribunal met in Paris, December, 1898. The award, made on October third, 1899, gave the larger part of the disputed area to the British colony, but Venezuela's right to the comparatively small but valuable¹⁰¹ portion of territory at the Orinoco's mouth was confirmed. On the whole, the line as drawn by the tribunal followed the Schomburgk line fairly closely.

Another result of the controversy was a general arbitration treaty by Secretary Olney and Sir Julian Pauncefote at Washington, January 11, 1897. This treaty provided that all differences between the two governments that diplomacy should prove unable to adjust were to be sent to arbiters. Three kinds of tribunals were provided, among which jurisdiction over various classes of controversies was distributed, with provisions for appellate and revisory procedure. The provisions of this treaty proved to be in advance of effective public opinion in the United States. Distrust of Great Britain could not be eliminated so expeditiously as from the diplomatic mind. It was claimed that this treaty might sooner or later bring an obligation to submit to an arbitral tribunal the validity of the Monroe Doctrine. Before the vote in the Senate, however, the safety of the Monroe Doctrine had been insured by an amendment requiring a special agreement for the submission of any difference, "which in the judgment of either power

100. J. B. Moore in A. Alvarez, op. cit., p. 484.

101. W. S. Robertson, op. cit., p. 110.

materially affects its honor or its domestic or foreign
¹⁰²
 policy." Some Senators objected that such a treaty, if rati-
 fied before the Clayton-Bulwer treaty of 1850 was definitely
 abrogated, would amount to a surrender of the American dream
 of building and controlling a canal across the Isthmus of
¹⁰³
 Panama. Too, it might have involved some debts repudiated
¹⁰⁴
 by certain states of the Union. But more than any of these
 reasons was the fact that blind partisan hatred of Cleveland
 once more was more powerful than patriotism, in spite of the
 fact that there was a great outburst of popular enthusiasm
¹⁰⁵
 for the treaty. The treaty failed to pass the Senate, May 5,
 1897 by a vote of 43 to 26----less than the requisite two-
¹⁰⁶
 thirds of the senators present. The effort for the treaty,
 however, advanced the general principle of arbitration, and
 in the opinion of many was a happy compensation for the
¹⁰⁷
 temporary alienation between the two countries.

III

The Character of the Olney Doctrine

The so-called Olney Doctrine is set forth in detail in
 Olney's dispatch to Lord Salisbury, of July 20, 1895 and is
 re-inforced by Cleveland's message to Congress. Let us look
 first at Olney's letter.

This dispatch opened with an account of the dispute be-
 tween Great Britain and Venezuela. It is to be questioned----

102. W.A. Dunning, op. cit., pp. 318-320.

103. R.M. McElroy, op. cit., V. 2, p. 244.

104. D.Y. Thomas, One Hundred Years of the Monroe Doctrine, p.
 526.

105. M. Schuyler, op. cit., p. 319.

106. J.B. Moore, in Cambridge Modern History, V. 7, p. 762.

107. D.R. Dewey, op. cit., p. 313.

or, at least, Lord Salisbury questioned----whether all of Olney's facts were correct. For example, Lord Salisbury contended that:

the fundamental principle underlying the Venezuelan argument is, in fact, that, inasmuch as Spain was originally entitled of right to the whole of the American continent, any territory on that Continent which she cannot be shown to have acknowledged in positive and specific terms to have passed to another Power can only have been acquired by wrongful usurpation, and if situated to the north of the Amazon and west of the Atlantic must necessarily belong to Venezuela, as her self-constituted inheritor in those regions. It may reasonably be asked whether Mr. Olney would consent to refer to the arbitration of another Power pretensions raised by the Government of Mexico on such a foundation to large tracts of territory, which had long been comprised in the Federation. 108

Again, Mr. Olney declared that "it seems impossible to treat the Schomburgk line as being the boundary claimed by Great Britain as matter of right, or as anything but a line originating in considerations of convenience and expediency,"¹⁰⁹ to which Lord Salisbury agreed, saying that it was "a great reduction of the boundary claimed by Great Britain as matter of right!"¹¹⁰ Finally, Mr. Olney summarized the question as follows:

The important features of the existing situation, as shown by the foregoing recital, may be briefly stated.

1. The title to territory of indefinite but confessedly very large extent is in dispute between Great Britain on the one hand and the South American Republic of Venezuela on the other.

2. The disparity in the strength of the claimants is such that Venezuela can hope to establish her claim only through peaceful methods----through an agreement with her adversary either upon the subject itself or upon an arbitration.

3. The controversy, with varying claims on the part of Great Britain, has existed for more than half a century,

108. Foreign Relations, 1895, Part I, p. 569.

109. Ibid., 1895, Part I, p. 546.

110. Ibid., 1895, Part I, p. 570.

during which period many earnest and persistent efforts of Venezuela to establish a boundary by agreement have proved unsuccessful.

4. The futility of the endeavor to obtain a conventional line being recognized, Venezuela for a quarter of a century has asked and striven for arbitration.

5. Great Britain, however, has always and continuously refused to arbitrate, except upon the condition of a renunciation of a large part of the Venezuelan claim and of a concession to herself of a large share of the territory in controversy.

6. By the frequent interposition of its offices at the instance of Venezuela, by constantly urging and promoting the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries, by pressing for arbitration of the disputed boundary, by offering to act as arbitrator, by expressing its grave concern whenever new alleged instances of British aggression upon Venezuelan territory have been brought to its notice, the Government of the United States has made it clear to Great Britain and to the world that the controversy is one in which both its honor and its interests are involved and the continuance of which it can not regard with indifference. 111

But the question of the dispute itself, though the reason for Olney's dispatch, is not very important, since that was settled by the Tribunal of Arbitration, and is no longer a matter of interest. What we are interested in is Olney's interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine as in regard to this question.

