



**OXFORD JOURNALS**  
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

---

The Monroe Doctrine and Russia: American Views of Czar Alexander I and Their Influence upon Early Russian-American Relations

Author(s): HIROO NAKAJIMA

Source: *Diplomatic History*, JUNE 2007, Vol. 31, No. 3, SHAFR'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE (JUNE 2007), pp. 439-463

Published by: Oxford University Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24916085>

#### REFERENCES

Linked references are available on JSTOR for this article:

[https://www.jstor.org/stable/24916085?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/24916085?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents)

You may need to log in to JSTOR to access the linked references.

---

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



Oxford University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Diplomatic History*

JSTOR

## The Monroe Doctrine and Russia: American Views of Czar Alexander I and Their Influence upon Early Russian-American Relations\*

The history of early Russian-American relations has often been presented in a contradictory and conflicting fashion. This has occurred partly because the historical literature tended to have political or ideological biases after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and especially during the Cold War. The differing historical interpretations also have arisen because of the mysterious character of Czar Alexander I (r. 1801–1825). Historians have labeled him as an “enigmatic tsar,” “paternalistic reformer,” or “the sphinx.”<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of his reign, Alexander was considered to be a liberal ruler. But as revolutions broke out in Spain, Portugal, Naples, and Piedmont during the early 1820s, he became increasingly conservative, even reactionary. Late in 1821, former U.S. President James Madison, an erstwhile admirer of the czar, wrote that he had “seen, not without some little disappointment, the latter developments of character in the Emperor Alexander.”<sup>2</sup> In addition, it was not always easy for outside observers to trace Russian foreign-policy initiatives to Alexander, even though he was the most absolute monarch of the time in Europe. Contemporary and later scholars have often been unable to determine whether Russian diplomacy was propelled by the czar, his ministers, or the directors of the semi-official Russian-American Company, which had considerable economic interests in North America.<sup>3</sup>

---

\*I would like to thank *Diplomatic History*'s anonymous readers for their valuable comments. Special thanks are due to Ed Crapol and Daniel Preston. I also would like to express my gratitude to Makoto Saito, Tadashi Aruga, Fumiko Nishizaki, Izumi Hirobe, and Tosh Minohara, who inspired me to write this essay.

1. Maurice Paléologue, *The Enigmatic Czar: The Life of Alexander I of Russia*, trans. Edwin Muir and Willa Muir (New York, 1938); Allen McConnell, *Tsar Alexander I: Paternalistic Reformer* (New York, 1970); Henri Troyat, *Alexander of Russia: Napoleon's Conqueror*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York, 1982).

2. James Madison to Richard Rush, 20 November 1821, *Letters and Other Writings of James Madison*, 4 vols. (Philadelphia, 1865), III: 235.

3. Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, *The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I: Political Attitudes and the Conduct of Russian Diplomacy, 1801–1815* (Berkeley, CA, 1969) puts emphasis on the importance of the interaction between the czar and his ministers in the making of Russian foreign policy.

It was against this background that the noted American scholar Foster Rhea Dulles published *The Road to Teberan* during World War II. With the strengthening of the Grand Alliance against Nazi Germany in mind, Dulles attempted to “discover enduring basis for understanding and good will between Russia and America.” According to Dulles, the precedent for improved Russian-American relations had been set by Alexander, who “created the Holy Alliance to establish peace throughout the world.” Countering this view, the prominent diplomatic historian Thomas Bailey wrote in the early years of the Cold War that an increase in Alexander’s power after the Napoleonic Wars had been “roughly analogous to that of Stalin in 1945.” In that same period, the revisionist historian and Cold War critic William Appleman Williams titled the first chapter of his 1952 book on the history of Russian-American relations a “realistic romance.”<sup>4</sup>

In the aftermath of détente, the English translation of N. N. Bolkhovitinov’s definitive study of early Russian-American relations appeared, as did an account by the leading post-revisionist John Lewis Gaddis.<sup>5</sup> When the Cold War ended during the period of 1989–1991, Norman Saul published a book on Russian-American relations up to the 1867 purchase of Alaska. He has just finished his trilogy on the history of Russian-American relations.<sup>6</sup> Now the time seems ripe for a new essay on American attitudes toward Russia during Alexander’s reign.

No subject is more appropriate for such an essay than the Monroe Doctrine, a pillar of American diplomacy. President James Monroe announced the doctrine in his annual message to Congress in 1823. The Monroe Doctrine asserted that the Americas comprised a different “hemisphere” that was and had to remain independent of European domination. Monroe enthusiastically welcomed the sovereignty of Latin American states, the former colonies of the Spanish empire. The Monroe Doctrine insisted that the newly independent Latin American states had to be protected from interference from the monar-

---

4. Foster Rhea Dulles, *The Road to Teberan: The Story of Russia and America, 1781–1943* (Princeton, NJ, 1944), v, 4; Thomas A. Bailey, *America Faces Russia: American-Russian Relations from Early Times to Our Day* (Ithaca, NY, 1950), 22; William Appleman Williams, *American-Russian Relations, 1781–1947* (New York, 1952). The frontispiece of Bailey’s book is taken from an influential book, *Siberia and the Exile System* (New York, 1891) by George Kennan (George F. Kennan’s distant relative), which gave impetus to growing concern in the United States about infringement upon human rights in Russia in the late nineteenth century. That concern would eventually culminate in the denunciation of the commercial treaty of 1832 in 1912, the campaign for which was led by Jacob Schiff, who had helped Japan finance its war against Russia owing to the latter’s anti-Semitism, for example the pogroms. See Norman E. Saul, *Concord and Conflict: The United States and Russia, 1867–1914* (Lawrence, KS, 1996), chap. 7.

5. N. N. Bolkhovitinov, *The Beginnings of Russian-American Relations, 1775–1815*, trans. Elena Levin (Cambridge, MA, 1975); John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union, and the United States: An Interpretive History* (New York, 1978).

6. Norman E. Saul, *Distant Friends: The United States and Russia, 1763–1867* (Lawrence, KS, 1991); Saul, *Concord and Conflict*; Norman E. Saul, *War and Revolution: The United States and Russia, 1914–1921* (Lawrence, KS, 2001). The latter two were recently reviewed in David Mayers, “History of Russian-U.S. Relations, 1867–1921,” *Diplomatic History* 27 (June 2003): 409–14.

chiefs of Europe. Monroe also cautioned strongly against European expansion on the North American continent.<sup>7</sup>

In trying to place the Monroe Doctrine in a transatlantic context, diplomatic historians have mentioned Russia primarily in relation to its non-colonization principle. As to the specific purpose of the principle, which was formulated almost solely by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, Dexter Perkins has stated in his classic work that it was aimed at Russian expansion on the northwest coast of North America.<sup>8</sup> In turn, Russian historians such as S. B. Okun have concluded that the Russian-American Convention of 1824 was a victory for the United States.<sup>9</sup> Edward Tatum, among others, has stressed that the dictum had an anti-British nature as Britain, Russia's archrival, was also trying to expand its holdings in that region.<sup>10</sup> According to Adams, the primary objective of the non-colonization principle was "to present to the Emperor Alexander a prevailing *motive*, to recede from his pretensions on the Northwest Coast of America."<sup>11</sup> This is an ambiguous statement, as giving the czar a "*motive*" might or might not have been an anti-Russian measure. Therefore, the purpose of the principle in the context of Russian-American relations merits further exploration.

On the other hand, the non-intervention principle in the Monroe Doctrine is often characterized as a byproduct of the British proposal of a joint declaration against a possible French intervention for the restoration of Bourbon rule in Latin America. Most of the literature has discussed the non-intervention principle in the context of Anglo-American relations. But the French menace was

7. Samuel Flagg Bemis, *John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy* (New York, 1949), 364–66; Dexter Perkins, *A History of the Monroe Doctrine* (Boston, 1955), chap. 1. For a brief but insightful comment emphasizing the importance of European, particularly Russian, expansion on the North American continent in the framing of the doctrine, see Makoto Saito, *A Political and Diplomatic History of the United States: An Interpretive View*, trans. Shumpei Okamoto and Linda L. Sieg (Tokyo, 1979), 68.

8. Dexter Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1823–1826* (Cambridge, MA, 1927), 3. See also Bradford Perkins, *Castlereagh and Adams: England and the United States, 1812–1823* (Berkeley, CA, 1964), 328–29.

9. S. B. Okun, *The Russian-American Company*, trans. Carl Ginsburg (Cambridge, MA, 1951), 85. See also N. N. Bolkhovitinov, "Torgovlia i razgranichenie vladenii Rossii, USA i Anglii na Severo-Zapade Ameriki (1824–1825)," in *Istoriia Russkoi Ameriki, 1799–1825*, ed. N. N. Bolkhovitinov (Moscow, 1999), 406.

10. Edward H. Tatum, Jr., *The United States and Europe, 1815–1823: A Study in the Background of the Monroe Doctrine* (Berkeley, CA, 1936), 275. In addition to Tatum's work which has distinctly isolationist and anti-British connotations, several articles on early Russian-American relations support the view. See Irby C. Nichols, Jr., "The Russian Ukase and the Monroe Doctrine: A Re-Evaluation," *Pacific Historical Review* 36 (February 1967): 20–21; N. N. Bolkhovitinov, "Russia and the Declaration of the Non-Colonization Principle: New Archival Evidence," trans. Basil Dmytryshyn, *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 72 (June 1971): 125–26; Harold E. Bergquist, "John Quincy Adams and the Promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine, October–December 1823," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 111 (January 1975): 51.

11. Adams to Rush, 17 September 1831, in Edward P. Crapol, "John Quincy Adams and the Monroe Doctrine: Some New Evidence," *Pacific Historical Review* 48 (August 1979): 414. Emphasis in original. The original letter is in James Monroe Papers, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia.

more negligible than the British proposal implied because, as Adams sensed, the Royal Navy controlled the Atlantic. In contrast, the influence of Russia, an important actor in transatlantic international relations, on the framing of the principle has been largely overlooked. Harold Bergquist, Gaddis, and James Lewis have been among the few to address the question. Lewis, for example, rightly observes that the Russian factor was “Monroe’s clearest explanation of the logic behind the Monroe Doctrine.”<sup>12</sup> Although acknowledging the well-documented history of Anglo-American relations, this article argues that Russia also was a key factor in the way Monroe’s opposition to French intervention was presented.

Russia had considerable influence upon the formulation of the non-intervention principle, arguably the most important element in the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>13</sup> The non-intervention principle is the inevitable corollary of the non-colonization principle. This article sheds new light upon the Monroe Doctrine by concentrating on the influence of Russian-American relations. Some neglected correspondence of James Monroe will be presented as evidence, as will a volume of *Vnesbniiaia politika Rossii XIX i nachala XX veka* (Russian foreign policy in the nineteenth and the beginnings of the twentieth centuries), a compilation of documents for the period. The Monroe Doctrine will thereby be placed in an “internationalized” context, to borrow Akira Iriye’s phrase.<sup>14</sup>

The United States and Russia, though “distant” politically and geographically, maintained cordial relations after the former had gained independence from England. Both countries had clashed with England over neutrality and the freedom of the seas.<sup>15</sup> The Treaty of Amity and Commerce with France (1778), the Treaty with Prussia (1785), and again the Treaty of Mortefontaine with

12. James E. Lewis, Jr., *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood: The United States and the Collapse of the Spanish Empire, 1783–1829* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1998), 260, n. 91. For references to the Russian factor in the declaration of the non-intervention principle, see Bergquist, “Adams and the Monroe Doctrine,” 46, 50–52; Harold E. Bergquist, “The Russian Ukase of September 16, 1821, the Noncolonization Principle, and the Russo-American Convention of 1824,” *Canadian Journal of History* 10 (April 1975): 177, n. 38; Gaddis, *Russia*, 10–11; Lewis, *Union*, 180, 184–85; James E. Lewis, Jr., *John Quincy Adams: Policymaker for the Union* (Wilmington, DE, 2001), 91. The background is informatively provided in Howard I. Kushner, *Conflict on the Northwest Coast: American-Russian Rivalry in the Pacific Northwest, 1790–1867* (Westport, CT, 1975), chap. 3. Perkins’s classic, for all its excellence, hardly discusses the factor. See Perkins, *Doctrine, 1823–1826*, 75.

13. See *ibid.*, 3–4; Bemis, *Foundations*, 394.

14. Akira Iriye, “Internationalizing International History,” in *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, ed. Thomas Bender (Berkeley, CA, 2002), 47–62. For locating Monroe’s scattered correspondence, the recently published *Comprehensive Catalogue of the Correspondence and Papers of James Monroe*, comp. and ed. Daniel Preston, 2 vols. (Westport, CT, 2001) is indispensable.

15. Saul, *Distant Friends*, 10–13, 35–36, 72; Bolkhovitinov, *Beginnings*, 12–29; David Griffiths, “Early Russian-American Trade Relations Re-Considered,” in *Russkoe otkrytie Ameriki: Sbornik statei, posviashchennyi 70-letiiu akademika Nikolaia Nikolaevicha Bolkhovitinova*, ed. A. O. Chubarian and N. N. Bolkhovitinov (Moscow, 2002).

France (1800) that the United States concluded included the principles of neutral rights.<sup>16</sup> This was one of the reasons for the War of 1812 between the United States and England. For its part, Russia twice formed the League of Armed Neutrality with Denmark and Sweden, first in 1780 during the war for American independence and again in 1800 during the Napoleonic Wars. Although Russians later fought with the British against Napoleon, they continued to be suspicious of the British government which in turn considered that “only fear controls” the mind of Alexander.<sup>17</sup> Half a century later, the United States and Russia signed an accord on neutral rights, two years before the 1856 Declaration of Paris, that was the first general international law on maritime rights.<sup>18</sup>

In addition, key American policymakers assumed that Alexander, who had been tutored by the Swiss philosophe Frédéric Cesar de La Harp, was liberal minded by virtue of his advocacy of the freedom of the seas. President Thomas Jefferson had noted the liberal current in the czar’s letters to his former teacher, letters that had become known to the president through old acquaintances in the pre-revolutionary salons in France. Responding to the czar’s “disinterested and virtuous regard” for the United States, Jefferson corresponded with him half-privately on topics such as the U.S. Constitution. He paved the way for full diplomatic relations with Russia in 1808.<sup>19</sup> The unfolding of what R. R. Palmer calls the “democratic revolution”<sup>20</sup> was tangible here.

Thus, America’s early diplomatic relations with Russia appeared truly cordial. “Your friendly interposition for the relief of the crew of an American frigate, stranded on the coast of Tripoli, has been recently made known to me,” wrote Jefferson in the early summer of 1804 in his first letter to Alexander. “I see with great pleasure the rising commerce between our two countries.” The president thanked the czar for the “act of benevolence” as proof of his disposition to befriend the “young republic,” for he thought the official note written by Secretary of State James Madison conveying the nation’s gratitude was not enough. In the letter, one of the few that he wrote to the czar, Jefferson claimed that he saw “manifestations of virtue and wisdom” in Russian policies in a reign that had started in the same year as his presidency.<sup>21</sup>

The news of Alexander’s intervention was first reported to Washington by James Monroe, then minister to Great Britain, who had received the information from Levett Harris, first American consul in St. Petersburg. Monroe

16. Bemis, *Foundations*, 105–6, 436–37.

17. Sir Stephen Shairp to George Chalmers, 25 December 1809, in Francis Bickley, ed., *Report on the Manuscript of Earl Bathurst* . . . (London, 1923), 137–38.

18. Saul, *Distant Friends*, 235.

19. N. Hans, “Czar Alexander I and Jefferson: Unpublished Correspondence,” *Slavonic and East European Review*, 32 (December 1953): 215–25. The quotation is from Thomas Jefferson to William Short, 24 August 1808, *ibid.*, 220.

20. R. R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760–1800*, 2 vols. (Princeton, NJ, 1959–1964).

21. Jefferson to Alexander I, 15 June 1804, Hans, “Alexander I and Jefferson,” 221.

expressed to Chancellor Count Alexander Vorontzov his satisfaction with the act as “a proof of the friendship of his Imperial Majesty, for the U. States.”<sup>22</sup> As mentioned above, Madison wrote to the chancellor that the president saw in the “so illustrious and powerful” Alexander “a ray of that luminous benevolence” which shone in his character. He praised the czar’s “honorable and beneficent example.”<sup>23</sup> In reply, the chancellor communicated to the secretary of state the czar’s intention to facilitate “commercial relations and good intelligence with the United States.”<sup>24</sup>

In the spring of 1806, Jefferson wrote to Alexander that the United States and “the northern nations,” which included Russia, had “a common interest in the neutral rights” as the United States was interested in “liberalizing them progressively.” Almost simultaneously, Madison transmitted a letter to the czar through Monroe and instructed the American minister to obtain better terms in what became known as the Monroe-Pinckney Treaty that would abortively provide for the neutral rights of the United States. “The communication may be of use, not only in regulating in some degree, the language you may hold in conversations with the British Minister,” Madison said, “but in shaping the result on certain points of your negotiation.”<sup>25</sup> He considered that Russia and France agreed with the United States with regard to neutral rights.<sup>26</sup> This is how the intimate relationship of the “Virginia dynasty” with the Romanov dynasty began.

As for John Quincy Adams, the first minister to Russia, Alexander received him warmly when they met in the fall of 1809. The czar said to Adams, “I am so glad to see you here.” Responding to this and other conciliatory gestures, Adams replied that the United States “would contribute to the support of the liberal principles” that the czar advocated in maritime politics.<sup>27</sup> The two men would sometimes see each other on their promenades on the quay of the Neva.<sup>28</sup>

22. James Monroe to Alexandr Vorontzov (copy), 27 March 1804, Diplomatic Despatches, Great Britain, Department of State, Record Group (hereafter cited as RG) 59, U.S. National Archives (hereafter cited as NA), Washington, DC (microfilm), reel 9. The copy of the note was enclosed in Monroe’s letter to Madison dated 15 April 1804. Ibid.

23. Madison to Vorontzov, 10 June 1804, Consular Instructions, All Countries, Department of State, RG 59, NA (microfilm), reel 1.

24. Vorontzov to Madison, 8/20 December 1804, Ministerstvo inostrannykh del SSSR, *Vnesniaia politika Rossii XIX i nachala XX veka: Dokumenty Rossiiskogo ministerstva inostrannykh del* (hereafter cited as *VPR*), ser. 1, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1961), 255. The Julian calendar used in Russia at the time is indicated before the slash preceding the Gregorian calendar.

25. Jefferson to Alexander, 19 April 1806, in Andrew A. Lipscomb and Albert E. Bergh, eds., *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 20 vols. (Washington, DC, 1904–1905), X: 249; Madison to Monroe, 22 April 1806, Diplomatic Instructions, All Countries, Department of State, RG 59, NA (microfilm), reel 1.