Olney justifies American intervention in the controversy with the following argument:

That there are circumstances under which a nation may justly interpose in a controversy to which two or more nations are the direct and immediate parties is an admitted canon of international law 112.... We are concerned at this time, however, not so much with the general rule as with a form of it which is peculiarly and distinctively American 113....

That America is in no part open to colonization, though the proposition was not universally admitted

111. *Ibid.*, 1895, Part I, p. 552.

112. *Ibid.*, 1895, Part I, p. 553.

113. *Ibid.*, 1895, Part I, p. 553.

at the time of its first enunciation, has long been universally conceded. We are now concerned, therefore, only with that other practical application of the Monroe Doctrine the disregard of which by an European power is to be deemed an act of unfriendliness towards the United States. The precise scope and limitations of this rule cannot be too clearly apprehended. It does not establish any general protectorate by the United States over other American states. It does not relieve any American state from its obligations as fixed by international law nor prevent any European power directly interested from enforcing such obligations or from inflicting merited punishment for the breach of them. It does not contemplate any interference in the internal affairs of any American state or in the relations between it and other American states. It does not justify any attempt on our part to change the established form of government of any American state or to prevent the people of such state from altering that form according to their own will and pleasure. The rule in question has but a single purpose and object. It is that no European power or combination of European powers shall forcibly deprive an American state of the right and power of self-government and of shaping for itself its own political fortunes and destinies. 114

The above paragraph evidently is Olney's interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine. Cleveland himself concluded:

The Monroe Doctrine may be abandoned; we may forfeit it by taking our lot with nations that expand by following un-American ways; we may outgrow it, as we seem to be outgrowing other things we once valued; or it may forever stand as a guaranty of protection and safety in our enjoyment of free institutions; but in no event will this American principle ever be better defined, better defended, or more bravely asserted than was done by Mr. Olney in this dispatch. 115

Thus far the clear style and vigorous reasoning of the dispatch supplied the best possible presentation of the case, but Olney went on to invoke considerations of public policy in support of the Monroe Doctrine and here he

said things which would have passed without comment if he had been hammering an opposing litigant in the heat of a trial, but which

114. *Ibid.*, 1895, Part I, p. 554.

115. G. Cleveland, Venezuela Boundary Controversy, pp. 95-6.

were startling in such a document. 116 The Monroe Doctrine....rests upon facts and principles that are both intelligible and incontrovertible. That distance and three thousand miles of intervening ocean make any permanent political union between an European and American state unnatural and inexpedient will hardly be denied 117

thus proclaiming the ultimate extinction of all European colonial possessions!

Whether moral or material interests be considered, it can not but be universally conceded that those of Europe are irreconcilably diverse from those of America, and that any European control of the latter is necessarily both incongruous and injurious....The states of America, South as well as North, by geographical proximity, by natural sympathy, by similarity of governmental constitutions, are friends and allies, commercially and politically, of the United States....The people of the United States have a vital interest in the cause of popular self-government.... They believe it to be for the healing of all nations, and that civilization must either advance or retrograde accordingly, as its supremacy is extended or curtailed. 118

The following quotation, undoubtedly, best expresses Olney's unique application of the Monroe Doctrine to the controversy in question, which has not since met the general sanction of even American publicists:

The mischiefs apprehended from such a source are none the less real because not immediately imminent in any specific case, and are none the less to be guarded against because the combination of circumstances that will bring them upon us cannot be predicted. The civilized states of Christendom deal with each other on substantially the same principles that regulate the conduct of individuals. The greater its enlightenment, the more surely every state perceives that its permanent interests require it to be governed by the immutable principles of right and justice. Each, nevertheless, is only too liable

116. H. James, op. cit., p. 107.

117. Foreign Relations, 1895, Part I, p. 556.

118. Ibid., p. 557.

to succumb to the temptations offered by seeming special opportunities for its own aggrandizement, and each would rashly imperil its own safety were it not to remember that for the regard and respect of other states it must be largely dependent upon its own strength and power. Today the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition. Why? It is not because of the pure friendship or good will felt for it. It is not simply by reason of its high character as a civilized state, nor because wisdom and justice and equity are the invariable characteristics of the dealings of the United States. It is because, in addition to all other grounds, its infinite resources combined with its isolated position render it master of the situation and practically invulnerable as against any or all other powers.

All the advantages of this superiority are at once imperiled if the principle be admitted that European powers may convert American states into colonies or provinces of their own....With the powers of Europe permanently encamped on American soil, the ideal conditions we have thus far enjoyed can not be expected to continue. 119

There is, then, a doctrine of American public law, well founded in principle and abundantly sanctioned by precedent, which entitles and requires the United States to treat as an injury to itself the forcible assumption by an European power of political control over an American state....Though the dispute relates to a boundary line, yet, as it is between states, it necessarily imports political control to be lost by one party and gained by the other. 120

Olney then logically destroys Great Britain's claim to being an American power and concludes this section of his argument with:

Being entitled to resent and resist any sequestration of Venezuelan soil by Great Britain, it is necessarily entitled to know whether such sequestration has occurred or is now going on, 121

thus being careful not to link himself to the cause of either disputant.

The second of the two principles expounded in this dis-

119. Ibid., p. 558.

120. Ibid., p. 559.

121. Ibid., p. 560.

patch is:

It being clear, therefore, that the United States may legitimately insist upon the merits of the boundary question being determined, it is equally clear that there is but one feasible mode of determining them, viz., peaceful arbitration. 122

Olney took the ground that Great Britain's position amounted to saying to Venezuela,

'you can get none of the debatable land by force, because you are not strong enough; you can get none by treaty, because I will not agree; and you can take your chance of getting a portion by arbitration, only if you first agree to abandon to me such other portion as I may designate.' It is not perceived how such an attitude can be defended nor how it is reconcilable with that love of justice and fair play so eminently characteristic of the English race. It in effect deprives Venezuela of her free agency and puts her under virtual duress. 123

And so he closed his note with a request for a definite decision on the matter.