26. Madison to John Armstrong (copy), 14 March 1806, *ibid.* The copy was enclosed in Madison’s instruction to Monroe.

27. 5 November 1809, in Charles Francis Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Comprising Portions of His Diary from 1795 to 1848*, 12 vols. (Philadelphia, 1874–1877), II: 51–53. Adams reached St. Petersburg on 23 October 1809.

28. See Saul, *Distant Friends*, 54.

Shortly after Adams met with the czar, Chancellor Count Nikolai Rumiantzev revealed Russian policy toward the United States. The chancellor assured Adams of “his great attachment to the system of friendly intercourse with the United States, and his conviction of long standing that the interest of Russia perfectly harmonized” with that of the United States. He remarked that

the English exclusive maritime pretensions, and views of usurpation upon the rights of other nations, made it essential . . . especially to Russia, that some great commercial state should be supported as their rival; that the United States of America were such a state . . . as by their relative situation the two powers could never be in any manner dangerous to each other.

In the same conversation, the chancellor talked of drawing up the instruction to Count Fedor Pahlen, the first minister to the United States, in consultation with Adams for “the great end of drawing closer the relations between the two countries.” In an instruction to Pahlen two months later, Alexander stated that he saw in the United States “a kind of rival to England.” Adams told Chancellor Rumiantzev that the United States found “great satisfaction and support in the knowledge that a sovereign so powerful and so enlightened as the Emperor of Russia” favored a maritime system independent of France and England, both of which interfered with America’s neutral trade during the Napoleonic Wars. “[T]he more liberal system established under his auspices by Russia was not only of great advantage to both countries,” he continued, “but would very much increase the commerce already existing between them.”<sup>29</sup> Adams was so flattered that he wrote to John Armstrong, the minister to France, that he “received the strongest and warmest assurances of the best dispositions towards the United States” from both Alexander himself and from Rumiantzev.<sup>30</sup>

Adams, a former Federalist senator from Massachusetts who would serve as secretary of state in the Monroe administration, was appointed to the Russian post by President Madison. These episodes show that the attitude of the Virginia dynasty and Adams toward Alexander was wholeheartedly supportive in the beginning.

During the War of 1812, Russia offered mediation, which implied an intention to side with the United States concerning maritime rights that had been a cause for the conflict. Seizing upon the overture, Madison as president hailed the “affinity between Baltic and American ideas of maritime law.”<sup>31</sup> Secretary of State Monroe reiterated to his envoys the importance of “a good intelligence

29. 15 November 1809, *Memoirs of Adams* II: 65–67. The czar’s words are from Alexander to Fedor Pahlen, 8 January 1810, *VPR*, ser. 1, vol. 5 (Moscow, 1967), 338.

30. John Quincy Adams to Armstrong, 27 November 1809, in Edward H. Tatum, Jr., “Ten Unpublished Letters of John Quincy Adams, 1796–1837,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 4 (April 1941): 376.

31. Madison to John Nicholas, 2 April 1813, in Gaillard Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison*, 9 vols. (New York, 1900–1910), VIII: 243–44.

between the United States and Russia respecting neutral rights.”<sup>32</sup> The envoys were authorized to sign a treaty of commerce with Russia in addition to negotiating peace with Great Britain under Alexander’s supervision, because the Madison administration knew that “the liberal principles . . . [had] distinguished the commercial policy of the Russian Empire.” The secretary of state hoped in vain that the treaty would be concluded “on fair and liberal conditions.”<sup>33</sup> He inferred that the reason the British had declined the Russian mediation was Russia’s “common interest with the United States against Great Britain” and that the British government wanted to “prevent a good understanding between the United States and Russia.”<sup>34</sup>

To add to these circumstances, England and Russia were often at loggerheads in European politics; the former had taken the initiative in forming the Quadruple Alliance against the Russian-led Holy Alliance in the Vienna settlement of 1815. Outside of Europe, both powers wanted to secure their spheres of influence in the Middle East as England’s hold on the route to India and Russia’s quest for the Black Sea Straits potentially clashed.<sup>35</sup>

In the Convention of 1818, the United States and England jointly claimed title to the land west of the Rockies. A year later, the United States inherited a claim to the Pacific Coast north of 42° by the Adams-Onís Treaty.<sup>36</sup> The ratification of the treaty by the Spanish government was promoted by Russia despite its interest in controlling the region. Because the United States and Russia both resented British depredations on the high seas, anti-English sentiment brought the United States and Russia together. By the early 1820s, however, their relations became more delicate, for the dispute over boundaries and maritime law on the northwest coast emerged when Alexander appeared to be heading toward reaction.

Therefore, the non-colonization principle was a reaction to the *ukaz* of 16 September 1821. Alexander issued the imperial decree claiming the northwest coast to 51° for Russia and prohibiting foreign vessels from coming within 100

32. Monroe to Albert Gallatin, Adams, and James A. Bayard, 15 April 1813, in Stanislaus Murray Hamilton, ed., *The Writings of James Monroe*, 7 vols. (New York, 1898–1903), V: 256; Monroe to Gallatin, Adams, and Bayard, 27 April 1813, in Elizabeth Donnan, ed., *Papers of James A. Bayard, 1796–1815*, 2 vols., Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1913 (Washington, DC, 1915), II: 215.

33. Gallatin, Adams, and Bayard to Nikolai Rumiantzev, 3 August 1813, *ibid.*, 238; Monroe to Adams and Bayard, 5 August 1813, *ibid.*, 240.

34. Monroe to Adams, Bayard, Henry Clay, and Jonathan Russell, 28 January 1814, *ibid.*, 264; Monroe to Gallatin, Adams, Bayard, Clay, and Russell, 14 February 1814, in Walter Lawrie and Matthew St. Clair Clark, eds., *American State Papers*, 38 vols. (Washington, DC, 1832–1861), *Class 1: Foreign Relations* (hereafter cited as *ASPPR*), III: 703.

35. For an interesting explanation of the connection between Anglo-Russian rivalry in the Middle East and the northwest coast question, see Anatole G. Mazour, “The Russian-American and the Anglo-Russian Conventions, 1824–1825: An Interpretation,” *Pacific Historical Review* 14 (September 1945): 303–10.

36. For a treatment of the treaty that incorporates recent historical scholarship, see William Earl Weeks, *John Quincy Adams and American Global Empire* (Lexington, KY, 1992).

Italian miles (approximately 30 marine leagues) of the Russian coast.<sup>37</sup> A main reason was that the directors of the Russian-American Company, which went for commodities such as otter skins on the northwest coast, approached him. As British Foreign Secretary George Canning judiciously observed, the “apparently extravagant [Monroe] doctrine” was “principally, if not specifically, directed against the no less extravagant doctrine of the Russian Ukase of 1821.”<sup>38</sup>

Russians entered the northwest coast trade in the early 1740s, preceding other powers by almost a half-century in search of sea otter skins, which had decreased in Kamchatka on the other side of the Pacific. By the turn of the century, New Archangel (Sitka) was established as the colonial capital. But Russia only had Fort Ross on the mainland, which was north of San Francisco and within Mexican territory, as its settlement south of Prince William’s Sound at 61°. The country’s major outposts were off the coast at New Archangel at 57°30’ and on Kodiak Island at about the same degrees. Fort Ross and its subunits including a few ranches and a port were expected to supply food to these Russian possessions that lay north.<sup>39</sup>

The real purpose of the decree was to bar Americans from supplying the natives with firearms, ammunition, and liquor in exchange for furs. Those Americans, locally called the “Bostonians,” had started the northwest trade in the 1780s and superseded the British by the end of the century as the major trader alongside the Russians.<sup>40</sup> The furs were transported to China by way of the Sandwich Islands (present Hawaii), where they obtained sandalwood. In Guangzhou (Canton), the American merchants, most of whom were from Boston, traded the cargos and specie for such items as tea and silk, which would be sold at high prices in their home country. The rigid enforcement of the decree would mean that American and British merchants could not trade at all in the area that Russia claimed to administer. The Russian decree also clashed with British and American territorial ambitions. As far as the United States was concerned, the decree was to be effective for ships departing ports after 1 July 1822.<sup>41</sup>

37. For an English text of the ukase, see *ASPPFR* V: 857–61.

38. George Canning to Sir Charles Stuart, 9 January 1824, in C. K. Webster, ed., *Britain and the Independence of Latin America, 1812–1830: Select Documents from the Foreign Office Archives*, 2 vols. (London, 1938), II: 132.

39. See A. A. Istomin, “Osnovanie kreposti Ross v Kalifornii v 1812 g. i otnosheniia s Ispaniei,” in *Istoriia*, ed. Bolkhovitinov; Basil Dmytryshyn, “Fort Ross: An Outpost of the Russian-American Company in California, 1812–1841,” in *Russkoe otkrytie Ameriki*, ed. Chubarian and Bolkhovitinov, for the background of the Russian settlement.

40. For details of the fur trade on the northwest coast, see James R. Gibson, *Otter-Skins, Boston Ships, and China Goods: The Maritime Fur Trade of the Northwest Coast, 1785–1841* (Montreal, 1992); James R. Gibson, “Pushnaia torgovlia na Tikhookeanskom severe i otnosheniia s “bostontsami,” trans. L. M. Troitskaia, in *Istoriia*, ed. Bolkhovitinov.

41. Peter Poletica to Adams, 11 February 1822, *ASPPFR* IV: 857.

In mid-October of 1821, Henry Middleton, the minister to Russia, sent the details of the ukase to Washington. Shortly thereafter, they were published in American newspapers. Count Peter Poletica, the Russian minister, rightly “expected . . . some remarks about this subject on the part of Mr. Adams.” But the secretary of state “made none, he even seemed to attach any importance to it.” After Poletica officially transmitted the copy of the ukase to Adams in mid-February of 1822, however, Adams conveyed President Monroe’s “surprise” and protested it in successive letters to him.<sup>42</sup> Following Adams’s moderate but unequivocal instruction of mid-May, Middleton intended to present a note to Count Karl Nesselrode, the foreign minister, requesting a discussion of the matter in late July of 1822. Nesselrode officially became the foreign minister in 1816, but he was usually subordinate to Count Ionnes Capodistrias, who would later become the first president of the Greek republic, from 1815 until 1822, when the latter resigned from the Foreign Ministry.<sup>43</sup> In his note, Middleton exaggerated the dispute with the claim that “a state of war between the two powers exists already.” Capodistrias, however, poured cold water over his hasty conduct, saying,

The emperor has already had the good sense to see that this affair should not be pushed too far. We are disposed not to follow it up. . . . You should not demand that we revoke the orders we have issued. We will not revoke them; we will not draw back; but in fact no orders have been issued which authorize your apprehension.

Middleton followed Capodistrias’s advice. When he met with Capodistrias and Nesselrode a few days later, they revealed Russia’s intention to negotiate with the United States over the northwest coast. For the purpose of giving that offer in writing, Middleton presented a different note to Nesselrode, simply asking “what was intended.” Now it seemed to Middleton that the decree had been signed “without sufficient examination,” so it could easily be transformed into a “less objectionable shape.”<sup>44</sup> In July of 1823, Alexander ordered that the surveillance of Russian cruisers be confined as close to shore as possible and to

---

42. Henry Middleton to Adams, 3/15 October 1821, Diplomatic Despatches, Russia, Department of State, RG 59, NA (microfilm), reel 8; Poletica to Karl Nesselrode, 8/20 December 1821, “Correspondence of Russian Ministers in Washington, 1818–1825, I” *American Historical Review* 18 (January 1913): 333; Poletica to Adams, 11 February 1822, *ASPF* IV: 856–57; Adams to Poletica, 25 February and 30 March 1822, *ibid.*, 861–63; Adams to Poletica, 24 April 1822, in Worthington C. Ford, ed., *The Writings of John Quincy Adams*, 7 vols. (New York, 1913–1917), VII: 245–46. Middleton sent a French translation of the ukase four weeks after he had first reported on it. Middleton to Adams, 29 October/10 November 1821, Despatches, Russia, reel 8.

43. Grimsted, *Foreign Ministers*, ix–x.

44. Adams to Middleton, 13 May 1822, Instructions, All Countries, reel 4; Middleton to Adams, 8/20 August 1822, *Proceedings of the Alaskan Boundary Tribunal* (hereafter cited as *PABT*), 58th Cong., 2d sess., Senate, Document no. 162, 7 vols. (Washington, DC, 1903–1904), II: 42–46. The two notes (dated 24 and 27 July) and Nesselrode’s answer to the second note (dated 1 August) were enclosed in Middleton’s dispatch.

the north of 55°,<sup>45</sup> the demarcation line drawn for the southern limit of the activities of the Russian-American Company in the original charter of 1799. Russian settlements on the northwest coast depended on American supplies after all. In 1824, the company was granted the right to trade with Americans, though at New Archangel only.<sup>46</sup>

Baron Diderick Tuyl van Serooskerken, the newly appointed Russian minister to the United States, was instructed to negotiate the northwest coast question, but was subsequently informed that the negotiations with the United States were to be held in St. Petersburg, as England had consented to settle the issue there. Tuyl arrived in Washington in April of 1823 and proposed a settlement in the Russian capital. By the summer of that year, Middleton had the power to resolve the dispute.<sup>47</sup>

Meanwhile, William Sturgis of Bryant and Sturgis, the Boston-based trading company, had written an unsigned article examining the Russian claims to the coast in the celebrated *North American Review* in the fall of 1822. To Sturgis, who had earned a fortune by selling furs to the lucrative China market, “[t]he claim of Russia to sovereignty over the Pacific ocean, north of latitude 51°, on the pretence of its being a ‘closed sea,’ ” was “more unwarrantable than her territorial usurpations,” for “nearly all the sea otter skins” were “procured north of the 51st degree.” He contended that the Russian claim would “give them the control of the China market.” In the age of the “market revolution,” the maritime or economic dimension of continental expansionism was quite important. “[T]he august Emperor may choose to occupy . . . California, and annex it to his already extensive dominions,” he also argued, in light of the fact that Russia had “already made a considerable settlement on Spanish territory at Port Bodega [Fort Ross].”<sup>48</sup>

45. Nesselrode to Diderick Tuyl van Serooskerken, 13/25 July 1822, “Correspondence, I,” 338. See also *Fur Seal Arbitration: Proceedings of the Tribunal of Arbitration, Convened at Paris*, 15 vols. and suppl. (Washington, 1895), II: 53–54; Okun, *Russian-American Company*, 82–83.

46. See Mary E. Wheeler, “Empires in Conflict and Cooperation: The ‘Bostonians’ and the Russian-American Company,” *Pacific Historical Review* 40 (November 1971): 419–41.

47. Tuyl to Adams, 12/24 April 1823, *PABT* II: 46–47; Adams to Tuyl, 7 May 1823, *ibid.*, 47; Adams to Middleton, 22 July 1823, *ibid.*, 47–48. That Tuyl was instructed to negotiate on the question was first made known to the United States in Nesselrode’s answer to Middleton’s note. Middleton to Adams, 8/20 August 1822, *ibid.*, 45–46.

48. “Examination of the Russian Claims to the Northwest Coast of America,” *North American Review* 15 (October 1822): 370–401. Sturgis’s comment on the linkage between the northwest coast and the China trade almost perfectly represented a maritime dimension of America’s continental expansion that historian Norman Graebner and others stress. Norman A. Graebner, *Empire on the Pacific: A Study in American Continental Expansion* (New York, 1955); Charles Vevier, “American Continentalism: An Idea of Expansion, 1845–1910,” *American Historical Review* 65 (January 1960): 323–35. See also David M. Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Involvement: American Economic Expansion across the Pacific, 1784–1900* (Columbia, MO, 2001), chap. 1. For the market revolution, see Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846* (New York, 1991).

Sturgis sent the draft of the article to Adams. He wrote the secretary of state again in the spring of 1823 and urged the administration to adopt measures that would make up for “the immense losses” of his company resulting from the enforcement of the ukase. In May, Adams received a letter from Charles Jared Ingersoll, a Philadelphia politician, who advocated repelling Russian “force by force.” Ingersoll had lost patience with “Mr. Monroe’s policy to cultivate good understanding with Russia.” “[W]hat an opportunity his administration will lose of immortality if this Russian outrage is overlooked,” he wrote. In the same month, Sturgis sent a letter to Senator James Lloyd of Massachusetts referring him to his article. In the letter, he stressed “a total and ruinous loss” that might result from the Russian decree. Emphasizing the necessity of resisting the pretensions of Russia, Lloyd wrote a lengthy letter to the president.<sup>49</sup> Lloyd’s letter was read in the cabinet meeting at the end of June, and after some discussion, it was decided that Adams should write a dispatch to Middleton.<sup>50</sup>

When Adams replied to Lloyd on behalf of the president on 15 July, he expressed the full-fledged non-colonization principle for the first time. Even though he did not expect that the “closed sea” along the northwest coast would be “a stubborn knot in the negotiations,” he said,

[W]hat right has Russia to any colonial footing on the continent of North America? Has she any that we are bound to recognize? . . . Is it not time for the American nations to inform the Sovereigns of Europe that the American continents are no longer open to the settlement of new European colonies?<sup>51</sup>

During the conversation with Tuyll two days later, he reiterated that “we should contest the right of Russia to any territorial establishment on this continent.” “[W]e should assume distinctly the principle that the American continents are no longer subjects for any new European colonial establishments,” he continued.<sup>52</sup> In the dispatch Tuyll wrote a week later, he said, “The American government probably grasps the present occasion in order to ask that she propose a general principle, by which foreign powers definitely and forever renounce the right of establishing new colonies in either of the Americas.”

Tuyll, nevertheless, wrote that the northwest coast dispute could be solved without “a great difficulty.” Perhaps this is because “any possession upon the continent of North America should not be of . . . importance to Russia,” as Adams shrewdly pointed out. Nesselrode himself, too, hoped that the negotia-

49. William Sturgis to Adams, 14 September 1822, Russian Claims, Miscellaneous, RG 76, NA, Envelope I, Folder 3; John Bryant and Sturgis to Adams, 21 April 1823, *ibid.*; Charles Jared Ingersoll to Adams, 10 May 1823, Adams Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston (microfilm), reel 460; James Lloyd to Monroe, 16 May 1823, James Monroe Papers, New York Public Library, New York, NY (hereafter cited as NYPL) (microfilm), reel 4. Sturgis’s letter to Lloyd (dated 13 May) was enclosed in the last letter.

50. 28 June 1823, *Memoirs of Adams* VI: 158.