Cleveland's message, five months later, merely reaffirmed the position Olney had taken.

The doctrine upon which we stand is strong and sound because its enforcement is important to our peace and safety as a nation, and is essential to the integrity of our free institution and the tranquil maintenance of our distinctive form of government. It was intended to apply to every stage of our national life, and cannot become obsolete while our Republic endures....The Monroe Doctrine finds its recognition in those principles of international law that are based upon the theory that every nation shall have its rights protected and its just claims enforced. 124

At no place in his dispatch did Olney maintain that the Monroe Doctrine was international law. Several references

122. Ibid., p. 560.
 123. Ibid., p. 561.
 124. Ibid., pp. 542-3.

to the Monroe Doctrine as "public law" in the United States, however, seem to have misled Lord Salisbury into thinking that he meant to say that it was part of international law and so the Prime Minister devoted some of his reply in denying this.¹²⁵ Olney did say that the fiat of the United States was law upon this continent upon subjects to which it confined its interposition! Cleveland, too, denied that it was international law, but claimed that international law entitled every nation to the rights belonging to it and that "the principle for which we contend has a peculiar if not exclusive¹²⁶ relation to the United States."

Before turning to the significance of the Olney doctrine, it is necessary to notice somewhat the language in which this dispatch was couched. Authorities may differ as to the legality of Olney's interpretation, but there is a practical unanimity on the fact that his choice of language was most unfortunate in places. John W. Foster called it the most bold and pronounced assertion of the Monroe Doctrine that had been¹²⁷ made; Manoel de Oliveira Lima has remarked that it was an¹²⁸ unexpected and rough warning; and Charles A. Beard has declared that:

Cleveland seemed to welcome the opportunity to give Great Britain some curt instructions on the Monroe Doctrine. Olney's demand was couched in the language of a decree rather than an invitation and was accompanied by remarks of magisterial quality which, if they had come from the English

125. D. Y. Thomas, op. cit., p. 57.

126. Foreign Relations, op. cit., p. 543.

127. A. Alvarez, The Monroe Doctrine, p. 409.

128. Ibid., p. 291.

foreign office, would have raised a furor in America. 129

Cleveland himself later christened it "Olney's twenty-inch
130
gun." From an English view point:

The violent language of Mr. Olney's note, its fulsome and excessive laudation of the United States, its contemptuous disregard of the susceptibilities of other great nations, and its glaring misrepresentations of facts and history caused natural offence in this country. 131

Henry James, however, has made statement in justification::

Over and beyond mere arguments and the arts of persuasion it diplomacy commands only two real weapons....It may induce concession by making such alliances with third countries as will confront the Government-to-be-compelled with an inimical alignment before which it must seek to retire; or it may invoke, or threaten to invoke, force directly....The first weapon is generally unavailable to the United States, because it is her well-established policy to keep out of European politics....Therefore, a threatening message is not necessarily "undiplomatic diplomacy"....Given this fundamental truth about international affairs, given also Cleveland's addiction to bludgeoning methods in the face of opposition or entanglements, and given, finally, Olney's passion for disposing of a difficulty promptly, it seems now that it might have been foreseen in 1895 that the Administration would resort to vigorous measures over the long-pending Venezuelan affair. For if the affair dragged on until a collision occurred in South America the United States might have to choose between abandoning the Monroe Doctrine and leaping into war. 132

Olney himself wrote later to Knox that "the excuse for them was that in English eyes the United States was then a so completely negligible quantity that it was believed only

129. C. A. & M. E. Beard, Rise of American Civilization, V. 2, p. 369.

130. R. M. Mc Elroy, op. cit., V. 2, p. 161.

131. S. Low, "The Olney Doctrine and America's New Foreign Policy" in The Nineteenth Century, Dec., 1895.

132. H. James, op. cit., p. 104.

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133

words equivalent to blows would be really effective."

But, in addition to its severity, the language used by Olney and Cleveland was in places vague and rhetorical. For example, Dr. James Dealey believes that Secretary Olney had no intention of asserting that the United States was legally sovereign; his stress was on "practically."¹³⁴

Olney did not confine himself to a statement of his case, wherein any amount of vigor would have been permissible, but ran his unpracticed eye unnecessarily over the whole field of American diplomacy. "That distance and three thousand miles of intervening ocean make any permanent political union between an European and an American state unnatural and inexpedient" may have been a philosophic axiom to many in Great Britain as well as in the United States, but it surely did not need reiteration in this state paper,¹³⁵ and appeared to be a direct threat and calculated to give offense. Likewise, Mr. Cleveland's reference to a high "tribunal that administers international law" was too rhetorical a figure for a state paper.

Finally, there is the question of just what was intended by the ex-parte Commission that was appointed. It was pronounced by many people in England and some in America to be an impertinence. Olney's justification of it is condensed into one sentence in his dispatch:

133. Olney to Knox, Jan. 29, 1912, Olney Coll., quoted in H. James, op. cit., p. 140.

134. J.Q. Dealey, Foreign Policies of the United States, p. 217.

135. C.R. Fish, op. cit., p. 82.

Being entitled to resent and resist any sequestration of Venezuelan soil by Great Britain, it is necessarily entitled to know whether such sequestration has occurred or is now going on. 136

Francis B. Loomis has stated that:

I do not think it was maintained by Mr. Cleveland or Mr. Olney that Great Britain would be bound to acquiesce in a decision regarding Venezuela's eastern boundary line which the commission appointed by himself might reach. 'The sole purpose of that commission' says a partisan of Mr. Cleveland's course, 'was to enlighten the conscience of our executive and the American people at large touching the Venezuelan question.' 137

John Bassett Moore has stated that:

So far as it seemed to imply, as the language has often been construed to do, that the United States possessed the right, by means of an ex parte commission, appointed by itself and composed of its own citizens, authoritatively to fix the boundary between two other independent nations, it went beyond the immediate necessities of the case. If the commission had ever reported, it is probable that its conclusions, which conceivably might not have been acceptable either to Great Britain or to Venezuela, would have been treated as advisory rather than definitive, and would have been made the basis of further correspondence with both governments. The actual position intended to be insisted on, as appears by Mr. Olney's instructions to Mr. Bayard, as well as the rest of President Cleveland's message, was that the United States would resist the palpable and substantial encroachment upon and appropriation by Great Britain of Venezuelan territory. This position was quite in harmony with the spirit of the Monroe Doctrine. 138

Although many authorities including James Ford Rhodes, Allan Nevins, and Robert W. Mowat, state that Cleveland took an unjustifiable risk of war, yet it appears that not only

136. Foreign Relations, op. cit., p. 560.

137. F. B. Loomis, "The Position of the United States on the American Continent", in Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, V. 22, p. 7.

138. A. Alvarez, op. cit., p. 539.

was Cleveland convinced that the principle involved was worth establishing whatever the cost might be, but he was certain that the method he employed was the only one which could succeed, for in no other way was it possible to awaken England to a realization of the fact that the United States was full-grown and imbued with a new consciousness of its strength. So far was Cleveland's message from provoking war that it caused the people of Great Britain actually to realize for the first time the importance of friendship with the United States. It marked a change in their attitude toward America which found expression not only in diplomacy, but in various other ways, and which strikingly revealed itself in the international politics of the next few years. Not that hostility was converted into affection, but former condescension gave way to an appreciative friendliness towards the people of the United States.¹³⁹

IV

The Significance of the Olney Doctrine

Since 1895 there has been endless discussion about Olney's interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine. Was it justifiable? Did it extend the scope of this important policy? Writers have differed widely----and sometimes bitterly----on the subject. Woodrow Wilson wrote in 1897 that:

the course it proposed was virtually a demand that the United States be accorded the right of

139. C. R. Fish, op. cit., pp. 88-9.

intervention in all questions arising between South American states and European powers. 140

Arthur Dunn has stated that the position which Cleveland took at that time had a wholesome effect upon the world at large.¹⁴¹

If Great Britain is to be permitted to occupy the ports of Nicaragua and, still worse, take the territory of Venezuela, there is nothing to prevent her taking the whole of Venezuela or any other South American state. If Great Britain can do this with impunity, France and Germany will do it also. 142

Most of the European powers----Great Britain included----were engaged in a mad scramble for colonial possessions. These powers had already seized the islands of the Pacific and parcelled out Africa. There was left to them only South America, and Cleveland interfered here.

In its broad character as a diplomatic episode this whole affair stands as an assertion by the United States and a recognition by Great Britain of far wider interest and authority beyond her borders than was ever before definitely maintained by the American Republic, whether as the Monroe Doctrine or otherwise. The giant democracy took her place among the great powers of the earth, whether for weal or for woe, and the British motherland was the first to accord recognition to her new position. 143

A recent writer on public affairs has declared that "when President Cleveland prevented the British from establishing a boundary line in Venezuela, he did something that Monroe never dreamed of." Today it is impossible to discern what Monroe was envisaging, but we cannot believe

140. W. Wilson, "Mr. Cleveland as President" in The Atlantic Monthly, V. 79, p. 299.

141. A.W. Dunn, From Harrison to Harding, V. I, p. 158.

142. H.C. Lodge, "England, Venezuela, and the Monroe Doctrine", The North American Review, V. 160, p. 658.

143. W. A. Dunning, op. cit., p. 317.

that he would have remained silent, had he become convinced that Great Britain had in mind any serious encroachment upon Venezuelan territory through "forcibly establishing a boundary line in Venezuela." The world knows something of how such lines have been established in Asia. Had the line been established in Venezuela without protest, it might ultimately have been established in Colombia. This certainly would have endangered "our peace", if not our "safety", while dreaming of
¹⁴⁴
 a canal at Panama.

Looking at it from the other point of view, Hector Petin has declared that, in this connection, the Monroe Doctrine had no bearing; that it had no more concern with the matter at issue than has theology with the question of mathematics. He thought that the enthusiastic reception of President Cleveland's message by the majority of the American people was a wholly ridiculous spectacle, and from the point of view of an international lawyer he found the state of affairs at the meeting of the Paris tribunal of arbitration to be quite beyond comprehension. He said that the treaty of arbitration was an intervention between two states, one of which, it is useless to deny, had no reason, whatsoever, to
¹⁴⁵
 figure in the arbitration.

Whether or not this widening of the Monroe Doctrine was justified, there is no doubt of the fact that Great Britain accepted Olney's interpretation. John Bassett Moore has

144. D. Y. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

145. F. B. Loomis, op. cit., p. 8.

asserted that the most important political result of the Venezuelan incident was the official adoption of the Monroe Doctrine by the Congress of the United States, and its explicit acceptance by the principle maritime power of Europe.¹⁴⁶ Carl Russell Fish, on the other hand disagreed with this contention to the extent that:

although to a degree Great Britain's action in treating of the matter constituted an acknowledgment of our special position on this continent, she did not formally recognize it, and she did not conclude without having forced a compromise, ---namely, that the arbitrators were to act on the rule that adverse possession for fifty years should make good title. 147

According to the London Times, Great Britain admitted:

that in respect of the South American Republics, the United States may not only intervene in disputes, but may entirely supersede the original disputant, and assume exclusive control of the negotiations.