51. Adams to Lloyd, 15 July 1823, Adams Papers, reel 146.

52. 17 July 1823, *Memoirs of Adams* VI: 163.

tion would be “neither long, nor difficult.”<sup>53</sup> Late in July, Adams also wrote to Richard Rush, the minister to Great Britain, that it was unimaginable that “any European nation should entertain the project of settling a colony on the Northwest Coast of America.” In contrast, Adams’s reaction was rather mild, as Perkins noted, in the dispatch to Middleton written on the same day he wrote Rush. “[T]here can, perhaps, be no better time for saying, frankly and explicitly, to the Russian government,” he declared, “that the future peace of the world, and the interest of Russia herself, cannot be promoted by Russian settlements upon any part of the American Continent.”<sup>54</sup> He was certain that he could “find proof enough to put down the Russian argument.” But his sentiments were not exactly the same as those of the hawkish Ingersoll. When Adams penned the above phrases, he asked himself, “[H]ow shall we answer the Russian cannon?”<sup>55</sup>

More important was that Adams was ready to concede to Russia the line at 55° as the southern boundary of its claim even as he formulated the non-colonization principle,<sup>56</sup> for the Columbia River basin that Americans wanted to secure was far south of the line.<sup>57</sup> As far as the territorial question was concerned, therefore, the northwest coast dispute was essentially settled between the United States and Russia in the summer of 1823. Nesselrode was more concerned with maritime and commercial issues such as coastal surveillance and American trade with the natives than he was with the territorial question.<sup>58</sup>

One of the reasons for the mutually conciliatory arrangement was that Alexander was arbitrating the Anglo-American dispute over the right of search in relation to slave smuggling. He favored the American claim that searching smugglers for slaves violated the freedom of the seas. In July of 1822, the czar accordingly awarded the United States indemnity from Great Britain under the first article of the Treaty of Ghent for the slaves who had been carried away by the British at the end of the War of 1812. This action should be noted, as slave smuggling was quite a serious issue in Anglo-American relations that would be prohibited by the abortive Convention of 1824.<sup>59</sup> Prior to the czar’s arbitration,

53. Tuyl to Nesselrode, 12/24 July 1823, *VPR*, ser. 2, vol. 5 (Moscow, 1982), 153; Adams to Middleton, 22 July 1823, *ASPFV* V: 437; Nesselrode to Tuyl, 20 August/1 September 1823, *VPR*, ser. 2, vol. 5, 206.

54. Adams to Rush, 22 July 1823, *ASPFV* V: 447; Adams to Middleton, 22 July 1823, *ibid.*, 445. See Perkins, *Doctrine, 1823–1826*, 12–13.

55. 1 July 1823, *Memoirs of Adams* VI: 159. See also Adams to Ingersoll, 19 June 1823, *Writings of Adams* VII: 488.

56. Adams to Middleton, 22 July 1823, *ibid.*, 437–38; Adams to Rush, 22 July 1823, *ibid.*, 447–48. Both instructions referred to 55° as the borderline.

57. To Canning’s surprise, Rush conveyed to him the idea of limiting the British territory north of the line at 51° in order that the United States would acquire the whole basin. Canning to Rush, 17 December 1823, Rush Family Papers, Princeton University Library, Princeton, New Jersey; Rush to Canning, 18 December 1823, George Canning Papers, Leeds District Archives, Leeds, England. See also Richard Rush, *A Residence at the Court of London . . .*, 2 vols. (London, 1845), II: 83–86.

58. Nesselrode to Poletica, 18/30 July 1823, *VPR*, ser. 2, vol. 5, 200.

59. See Bemis, *Foundations*, chap. 20; Perkins, *Castlereagh and Adams*, 275–77.

a congressman from Maryland, who had been an ardent supporter of the Anglo-American war owing to British infringement of America's maritime rights, communicated to Monroe his strong expectation for a favorable decision.<sup>60</sup>

In June of 1823, Adams named Alexander, under the fifth article of the Treaty of Ghent, the arbitrator of the northeastern boundary dispute between the United States and England.<sup>61</sup> A month later, Adams drafted the Anglo-American convention that interpreted the freedom of the seas quite progressively, banning privateering and guaranteeing the protection of private property in time of war. Monroe consented to Adams's proposal that Middleton deliver a copy of the convention to the Russian government for the czar's perusal.<sup>62</sup> Right after Monroe's declaration, Middleton proposed the convention of maritime law to Russia and found the Russian government quite interested in it.<sup>63</sup> Thus, it is against this background that America's reaction to Canning's overture for an Anglo-American declaration should be construed in order to see the linkage between the non-intervention and non-colonization principles implied by Adams's "combined system of policy."<sup>64</sup>

The joint declaration that Canning had proposed in August of 1823 contained two critical points. First, it implicitly opposed France's armed intervention in Latin America. In 1818, France became a member of the Holy Alliance headed by Russia. Second, it denied any British or U.S. intention to acquire Spanish territory in the Americas.<sup>65</sup> Nothing in Canning's proposal conflicted with the Monroe Doctrine. Only Secretary of State Adams opposed cooperation with England.

After intensive cabinet debate in November, however, the Monroe administration responded to the Russian communications instead of accepting Canning's offer. The first communication was a note, accompanied by a verbal remark, that Tuyl handed over to Adams just one week after the administration learned about the foreign secretary's overture. The note of 16 October maintained that Russia would not receive diplomatic agents from any of the rebelling Spanish colonies. As the Russian minister delivered the note to the secretary of state, he demanded American neutrality in the war between Spain and its colonies.<sup>66</sup>

60. Robert Wright to Monroe, 5 January 1822, Miscellaneous Letters, Department of State, RG 59, NA (microfilm), reel 53.

61. 4 June 1823, *Memoirs of Adams* VI: 140.

62. 28, 29, and 31 July and 1 August 1823, *ibid.*, 164–67. See also Bemis, *Foundations*, 436–42; Harry Ammon, *James Monroe: The Quest for National Identity* (New York, 1971), 520.

63. Middleton to Adams, 17 February 1824, Despatches, Russia, reel 10. Russian response to the proposal had been a letter from Nesselrode to Middleton dated 1 February 1824, enclosed in the above.

64. 7 November 1823, *Memoirs of Adams* VI: 179.

65. Canning to Rush, 20 August 1823, *Writings of Monroe* VI: 365. Canning's proposal actually contained five points, but they are condensed to two here.

66. Tuyl to Adams, 4/16 October 1823, in Worthington C. Ford, "Some Original Documents on the Genesis of the Monroe Doctrine," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d ser., 15 (1902): 400; Adams memorandum, n.d. (ca. 27 November 1823), *ibid.*, 394–95.

On 7 November, Adams submitted the draft of an answer to the note to the cabinet. He remarked in the ensuing debate that the Russian communications afforded “a very suitable and convenient opportunity for us to . . . decline the overture of Great Britain.” After the meeting, Adams told Monroe that “the answer to be given to Baron Tuyll, the instructions to Mr. Rush relative to the proposal of Mr. Canning, those to Mr. Middleton at St. Petersburg . . . must all be parts of a combined system of policy.” The president concurred with his opinion.<sup>67</sup> In his interview with Tuyll the next day, Adams demanded Russia’s neutrality in return for the neutrality of the United States.<sup>68</sup> The importance of this interview cannot be exaggerated, as Monroe regarded it as “the basis of all subsequent measures, either with Congress, or through Mr. Rush with the British govt.”<sup>69</sup>

On 11 November, the Russian minister wrote a dispatch referring to an interview with Adams that had taken place on 27 October. In it, the secretary of state went so far as to say:

[T]his government considers as inadmissible the reestablishment of the colonial system in America and all influence that the powers of Europe would exercise in view of such a reestablishment.

These words are the prototype of the non-intervention principle. Tuyll worried that his 16 October note and his explanations would “cause a sort of anxiety and inquietude here.”<sup>70</sup> On 15 November, Adams answered the Russian note stating that the Latin American countries, to which the United States had extended diplomatic recognition in the preceding year, had become irrevocably independent.<sup>71</sup>

On 17 November, Tuyll handed over to Adams an excerpt of Nesselrode’s circular written at the end of August. The circular, which predicted the crushing of the revolutions in the Iberian Peninsula,<sup>72</sup> proved Alexander’s commitment to the principle of absolute monarchy. In reply to the Russian circular, the secretary of state read a paper to the Russian minister that exhibited America’s strong commitment to republican principles. The 27 November paper referred, above all, to the principles of non-intervention and isolation from European affairs.<sup>73</sup> This course of events laid the foundation of the declaration that Monroe would

67. 7 November 1823, *Memoirs of Adams* VI: 177–79.

68. 8 November 1823, *ibid.*, 181.

69. Monroe to Adams, 8 November 1823, Ford, “Original Documents,” 380.

70. Tuyll to Nesselrode, 11 November 1823, *VPR*, ser. 2, vol. 5, 253.

71. Adams to Tuyll, 15 November 1823, Ford, “Original Documents,” 378–80.

72. Nesselrode to Tuyll (excerpt), 30 August 1823, *ibid.*, 402–5. For Adams’s view of the circular, see *Memoirs of Adams* VI: 189–90.

73. 25 and 27 November 1823, *ibid.*, 199, 212–14. The non-intervention principle is expressed in the following. “Observations on the Communications Recently Received from the Minister of Russia,” 27 November 1823, Ford, “Original Documents,” 405–8.

make on 2 December, intending, as Adams stated, to be “an unequivocal answer to the proposal made by Canning.”<sup>74</sup>

Tuyll found nothing objectionable in this paper, for Adams had been very generous. In the 21 November interview with the Russian minister, the secretary of state said that “the Personal Relations in which I had stood for several years with the Russian Government, and the proof of Friendship which during that period the Emperor Alexander had repeatedly given to the United States, had left on my mind, an indelible impression of respect for his character.”<sup>75</sup> Immediately after Tuyll heard what Adams said, he conceded that the discussion of monarchical and republican principles was “one of the most difficult questions . . . about which it was probable that the opinion of men would ever be brought to agree.” “That difference of principle,” nevertheless, “did not necessarily involve hostile collision between them.” “The Imperial Government distinguished clearly,” Tuyll continued, “between a republic like that of the United States and rebellion founded on revolt against legitimate authority.”<sup>76</sup>

About a week after Monroe had sent his annual message to Congress, he wrote a letter to former President Jefferson, whose advice he had sought on Canning’s proposal:

By taking the step here, it is done in a manner more conciliatory with, & respectful to Russia. . . . Russia dreads a connection between the U States & G. Britain, or harmony in policy moving on our own ground, the apprehension that unless she retreats, that effect may be produced, may be a motive with her for retreating.<sup>77</sup>

Two weeks after the declaration, Monroe wrote Rush, who had refused to take advantage of Canning’s offer and was awaiting instructions from Washington, a letter whose importance has been overlooked.