The United States had, in effect, proclaimed her hegemony in the New World and Great Britain had conceded it.¹⁴⁸ Henry James has clinched this contention with the statement that:

if it was a fact---and nothing has come out that contradicts the appearances---that England did not remind the other European powers of their community, of interest with her, or invite them to support her against the United States, then her conduct certainly meant something else than that she did not care about the bit of territory in dispute. It meant that she was not averse to the enforcement of a substantial limitation upon European liberty of action in South America; and, also it signaled her sense of a sort of solidarity between the English-speaking nations. 149

In fact, this clearing of the atmosphere between Great Britain

146. A. Alvarez, op. cit., p. 484.

147. C. R. Fish, American Diplomacy, p. 394.

148. P. L. Haworth, op. cit., p. 222.

149. H. James, op. cit., p. 135.

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and the United States initiated a virtual entente that within a generation was to prove of the profoundest importance in world history.

150

But even more important than the diplomatic victory over Great Britain was the precedent set by this incident:

It may be argued that, international engagements alone being binding, diplomatic precedents have no existence; that Cleveland and Olney themselves tacitly dropped their extreme claims; and that any future case must be decided on its merits both by the United States and by any European Power concerned. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the position assumed in this instance has been considerably strengthened by later events, has been not only recognized but actually supported throughout by the attitude of Great Britain, and has never been seriously challenged by any European power. As Canning foresaw, the destiny of the tropical republics of America depends on the relations between Great Britain and the United States. 151

It would be difficult to exaggerate the profound impression which the Venezuelan affair produced upon the statesmen of Continental Europe----an impression that was reflected in the press and in many monographs and special publications. The prestige of the United States was enhanced immensely----a fact of which Americans abroad were made aware in many ways. Their country was now spoken of in a tone of grave respect that was altogether new. 152 The London Times stated that:

Great Britain cannot, of course, bind any other nation by her action, but she has set up a precedent which may in the future be quoted with great effect against herself, and she has greatly strengthened the hands of the United States government in any dispute that may arise in the future between the South American Republics and a European power, in which the United States may de-

150. A. Nevins, op. cit., p. 640.

151. F. A. Kirkpatrick, "Historical Sketch to 1890 of the Republics of Latin America", in Cambridge Modern History, V. 12, p. 608.

152. H. T. Peck, op. cit., p. 435.

sire to intervene. 153

"The precedent", says Dr. Petin, "is very important in that it forces Europe to accept arbitration in the adjustment of a boundary line with American states and marks an ominous advance in the development of the Monroe Doctrine." 154

The best informed French and German journalists----- seldom inclined to view the aspirations and pretensions of Great Britain with indulgence-----declared that Lord Salisbury had the better of the argumentative duel. "We wish to take the first opportunity of declaring", said a Rhemish newspaper, the Cologne Gazette, in an article which was reproduced with approval by the semi-official Norddeutsche Zeitung, "that the precedent in question is at most an English, and in no way an European precedent." 155 Nevertheless the German writer admitted that the United States had entered upon a line of policy from which it could not withdraw, and that in the future, and in the light of this Venezuelan transaction, American public opinion would unhesitatingly demand the intervention of the Federal government in any dispute between an American state and a European power, whether territorial questions be involved or not. 156 The Tempus, which is the best instructed of French newspapers where foreign affairs are involved, wrote in a similar strain. What specially concerned Frenchmen, it argued, was the countenance Great Britain had given to a novel and extreme deduction from the Monroe

153. London Times, Nov. 14, 1896 in H.T. Peck, op. cit., p. 435

154. F. B. Loomis, op. cit., p. 8.

155. S. Low, op. cit., pp. 852-3.

156. Ibid., p. 853.

Doctrine:----

Ainsi, au consentement expres du Royaume-Uni, le gouvernement de Washington se verra investi du droit de s'immiscer dans toute querelle territoriale entre une puissance europeenne et un Etat du nouveau monde. Il obtiendra le droit de se porter fort, meme sans mandat expres, pour l'un de ses clients. Il pourra, d'accord avec la puissance europeenne engagee dans la litige, mais sans l'intervention de l'Etat americain pue represente l'autre partie, regler souverainement le mode, les conditions, la forme, et le fonds de la solution destinee a mettre fin au conflit.

Ce sont la de bien grosses innovations en matiere de droit international. Elles consacrent la suprematie absolue des Etats-Unis dans leur hemisphere. 157

Sidney Low continues by saying:

In that strangely confused and indefinite system which is called international law, acts go for more than words. If the jurist will be able to turn to the cogent piece of argument in which Lord Salisbury dismissed the new interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine, statesmen will point to the fact that the government over which Lord Salisbury presided did eventually comply with the cardinal demand this new interpretation embodied.

It may be said that this precedent is not binding in the tribunal of diplomacy....French and German protests have already been issued, and it will be open to any foreign government, if the occasion should arise, to declare that the general system of international law cannot be modified by a private arrangement between two powers. But if the civilized world is not committed to the fundamental article of the new doctrine, the United States is; and that is the true importance of the matter. We have seen how President Monroe's message----which was in fact a purely academic commentary on events, not followed, or intended to be followed, by definite action----has become an inseparable part of the public policy of the United States, and has assumed in the eyes of American citizens a sanctity almost equal to that of the Constitution itself. Probably the same weight of authority will not attach to the policy laid down by President

Cleveland and Mr. Olney. But authority it will have; the authority of an accomplished fact, and the authority of a successful vindication of a principle which could not be consequently abandoned without some appearance of humiliation. America is a democratic country, in which the sovereign is an electorate keenly alive to the national dignity, and impulsively quick to resent any sacrifice of national honor. Nothing helps a party in difficulties more than a show of spirit in foreign affairs, nor injures it worse than any suspicion of weakness or pusillanimity. What has been gained by the assertion of the Olney Doctrine cannot be lost. 158