[I]t affords me great satisfaction, to add . . . that you have moved in every step which you took, the soundest judgment, with the most perfect discretion. . . .

Had the first public act occurred in England, all the weight, founded on amicable relations, which the UStates have, with any of the other powers, would have been lost at once. Russia, in particular, wishes to prevent any close connection, between the UStates, and G. Britain, and it is probable, will make, some accommodation, in a spirit of conciliation, to prevent it. . . .

It happened fortunately that the Russian govt., through its minister here, drew the attention of this govt., to the same object, in a way, to enable it, to express its opinion, or rather sentiments, on very point, involved in the

74. 25 November 1823, *Memoirs of Adams* VI: 199.

75. Adams memorandum, n.d. (ca. 27 November 1823), Ford, “Original Documents,” 396.

76. 27 November 1823, *Memoirs of Adams* VI: 213–14.

77. Monroe to Jefferson, December 1823, *Writings of Monroe* VI: 344–45. The original has a note that reads “rec’d. Dec. 11.” Thomas Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as LC), Washington, DC (microfilm), reel 54.

proposition of Mr. Canning. Of this opportunity we availed ourselves, and as we presume, in a manner, to meet all the objects of the British govt., and in terms the most conciliatory to the Russian.<sup>78</sup>

Three days later, Monroe told former President Madison, from whom he also had asked advice on Canning's proposal, that the rejection of his offer was not simply an independent course but also one that would have "better effect with our southern neighbors, as well as with Russia and other allied powers." According to Monroe, "Russia, who wishes to prevent any connection or concert between the UStates and G. Britain and may be willing to make some accommodation to prevent it, considering she can [be] desperate, in such event, would abandon the hope" of salvaging the Spanish empire in Latin America.<sup>79</sup> Madison replied that "the ground on which the Russian communications were met was certainly well chosen."<sup>80</sup>

Five years later, at the dawn of Andrew Jackson's presidency, Monroe wrote a letter to Rush, who had just failed in his election as a vice presidential candidate on the Adams ticket.

With the part which you acted, in that affair, we were highly gratified. . . . It laid the foundation, of an answer which was given, by Mr. Adams, immediately after the receipt of a copy of the correspondence [with Mr. Canning], to a communication from the minister of Russia, which expressed strong disapprobation, by the Emperor, of all revolutionary movements, and a disposition to aid Spain against those states, as it likewise did . . . of the message which I shortly afterwards presented to Congress.<sup>81</sup>

Notwithstanding the undiplomatic repudiation of the monarchical ideology to which Russia clung, one of the chief reasons for this course of action was that the Monroe administration wanted to avoid discouraging the Russian government, which feared a U.S. connection with England. Ernest May notes that "the tsar would have been shocked" and "almost certainly have felt less friendly toward the United States" had the Anglo-American declaration materialized, while emphasizing domestic political factors in the framing of the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>82</sup> The presidential message surprised Tuyll. He envisioned the United States as "the chief of a democratic league of the New World." Still, the Russian minister wrote:

---

78. Monroe to Rush, 17 December 1823, Simon Gratz Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Case 2, Box 18. James Lewis's reference to the importance of the letter is a rare exception. Lewis, *Union*, 260, n. 91.

79. Monroe to Madison, 20 December 1823, James Madison Papers, LC (microfilm), reel 26.

80. Madison to Monroe, n.d., *Writings of Monroe* VI: 420.

81. Monroe to Rush, 3 December 1828, Gratz Collection, Case 2, Box 18. This letter has been long overlooked by students of the Monroe Doctrine.

82. Ernest R. May, *The Making of the Monroe Doctrine* (Cambridge, MA, 1975), 73-74.

[I]t seems difficult to imagine that the government of the United States decided to occupy a position . . . without being plainly certain of the concurrence and the support of Great Britain. It was, however, not entirely impossible that it flattered itself that it imposed upon Europe its language both remarkable and decisive without having acquired plain conviction on that regard.

Accordingly, he decided to “abstain from making any mention to the Secretary of State of the message of Mr. Monroe until the arrival of new instructions of the minister.”<sup>83</sup> This decision led to a remark Monroe would make in a letter to Adams in January of 1824:

The prospect of detaching Russia, from any co-operation with Spain, or any other member of the holy alliance, against So. Ame. is much increased. . . . She must be sensible, that by such cooperation, only, can she force the UStates into any close connection with Engl. As therefore she can have no interest, in restoring the new govts., to the Spanish monarchy, it may be presumed, that this consideration admitted to, will have sufficient weight, to induce her govt., to adopt a decisive policy on that subject, and to make it known, at least to us.<sup>84</sup>

To the chief executive, a former diplomat who was well versed in the balance of power in Europe, the possibility of drawing Russia into the camp of the country he served was not an illusion. In fact, Monroe periodically expected “some accommodation” from Russia. As Adams’s biographer James Lewis states, the accommodation he expected was that Russia allow Latin American nations to become independent.<sup>85</sup> It might also be that Russia made a concession on the northwest coast question, that is, the reversal of her claims in the ukase of 1821. Apart from the fact that the president fully grasped the Russo-British rivalry, a principal cause for this attitude was that he still regarded the czar as “the patron of liberal ideas,” for that image had been common among American policy-makers during the first and second decades of the nineteenth century.

When Jefferson described Alexander’s character in 1807, he wrote, “A more virtuous man, I believe, does not exist.”<sup>86</sup> Madison, who would later be critical of the czar, praised him during the War of 1812, saying, “We are encouraged . . . by the known friendship of the Emperor Alexander to this country.” He considered that “at this moment” Russia was “in its zenith” and the czar’s interposition for

83. Tuyll to Nesselrode, 21 December 1823, *VPR*, ser. 2, vol. 5, 273–74; Tuyll to Nesselrode, 21 December 1823, *ibid.*, 279.

84. Monroe to Adams, 9 January 1824, Adams Papers, reel 464. This important letter is quoted at length in N. N. Bolkhovitinov, *Russko-amerikanskii otnosheniia, 1815–1831* (Moscow, 1975), 313.

85. See Lewis, *Adams*, 91.

86. Jefferson to William Duane, 20 July 1807, *Writings of Jefferson* IX: 119.

peace to be “consistent with the character assumed by him.”<sup>87</sup> Adams called the czar “the Titus of the age,” “the darling of the human race,”<sup>88</sup> toward the end of the Anglo-American war. Living up to the expectations of Americans, the czar granted a constitution to the reconstituted Poland, a country that was independent of Russia in name only.

In the post-Napoleonic era, Alexander’s captivating personality also earned him some favor outside of government circles. Hezekiah Niles, the publisher of the influential *Niles’ Weekly Register*, wrote, “He has more sense and virtue . . . than the whole stock of all the rest of the legitimates.”<sup>89</sup> In the northern and eastern part of the country, nearly thirty “peace societies” appeared, regarding the Holy Alliance as genuine and hailing the czar as “the Prince of Peace.” Those societies, however, did not have much influence in national politics.<sup>90</sup> Indeed, former President John Adams turned down an invitation to join the Massachusetts Peace Society. Although his son John Quincy Adams, along with Daniel Webster, would later serve on one of the committees of the society, he initially thought of it as misguided. Jefferson, who had also refused to join the society, eventually accepted an honorary membership.<sup>91</sup>

Still, the Reverend Noah Worcester, the leader of the peace society movement, actually corresponded with Alexander to praise “the wonderful alliance.”<sup>92</sup> A Christian weekly in Boston, too, looked on the Holy Alliance as “terminating the dangerous progress of tyranny” and expressed a wish to “enter into the spirit of their union” that it called “the Christian Alliance.” Just after the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle (1818), which discussed the possibility of armed intervention in revolutions in Europe and Latin America, the Massachusetts Peace Society rebuked an argument that questioned the czar’s motives in leading the alliance.<sup>93</sup>

On his part, Alexander held the United States in high estimation. Replying to Jefferson’s first letter, he wrote, “Your nation . . . was able to make its independence the most noble one by giving a liberal and wise Constitution that assures the happiness of all.”<sup>94</sup> Prior to the War of 1812, Chancellor Rumiantzev assured

87. Madison to John Nicholas, 2 April 1813, *Writings of Madison* VIII: 243–44.

88. Adams to Abigail Adams, 30 June 1814, Adams Papers, reel 418; Adams to Louisa Catherine Adams, 2 July 1814, *Writings of Adams* V: 55.

89. *Niles’ Weekly Register*, 26 July 1817, 12: 345.

90. Benjamin T. Thomas, “Russo-American Relations, 1815–1867,” *Studies in Historical and Political Science* 48, no. 2 (1930): 27–28; Tatum, *United States and Europe*, 31, 56, 221–26. On the history of the peace societies in general, see Edson L. Whitney, *The American Peace Society: A Centennial History* (Washington, DC, 1928).

91. John Adams to Reverend Noah Worcester, 6 February 1816, printed in *Niles’ Weekly Register*, 13 July 1816, 10: 328; Adams to Alexander Hill Everett, 29 December 1817, *Writings of Adams* VI: 280–81; Jefferson to Worcester, 29 January 1816, printed in *Niles’ Weekly Register*, 13 July 1816, 10: 328; Jefferson to Worcester, 26 November 1817, *Friends of Peace* 1, no. 11: 28–29.

92. Worcester to Alexander, 9 April 1817, printed in *Niles’ Weekly Register*, 18 October 1817, 13: 124.

93. *Recorder*, 17 April 1816, 1: 63; *Friends of Peace* 2, no. 3: 30–31.

94. Alexander to Jefferson, 20 August 1805, Hans, “Alexander I and Jefferson,” 222.

Adams that Russia's "attachment to the United States" was "obstinate, more obstinate" than he thought. During the war, British Prime Minister Earl of Liverpool described the czar, who tried to mediate between the United States and England, as "half an American."<sup>95</sup> In 1819, the czar even tried to persuade the United States to join his Holy Alliance.<sup>96</sup> The "mirror-imaging" between the United States and Russia, that is, "the ways that Americans and Russians saw themselves as having a common relationship"<sup>97</sup> that Saul depicts in his trilogy, is apparent here.

This "mirror-imaging," or the favorable "mutual images,"<sup>98</sup> however, began to recede in the 1820s. Upon Alexander's death in 1825, Niles finally concluded that the czar had been "the most dangerous man of modern times," as he had acquired power "under the semblance of moderation."<sup>99</sup> In the fall of 1822, Sturgis expressed his fear of Russian expansion on the northwest coast. "[A]ll the veneration we feel for the great leader of the 'Holy Alliance,'" he said, "awakens no desire to witness a nearer display of his greatness and power."<sup>100</sup> Seconding the bill that called on the administration to build a post at the mouth of the Columbia River, Representative Francis Baylies (MA) early in 1823 boasted, "[W]e can encounter him [Alexander] . . . [o]n that very shore which he claims, he there shall meet our ocean-warriors."<sup>101</sup> In the spring of the same year, Ingersoll criticized the czar as the "father of all mischief who now says that he maintains a million of soldiers to keep down freedom, who nods France into a war of the worst principles [i.e., the suppression of the Spanish Revolution], who is, in short, Napoleon revived with all his faults, and a hypocrite besides."<sup>102</sup> Four months before the issuing the Monroe Doctrine, even the president admitted that most Americans viewed the Holy Alliance as "a mere hypocritical fraud."<sup>103</sup>

After Alexander had backed the Austrian intervention in the Neapolitan revolution in early 1821, Madison was disappointed that the czar was "no longer the patron of the liberal ideas of the age." He now believed that "the future growth of Russia" was "a little overrated." "[T]he overgrown empire," Madison

95. Adams to Robert Smith, 12 October 1810, Despatches, Russia, reel 2; Earl of Liverpool to Duke of Wellington, 27 September 1814, in *Supplementary Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda of Field Marshal Arthur Duke of Wellington, K. G.*, ed. Arthur, Second Duke of Wellington, 15 vols. (London, 1858–1872), IX: 291.

96. W. P. Cresson, *The Holy Alliance: The European Background of the Monroe Doctrine* (New York, 1922), 94.

97. Saul, *War and Revolution*, xi.

98. For helpful discussions on mutual images in international relations, see the following pioneering essay. Akira Iriye, "Introduction," in *Mutual Images: Essays in American-Japanese Relations*, ed. Akira Iriye (Cambridge, MA, 1975), 1–23. See also Harold R. Isaacs, "Some Concluding Remarks: The Turning Mirrors," in *ibid.*, 258–65.

99. *Niles' Weekly Register*, 11 February 1826, 29: 377. For an interpretation that questions reverence for the czar in the United States, see Bailey, *America Faces Russia*, 19–21.

100. Sturgis, "Examination," 391.

101. 24 January 1823, *Annals of Congress*, 17th Cong., 2d sess., 686.

102. Ingersoll to Adams, 10 May 1823, Adams Papers, reel 460.

103. 9 August 1823, *Memoirs of Adams* VII: 170.

added, “must fall into separate and independent States.” Like him, even Jefferson did not conceal his disappointment with the czar in his letter to Harris, now minister to Russia, at the end of 1821:

I am afraid that our quondam favorite Alexander has swerved from the true faith. His becoming an accomplice of the soi-disant Holy Alliance, the anti-national principles he has separately avowed, and his becoming the very leader of a combination to chain mankind down eternally to oppressions of the most barbarous ages, are clouds on his character not easily to be cleared away.

Still, the sage of Monticello concluded, “These are problems for younger heads than mine. You will see their solution and tell me of it in another world.”<sup>104</sup> During the Congress of Laibach (1821) in which the allies discussed the expediency of an Austrian intervention in the revolution in Naples, Alexander confided to his close friend Prince Alexander N. Golitsyn that the crushing of the upheaval was “[i]n a word . . . only the putting into practice of the doctrines preached by Voltaire, Mirabeau, Condorcet and by all the bogus philosophes.”<sup>105</sup> Affirming friendship between Russia and the United States, the czar wrote President Monroe from Laibach in early March.<sup>106</sup> When the French army crossed the Pyrenees in the spring of 1823 to suppress the revolution in Spain, the Massachusetts Peace Society still kept its faith in the czar’s sincerity even though it denounced the means he used.<sup>107</sup> Several days before Monroe’s declaration, the czar issued a backhanded compliment to the United States in his criticism of the independence movements in Latin America. “Where are the Franklins, the Washingtons, and the Jeffersons of southern America?” he said, lamenting the absence of “estimable leaders,” the ideal of republicanism.<sup>108</sup>

In the Russian-American convention signed on 17 April 1824, the United States succeeded in partitioning the northwest coast at 54°40′. Both the United States and Russia refrained from mentioning the non-colonization principle during the negotiation. In Middleton’s words, all that was controversial was “carefully avoided by the opposite party.”<sup>109</sup> When the conclusion of a treaty was imminent, Nesselrode communicated to Tuiyll the czar’s hope that he would

104. Madison to Rush, 20 November 1821, *Letters and Writings of Madison* III: 235–36; Jefferson to Levett Harris, 12 December 1821, *Writings of Jefferson* XIX: 227.

105. See Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovitch, *Imperator Aleksandr I: Opyt istoricheskago izsledovania*, 2 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1912), I: 241.

106. Alexander to Monroe, 22 February/6 March 1821, Notes from the Russian Legation in the United States, Department of State, RG 59, NA, reel 1.

107. *Friends of Peace* 3, no. 10: 312–17.

108. Count La Ferronnays to Viscount Chateaubriand, 28 November 1823, *Correspondance Politique*, Russia, vol. 165, Archives du ministère des affaires étrangères, Paris.

109. Perkins, *Doctrine, 1823–1826*, 28; Bolkhovitinov, “Russia and the Non-Colonization Principle,” 126; Nichols, “Russian Ukase,” 26. The quotation is from Middleton to Adams, 19 April 1824, *ASPPF* V, 460.

“maintain the passive attitude” and “continue keeping silence . . . relating to the message of the president.” The foreign minister considered “not just the amount of mutual claims, but also the possibility of reaching set goals without harmful tension.”<sup>110</sup> The “realistic romance”<sup>111</sup> between Russia and the United States weighed more with both countries than the abstract non-colonization principle did. Less than two weeks before the Monroe declaration, Tuyll wrote, “Mr. Adams once more assured me . . . that he thought favorably of the issue of the negotiation relative to the Northwest coast.”<sup>112</sup> In Irby Nichols’s words, “Alexander . . . was as anxious as Adams to avoid any incident which would endanger Russo-American friendship.”<sup>113</sup>

Right after the Russian-American convention arrived in Washington at the end of July 1824, Monroe wrote to his son-in-law Samuel L. Gouverneur on the importance of the convention with Russia.

We have concluded a treaty with Russia, by which the differences respecting the no. west coast are happily terminated. The question of “mare clausum” is given up by that govt. . . . The question with England will remain [sic] to be adjusted; her object is to confine us to the latitude of 49°, but the arrangement with Russia will place us on better ground as it not only puts us at ease with Russia, but engages her on our side, in any difference with England.<sup>114</sup>

Replying to Monroe’s praise of Alexander’s generosity concerning the freedom of the seas, Madison declared, “I give the Emperor however little credit for his assent to the principle of ‘Mare liberator’ in the North Pacific. His pretensions were so absurd, & so disgusting to the Maritime world.”<sup>115</sup> Monroe himself, nevertheless, thought differently of the czar, who had granted the United States the right to fish and trade with the natives in the inland seas, harbors, and estuaries of Russia’s territory in North America for ten years under the terms of the Russian-American Convention of 1824. “By entering into the negotiation with us singly [i.e., not with Great Britain], & conceding to us . . . points, especially that relating to navigation, the Emperor has shewn [sic] great respect for the UStates.” He continued:

[T]he event derives additional importance from the consideration that the treaty has been concluded since the receipt at Petersburg of the message at the opening of the last Session of Congress, which expressed sentiments in

110. Nesselrode to Tuyll, 17 March 1824, *VPR*, ser. 2, vol. 5, 359. See also Bolkhovitinov “Rossii, USA i Anglii,” in *Istoriia*, ed. Bolkhovitinov, 423.