It was a great triumph of American diplomacy, too, to force Great Britain just at this time to recognize in fact, if not in words, the Monroe Doctrine, for it was not long before Germany showed a disposition to question this principle of American policy. The fact that we had upheld the Doctrine against England made it easier to deal with Germany. 159 The precedent for arbitration set in the Venezuelan dispute was followed in the case of a dispute between French Guiana and Brazil in 1900 and in another between British Guiana and Brazil in 1904. 160 Grasping European powers were made to understand that the Monroe Doctrine meant, "You must not seize American soil", and that violation of the doctrine spelled war with the United States. 161

Also, from the negative side of the question our neglect to take cognizance of the case would have involved a practical abandonment and the consequent violation of the Monroe Doctrine and thus would have established a precedent which might have

158. S. Low, op. cit., pp. 852-855.

159. J. H. Latane, History of American Foreign Policy, p. 488.

160. Sir A. W. Ward and G. P. Gooch, op. cit., p. 226.

161. P. L. Haworth, op. cit., p. 222.

proved almost infinitely mischievous. The force of precedent is so great that in the present state of international law, it would be dangerous not to assert it on every occasion of its violation.

It is impossible to say with confidence when a principle or policy, long contested, at last obtains such an amount of assent that it may be taken to be a part of that necessarily somewhat loose and mutable body of usages known as international law. The answer is still more uncertain when the expositors of international law write in one strain, and the action of governments is conceived in another; which has been true of the history of this doctrine. 163

But how did the Latin American states themselves react to this declaration by the United States? Professor Robertson has remarked that:

it is within the bounds of truth to say that the foreign policy of the United States evoked more approbation in hispanic America in 1895 and 1896 than at any other time since the days of President Monroe. 164

To prove his point he has quoted extensively from newspapers of the time, as follows:

On April 10, 1896, yielding to persons who desired expressions of opinion about the Monroe Doctrine, the Mexican president said to the congress that Mexico could not do less than show herself 'a partisan of the doctrine' that condemned as 'contrary to the established order any attack of monarchical Europe against the republics of America....The course of our history, especially the struggle of our people to cast off the yoke of an exotic empire of European origin and form and elements----as shown by the torrents of blood which were spilt in that rude conflict----furnishes testimony to the world, of

162. W.F. Johnson, America's Foreign Relations, V. 2, p. 114.

163. J. Macdonell, "South American Republics and the Monroe Doctrine", The Nineteenth Century and After, V. 53, p. 587.

164. W. S. Robertson, Hispanic-American Relations with the United States, p. 113.

our love for independence and our hatred for all foreign intervention.' 165

Cleveland's belligerent message was greeted with joy in Venezuela. On March 9, 1896, both houses of the Venezuelan Congress adopted the declaration that the President of the United States as the advocate of 'the territorial integrity of the independent nations of the New World', had 'acquired a special claim to the gratitude of the peoples of this continent'; that by its response to 'the noble ideas of the Supreme Magistrate' the Congress of the United States had 'opened new and hopeful vistas in the dispute', which had been confined 'to the narrow sphere of fruitless discussion with peril to the general interests of the continent'; and that, because of these actions, the supreme magistrates of the United States deserved 'in a singular manner, the expressions of affection' which embodied 'all the grateful sentiments of this republic towards the glorious fatherland of Washington and Monroe!' 166

The Brazilian Congress unanimously adopted a motion approving Cleveland's policy. The upper house of that Congress sent greetings to the United States Senate about the message of Cleveland, declaring that he had guarded "the dignity, the sovereignty, and the freedom of the American nations." 167

Prominent newspapers in various countries of Spanish America expressed their approval of Cleveland's policy in no uncertain terms. El Ferrocarril of Sonata in Salvador praised Cleveland and Monroe thus: 'Monroe has opened to Cleveland the doors of the temple. In his turn Cleveland, if possible, has conferred greater immortality upon Monroe. The message of Cleveland....has been the complement of American independence; or rather this state paper, which has made effective and practical the saving doctrine that for many years was considered platonic and theoretical, has had

165. La epoca, June 22, 1896, quoted in W. S. Robertson, op. cit., p. 109.

166. Acuerdo del congreso de los Estados Unidos de Venezuela, dictado el 9 de Marzo de 1896, pp. 7-9, quoted in W. S. Robertson, op. cit., p. 109.

167. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1895, V. 1, pp. 75, 76.

the effect of a moral and political victory!' 168

In Guayaquil, Ecuador, El Tiempo published an article entitled 'International Questions', declaring that the Attitude assumed by the United States in the boundary dispute had profoundly affected the minds of Spanish Americans: 'Every person now feels that the saving Doctrine of Monroe will cease to be a purely speculative principle or a principle of merely historic value, as it has been designated, and that it will become the formula of our public international law.' On January 4, 1896, La epoca of Bogota published an editorial entitled 'The Practice of the Monroe Doctrine', asserting that England by an abuse of force had attempted to make herself the judge of the dispute. 'Confronted by such a display of force and such scandalous injustice the land of Washington has shocked Europe by constituting herself,----in the name of justice and the New World, an arbitrator between a strong nation and a weak nation for the adjudication of the controversy.' On January 9, El heraldo of the same city contained an editorial which expressed the following sentiments: 'Admirable is the role which the Great Republic founded by the virtuous Washington plays in the Guiana controversy! By the side of Washington there will figure honorably in history Monroe and Cleveland, his worthy successors.' On January 13, 1896, Diario de Caracas, the official organ of the Venezuelan Government, declared: 'Propitious winds now blow from one extreme of the continent to the other. The right of preservation prevails over every other consideration; and the Monroe Doctrine, based upon this right which is vital for individuals and for organizations, now assumes the character of a formidable principle:---- it is the formula that will preserve the existence of our incipient democracies.' 169

On February 7, that journal made this comment: 'President Monroe furnished the formula in the celebrated message that bears his name; Cleveland and the United States Congress have amplified it in connection with our dispute with England; and eventually there is spreading from the Hudson River to Cape Horn a conception of a grand American alliance as the most expeditious and imperative measure for the salvation of the rights and sovereignties of our young republics.' 170

168. W. S. Robertson, op. cit., p. 110.

169. W. S. Robertson, op. cit., p. 112.

170. Ibid., p. 113.

Although all this sounds very friendly to the United States, there is another side to the picture. Senor Alvarez, for example says:

In several instances the United States has made declarations of hegemony that are truly extraordinary but fortunately isolated, for in practice they would have met with the resistance of the Latin-American States or at least of the better constituted States among them. 171

George H. Blakeslee, an authority on international affairs, has remarked that though the original Monroe Doctrine was clearly justified, the extensions of it, including the Olney-Cleveland one, are a constant source of irritation to the South American Republics and are a menace to the peace of the world. 172 F. Garcia Calderon calls it an imperialistic declaration, 173 which verifies the statement that the other American powers considered our assertion of authority in connection with what they believed to be our designs, and that our protection of Venezuela, therefore, failed to increase our popularity in America. In fact, Carl Russell Fish goes on to say that:

His remark that 'the states of America, South as well as North, by geographical proximity, by natural sympathy, by similarity of governmental constitutions, are friends and allies, commercially and politically of the United States', could scarcely have compressed more errors into fewer words. 174

When Secretary Olney declared that "today the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is

171. A. Alvarez, op. cit., p. 223.

172. Ibid., p. 390.

173. Ibid., p. 260.

174. C. R. Fish, American Diplomacy, p. 395.

law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition", the inference seemed clear to South America that the United States considered itself sovereign on both continents. The great republics of South America keenly resented such an attitude¹⁷⁵ and felt that talk of an American fiat had an ominous ring. William H. Taft wrote:

It is not remarkable that it has been construed to be a claim of suzerainty over the territory of the two American continents. Our fiat is not law to control the domestic concerns, or, indeed, the foreign policies of the Latin-American republics or of other American governments, nor do we exercise substantial sovereignty over them. We are concerned that their governments shall not be interfered with by European governments; we are concerned that this hemisphere shall not be a field for land aggrandizement and the chase for increased political power by European governments, such as we have witnessed in Africa and in China and Manchuria. 176

Our relations with Latin America will not be established upon a satisfactory basis of mutual confidence as long as a large number of our Latin American neighbors feel that the Monroe Doctrine is a selfish policy, based upon the desire of the United States to exclude European powers from interfering with the political interests of the western hemisphere merely in order to have a better opportunity to act in a similar fashion itself. "South Americans are prone to turn to this official utterance when we seek by pronouncements equally official to allay a suspicion of our ulterior¹⁷⁷ motives."

What was the significance of the Olney Doctrine to the

175. G. H. Stuart, op. cit., p. 43.

176. A. Alvarez, op. cit., p. 539.

177. L. M. Sears, op. cit., p. 431.

United States? First, it gave new life to the Monroe Doctrine as an integral part of our foreign policy. John Latane noticed that the most striking feature of it was that the Monroe Doctrine was appealed to by name.¹⁷⁰ It proved to the world the determination of the United States to be heard in all affairs that touched her interests. Cleveland, in addition, united the country rather completely upon a matter of foreign policy.

More important than this unity of feeling throughout the land, however, was the development of a spirit of inquiry among the people. Suddenly confronted by changes of policy that might bring wealth or poverty, life or death, the American people began to take the foreign relations of the United States more seriously than they had since the Napoleonic wars.¹⁷⁹

The interpretation which was given was instantly accepted by his country-men and has been confirmed and extended by his successors. Through this incident President Cleveland left an ineffaceable mark upon the history, not of the United States alone, but of the whole Western Hemisphere and of the world.¹⁰⁰

More important than other phases of it is the feeling by many authorities that if the Government of the United States had the rights which it claimed, it must take them cum onere and so assume certain obligations and responsibilities. Even Lord Salisbury indicated this when he remarked that:

such a claim would have imposed on the United States the duty of answering for the conduct of these States, and consequently the responsibility of controlling it....It follows of necessity that if the Government

170. J. H. Latane, American Foreign Policy, p. 431.

179. C. R. Fish, The Path of Empire, p. 89.

100. H. T. Peck, op. cit., p. 436.

of the United States will not control the conduct of these communities, neither can it undertake to protect them from the consequences attaching to any misconduct of which they may be guilty towards other nations. 101

In 1896 Sidney Low pointed out the difficulties in such a position:

If it were possible to keep the New World free from the strife, ambitions, wearing intrigues, jealous rivalries, the burden of armaments, the constant dread, and sometimes the awful reality, of war, which have saddened the Old----what Englishman would seek to put obstacles in the way of realizing the comfortable dream? By all means, he would say, let the Americans try the experiment. Only, from the depth of Old World experience that ranges over two thousand years of fierce conflict among nations, he may be permitted to remind the Americans that the experiment is no cheap and easy one!....

Even in embarking upon the modified form of this enterprise which I take to be implied in the Olney Doctrine, the United States has saddled itself with a vast addition to its burdens and its duties....Many powerful modern States have exercised a hegemony, or supremacy, over independent civilized neighbors; but no other has yet attempted to regulate the affairs of a whole fourth of the habitable globe....Whatever may be the actual facts, in theory, and in the view of international law, the other governments of the Americas have as much right to call themselves civilized, and to claim all the immunities and prerogatives of civilization, as that of Washington itself; and some at least of their States have existed, under settled rule, as dependencies of European powers, as long as the United States or longer. Nor are these groups of countries, which are hence-forth to consider themselves under the tutelage of the republic, insignificant in resources, or in possibilities of future wealth and greatness. 182

The Old Monroe Doctrine was one of self-centered isolation. The country, which aimed as far as possible at having no political relations with foreign States, could almost dispense with the luxury of fleets and armies. But the New Monroe Doctrine (which in some respects is rather the antithesis than the legitimate

101. Foreign Relations, 1895, Part I, p. 565.

182. Sidney Low, op. cit., p. 856.

development of its predecessor) cannot assuredly be maintained unless the citizens of the republic are prepared to endure burdens and incur obligations from which hitherto they have been enviauly free. 183

Richard Olney himself in 1916 denied the validity of American assumption of a position of supremacy by writing:

Perhaps what has been done in the course of developing the new policy may be considered as a tacit acknowledgment and acceptance of the claims of European jurists and statesmen that if the United States assumes to protect the political independence and territorial integrity of the other American states it must see to it that such states abide by and perform their international duties and obligations. At all events, that is what the United States has been doing and is doing with the acquiescence of the European states in various well-known instances....