111. Williams, *American-Russian Relations*, chap. 1.

112. Tuyll to Nesselrode, 20 November 1823, “Correspondence of the Russian Ministers in Washington, 1818–1825, II,” *American Historical Review* 18 (April 1913): 550.

113. Nichols, “Russian Ukase,” 24.

114. Monroe to Samuel L. Gouverneur, 31 July 1824, *Monroe Papers*, NYPL, reel 4.

115. Madison to Monroe, 5 August 1824, *Writings of Madison* IX: 197.

regard to our principles & hemisphere adverse to those entertained by the holy alliance.<sup>116</sup>

The content of the convention probably was more than “some accommodation” Monroe expected. Yet Adams appears to have thought he would be able to manipulate Alexander despite his rather hyperbolic compliments to the czar during the War of 1812. In the summer of 1823, he told Monroe that he “had been so far from expressing approbation of his [Alexander’s] acts, or those of the Holy Alliance” even though he thought he could still depend on the czar’s “intimate conscience.”<sup>117</sup> Adams later wrote to Rush that the non-colonization principle had been one that the czar “would consider as bearing chiefly upon Great Britain, and which would fall in with his feelings towards her.” “With the Emperor of Russia,” he continued, “it was completely successful.”<sup>118</sup> Apart from Adams’s complacency, it is understandable that the czar conceived the unequivocal but abstract principle to be aimed at England, as the settlement of a territorial question between Russia and the United States had been on the horizon. As a consequence, he seems to have benevolently permitted the access of American merchants to the area to which Russia obtained a claim.

Hence, the avoidance of acceptance of Canning’s offer and the intended abstractness of the non-colonization principle were intertwined; both were expected to produce a favorable effect upon Russia. Shortly after the Russian-American convention reached Washington, Adams could write in his diary that Tuiyll talked of “the sacrifices made by the Emperor in the way of conciliation” regarding the convention. The Russian minister also talked of “the satisfaction of the Emperor at the conciliatory disposition” manifested by U.S. communications to Russia prior to Monroe’s declaration, “notwithstanding . . . explicit avowal of opposite principles.” Adams then sensed Russia’s “friendly and conciliatory” attitude.<sup>119</sup> The semiofficial *National Intelligencer* reported that the convention had resulted from American policy that had cultivated “the good will of the Russian government” since the time of the War of 1812.<sup>120</sup> However “extravagant” the Monroe Doctrine was to him, Canning grasped the conciliatory nature of the Russian-American rivalry:

[I]t is to be hoped that the negotiation now pending between Russia and the United States may terminate in withdrawing both that pretension and the one in which it originated.<sup>121</sup>

116. Monroe to Madison, 2 August 1824, *Writings of Monroe* VII: 33.

117. 9 August 1823, *Memoirs of Adams* VII: 170.

118. Adams to Rush, 17 September 1831, Crapol, “New Evidence,” 414.

119. 23 August 1824, *Memoirs of Adams* VI: 409–10; Adams to Monroe, 24 August 1823, Adams Papers, reel 146.

120. *National Intelligencer*, 4 August 1824.

121. Canning to Stuart, 9 January 1824. The fact that this letter to the ambassador to France was also sent to St. Petersburg and Vienna attests to the importance Canning attached to it. Webster, ed., *Britain and Latin America* II: 132–34.

In spite of the non-colonization principle, the Monroe administration allowed Russia to claim the northwest coast as far south as 54°40'. The administration first intended to choose the line at 55° as the boundary, but it conceded to the Russian demand that the present Prince of Wales Island be included in their territory. Canning, who understood the Monroe administration's rationale for choosing the line at 55° as the northern limit of England's claim, suspected that the United States was favoring Russia in the Anglo-Russian negotiations over the northwest coast.<sup>122</sup> In a tacit reference to the non-colonization principle, Nesselrode said, "[I]t would be best for us to waive all discussion upon abstract principles of right and upon the actual state of facts" when the United States and Russia began the final negotiations on the northwest coast in early February of 1824. "[W]e must endeavor to settle the differences which had arisen between our Governments," he continued, "on the basis which might be found most conformable to our mutual interests."<sup>123</sup>

Adams communicated to Middleton Monroe's "entire approbation" of his conduct in the negotiation and the president's "satisfaction with the Convention" in early August of 1824.<sup>124</sup> The secretary of state thought that the convention would produce a "very positive result," that is, "attitudes favorable to Russia." He even told Tuyl that the two countries were "natural friends."<sup>125</sup> There were, of course, some reservations on both sides concerning the signed convention. At first, Senator Lloyd was dissatisfied with the ban on the sale of firearms, ammunition, and liquor and the ten-year limitation imposed upon the activities of American merchants. Adams "could not entirely remove" his objection and Tuyl "appeared to be vehemently affected" at the objections which the Senate was likely to raise. Still, Adams did his utmost to convince the senator that "our interest was to gain time."<sup>126</sup>

At the same time, the chief administration and directors of the Russian-American Company believed that the Russian government had made too many concessions to the United States. Thus, Tuyl was instructed to propose modifications to the convention so that American merchants could not travel above the latitude 59°30'. He did make the proposal, but it would not come into effect.<sup>127</sup> In

122. Immediately after Canning met with Rush on 17 December 1823, he knew about the U.S. intention by its minister's memorandum. Rush, *Residence* II: 82–86.

123. Middleton to Adams, 7 April 1824, *PABT* II: 71–72.

124. Adams to Middleton, 7 August 1824, Instructions, All Countries, reel 5.

125. 6 December 1824, *Memoirs of Adams* VII: 436. See also *Istoriia*, ed. Bolkhovitinov, 431.

126. 25, 26, and 29 December 1824, *Memoirs of Adams* VII: 454–56. Lloyd's strong oppositions are found in the following letter. Lloyd to Adams, 25 December 1824, Adams Papers, reel 466.

127. Bergquist, "Russian Ukase," 180–82; Bolkhovitinov, "Torgovlya i razgranichenie." For the decision making of the company in its relation to the Russian government, see A. N. Ermolaev, "Vremennyi Komitet i Osobyi Sovet Rossiisko-Amerikanskoi Kompanii: Kontroliruiushchie ili Soveshchatelniye Organy (1803–1844)," *Amerikanskii Ezhegodnik* for the Year 2000 (2002): 232–49; A. N. Ermolaev, "Glavnoe Pravlenie Rossiisko-Amerikanskoi Kompanii: Sostav, Funktsii, Vzaimootnosheniia s Pravitelstvom, 1799–1871," *ibid.* for the Year 2003 (2005): 271–92.

the spring of 1824, however, Nesselrode himself already received an official approval of the convention by Alexander and instructed Tuyll that he “make all efforts to exchange ratifications for the convention of April 5 (17) as soon as possible.”<sup>128</sup> Six days after the Senate ratified the convention—with only one opposing vote—on 11 January 1825, the ratifications were exchanged between Adams and Tuyll.<sup>129</sup> At the end of the month, Adams instructed Middleton that it was better for the two countries to see the “practical operation” of the convention first.<sup>130</sup>

When Adams became president in the spring of 1825, rumors flew about that Mexico and Colombia were going to invade Cuba and Puerto Rico, which would then be placed under British sovereignty. Desirous of preventing this, the Adams administration hoped that Alexander would apply his “enlightened and humane counsels” to the mediation of the conflict between Spain and its former colonies in Latin America; only the czar’s death late in the year prevented the plan from coming to fruition.<sup>131</sup> After the Decembrist revolt had failed, Middleton wrote about Alexander as “known to have valued the absolute power . . . only as the means of doing good.”<sup>132</sup> As followers of Viscount Bolingbroke, who had been highly respected by the generation that had fought in the American Revolution, Monroe and others believed that “the Chief Magistrate of the Country ought not be the head of a party, but the nation itself.” Thus they might have seen in Alexander the Russian equivalent of the “Patriot King,” Bolingbroke’s ideal of a virtuous monarch.<sup>133</sup>

In conclusion, the non-colonization principle was formulated in unequivocal but abstract terms because of the existing cordial relationship between the United States and Russia. The United States did not accept the British offer, deferring to Alexander’s wishes. Russia in turn gave the United States access to the northwest coast north of latitude 54°40′. Still, Russia was the primary target of the non-colonization principle, and the non-intervention principle was declared to counter the czar’s exposition of royal absolutism.<sup>134</sup> Therefore, the promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine is a good illustration of conciliatory rivalry in Russian-American relations in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

128. Nesselrode to Tuyll, 20 May/1 June 1824, *VPR*, ser. 2, vol. 5, 469. See also *Istoriia*, ed. Bolkhovitinov, 425.

129. U.S. Congress, Senate, *Journal*, 18th Cong., 2d sess., 1824–1825, 463; 11 January 1825, *Memoirs of Adams* VII: 465.

130. Adams to Middleton, 29 January 1825, Instructions, All Countries, reel 5.

131. Clay to Middleton, 10 May and 26 December 1825, *ibid.*; Middleton to Clay, 8 September 1825 and 12/24 March 1826, Despatches, Russia, reel 10. The quotation is from the first letter.

132. Eugene Anshel, ed., *The American Image of Russia, 1775–1917* (New York, 1974), 88.

133. Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780–1848* (Berkeley, CA, 1969), 16–23, 188–204; Ralph Ketcham, *Presidents above Party: The First American Presidency, 1789–1829* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1984), 124–30.

134. For idealist as well as realist, or unilateral as well as collaborative posture in the origins of American foreign policy, see Tadashi Aruga, “Revolutionary Diplomacy and the Franco-American Treaties of 1778,” *Japanese Journal of American Studies* 2 (1985): 59–100.