Consequently, whether the supplemental policy above sketched is or is not the logical and inevitable sequence of the Monroe Doctrine, it is now no longer aimed at Europe only, but also trenches upon the American states themselves. It is a policy, indeed, which as respects such states impairs their independence. It does not alter the case that the intervention of the United States.... may be for the best good of such states. Such intervention is in clear conflict with the basic principle of international law, which asserts the absolute equality inter se of all states, great and small. 184

But this interpretation as meaning American hegemony in the western hemisphere fails to do full justice to Mr. Olney's position. Before the American Society of International Law, in 1907, he stated his belief in the principle of co-operation in the enforcement of the present Monroe Doctrine.

How and on what lines is it desirable that the United States should proceed? Surely, not by making itself a sort of international American "boss"----but by proceeding on lines justified by precedent and the highest considerations of policy----by initiating, cultivating, and working through an American concert. 185

183. Ibid., p. 660.

184. R. Olney, "Our Latin-American Policy, The North American Review, V. 203, p. 186.

185. G. H. Blakeslee in A. Alvarez, op. cit., p. 396.

And again in 1916 he wrote:

For the role of sole dictator of affairs on the American continent as now undertaken by the United States, there should be substituted co-operation between the United States and the other principal American states for the promotion and protection of their common American interests. In short, what is to be desired in place of the present unsatisfactory status is a Concert of American states,The Concert would put all the American states behind the Monroe Doctrine....The Monroe Doctrine is without recognition in international law....But an established Concert of American states....might well challenge recognition as coming within the purview and entitled to the sanction of international law. 186

V

Conclusion

With the Olney Doctrine, Cleveland and Olney opened a question which has not yet been settled. Does the Monroe Doctrine justify the United States in intervening in a boundary dispute between an American and a European power? Olney's dispatch is a logical development of the rights of the United States. His main contention is that moving a boundary line necessarily means the transfer of political power from one state to another. This statement, is undeniably true. The condition of world affairs in the last decade of the nineteenth century increased the importance of this ultimatum to Great Britain. Throughout Africa and Asia the great powers were struggling for economic supremacy---imperialism was the order of the day. The United States had prevented actual political penetration of the Americas, but once a precedent had been

186. R. Olney, "Our Latin-American Policy", The North American Review, V. 203, pp. 189-191.

laid down by which a country might extend its control by claiming territory not legally its own, the Monroe Doctrine would have been given its death blow. This must have been the very thing that Olney was fighting to prevent.

In the arguments which Secretary Olney used to prove his contention, however, he made several bad mistakes. First, he declared the Monroe Doctrine to be "public law in the United States", which it was not----it being merely public policy; Secondly, he backed Venezuela in her demand for unreserved arbitration, a policy which had not been followed very often; Thirdly, he made several broad statements which were open to misinterpretation. Certainly, he could not have meant literally that the United States was practically sovereign in this hemisphere, or that any permanent political union between Europe and America was unfeasible. These statements were not merely unwise, but also undiplomatic.

There has never been any question, however, as to the motive behind Olney's intervention. Too often intervention by the United States has been in actuality for the purpose of protection of its own interests, but here the motive was quite unselfish and responsive only to the appeal of Venezuela. Mr. Olney reiterated several times the fact that we were intervening in behalf of a weak state which could not secure justice of itself, and in this matter Olney was sincere.

There is one other phase of this doctrine which is important; that is, its effect in South America. The people as a whole applauded the action of the United States, believing that for

once the United States was not using the Monroe Doctrine primarily for its own ends. The United States was more popular in South America than it had been since 1823. Political scientists and people jealous of their country's sovereignty, however, affected to see in it another of those imperialistic interpretations of the Monroe Doctrine.

They resented keenly the implication that they were not sovereign and independent states. A British historian has summed up the Latin-American opinion in the following statements:

As an instrument of international good will the Monroe Doctrine has committed the cardinal blunder of belittling those for whose benefit it was designed, and there is nothing more annoying to grown men than a standing offer of a ride in a perambulator....¹⁸⁷

The self-esteem of Washington, as it gazed south across the Rio Grande, was founded upon two convictions: that it was older than its Spanish neighbors, and that its own moral qualities were on a distinctly higher level. That hallucination seems to underlie the whole attitude of the United States to South America in all its manifestations; and South America, which might have pardoned the Yanqui tendency to treat her as a child, cannot forgive the graver error which regards her as a backward, a distinctly wicked child. ¹⁸⁸

In conclusion then the Venezuelan episode and the resulting Olney Doctrine were significant in that ~~they~~ established the Monroe Doctrine in its broadest aspects on a firm and lasting foundation, and also forced a recognition from England of the vital interest of the United States in any dispute between Latin-American and European countries. The Olney interpretation

¹⁸⁷. P. Guedalla, "The Big Brother Complex", The Forum, V. 60, p. 328.

¹⁸⁸. Ibid., p. 329.

produced results in the United States that were equally as important as those in Latin-America. From now on the American public showed a growing interest in foreign affairs and a real desire to see the United States assume its proper place in the international relations of the world.

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