



General Hunt to Mr. Forsyth,  
Texian Legation  
Washington city, September 12,  
1837.

Sir: The undersigned envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the republic of Texas has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the note of the honorable Mr Forsyth, Secretary of State of the United States of the 25th of August in reply to the proposition which he had the honor to submit on the 4th of the same month to negotiate a treaty for the annexation of Texas to the United States.

The undersigned was aware that in recognising the independence of Texas the question of right was not taken into consideration by the Government of the United States. It was with a proper understanding of the settled policy of this Government in similar cases that the claim of Texas to the justice of a recognition was placed by his colleague and himself upon her actual existence as an independent Power, and the impossibility of a reconquest at the hands of Mexico. Although by the issue of that negotiation the question of fact was satisfactorily determined it was not deemed inappropriate, after the misrepresentations of the late envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of Mexico to preface the proposition for the annexation of Texas to the United States with a plain statement of the causes which led to and the events which grew out of her separation from Mexico so conclusively showing that they can never be reunited; and, for an additional reason which he will presently show, the undersigned adheres to the opinion that the simple narrative of facts which the honorable Secretary of State declines examining into cannot be regarded as irrelevant in a proposition for the annexation of Texas to the United States.

The venerable ex-President General Jackson was so strongly impressed with a belief at one time during his administration that the negotiation then pending for the acquisition of Texas would be brought to a speedy and favorable issue that he tendered the office of Governor of the Territory of Texas to the late Governor H. G. Burton of North Carolina, to be entered upon so soon as the treaty of cession should be completed. See a publication on the subject of Governor Burton's appointment. The same principles it appears to the undersigned were involved in the negotiation for the acquisition of Texas from Mexico previously to the recognition of the independence of the latter by Spain which are now presented by the question of the annexation of Texas to the United States previously to the recognition of her independence by Mexico: and had his excellency the President of the United States entertained any inclination to negotiate a treaty for the annexation of Texas a hope which had been ardently cherished as he had expressed determination to carry out the measures and conform to the general policy of his venerable predecessor it appears to the undersigned but a distinguished deference to the

honorable Mr Forsyth's opinion to the contrary that neither a sense of duty nor the settled policy of this Government, during the administration of the venerable ex-President, would have prevented an examination into the accuracy of the historical facts accompanying the proposition. That brief compendium, which is believed to be correct, will show that there is as little prospect of the recovery of Texas by Mexico at this time as there was of the reconquest of Mexico by Spain, at the time that General Jackson believed that the charge d'affaires [Mr. Butler] of this Government had succeeded in negotiating the acquisition of Texas. If the act of annexation of Texas would involve the U. States in a war with Mexico at this time, the undersigned is at a loss to perceive why a similar result was not anticipated with Spain in the event of a cession of Texas by Mexico. Texas asked nothing more of the U. States in proposing to negotiate for her annexation than the United States had previously desired of Mexico, when General Jackson was at the head of this Government; for Mexico was then as much at war with Spain as Texas now is with Mexico; and it is believed that as friendly treaty and commercial relations existed between Spain and the United States at that time as are now maintained between the United States and Mexico.

In addition to the fact that this Government when administered by the sage of the Hermitage proposed the acquisition of Texas by purchase from Mexico many years before the recognition of her independence by Spain the undersigned most respectfully invites the attention of the honorable the Secretary of State to the report of the House of Representatives of the State of Mississippi contained in a newspaper which he herewith presents. That report which is said to have been adopted unanimously alludes in strong terms to the subject of the right of this Government to admit Texas into its confederacy; and the undersigned refers to it thus particularly, that he may be sustained by high authority, when he assures the Secretary of State of the United States that, in submitting the proposition of annexation, it was far from his intention to ask the Government of the United States to accede to a measure which Mr. Forsyth was instructed to say was believed to involve unjust principles. The undersigned assures the Secretary of State of the United States that he could not knowingly consent to be the medium of presenting any proposition asking of the United States a disregard of just principles.

The honorable Mr Forsyth will pardon the undersigned for expressing the opinion which appears to him undeniable—that a sovereign Power has as perfect a right to dispose of the whole of itself and a second Power to acquire it as it has to dispose of only a part of itself and a second Power to acquire that part only; and that the acquisition of the whole territory of a sovereign Power could no more be objected to on the ground of constitutional right than the acquisition of a part of that territory only. The ma-

terial difference alluded to by Mr Forsyth between the annexation of independent Texas by her own voluntary act and the acquisition of the colonial provinces of Louisiana and Florida by the act of their respective Government is acknowledged. But the difference is conceived to be altogether in favor of the former for the reason that the annexation of Texas would be an act of free will and choice on the part of the Government and people who own and actually occupy the very territory proposed to be transferred while the latter would seem to have been the result of an arbitrary right on the part of the metropolitan Governments, to dispose of the territorial possessions ceded by them without regard to the wishes of the inhabitants residing thereon.

After the assurance of the honorable Mr Forsyth that a sense of duty and a reverence for consistency left his Government no alternative in leading the way in recognising the independence of Texas the undersigned confesses some surprise at the intimation of Mr Forsyth that the circumstance of her having been first recognised by the United States should in any manner influence the foreign intercourse of Texas. However much the Government of Texas may be disposed to encourage the most friendly relations with the Government of the U. States, the undersigned assures the honorable Secretary of State that the Government of Texas does not consider that any particular foreign policy was implied or made binding upon her by the circumstance of her independence having been first recognised by the Government of the U. States. The representatives of Texas, in their interchanges with foreign Powers, will not except the recognition of her independence, unless it is unconditional in this respect. In all their negotiations and treaties with foreign Powers, the best interests of their own Government and people will doubtless be consulted, and must indicate the policy which they will be directed to adopt. With even the same permanent policy in its commercial interchanges with the U. States which may exist with the most favored nation, the undersigned cannot guaranty for his Government that any advantages accrue therefrom to the manufacturing interests of the U. States; for it is understood that that great interest is mainly sustained in the U. States by the protection afforded by high duties against the competition of similar interest in foreign nations where labor and the facilities for manufacturing are more available and at cheaper rates. Such being the case, it is apparent that even should no detriment accrue to the manufacturing interest of the United States from the vicinity of Texas as an independent nation, certainly no advantage affecting that interest can be anticipated.

The apprehension of the honorable Mr Forsyth that the refusal of this Government to negotiate for a treaty of annexation thereby declining all the commercial and other advantages which would be secured by that measure may induce an attempt on the part of the Government

of Texas to extend its commercial relations elsewhere on terms more favorable to its own welfare and prosperity is perfectly natural; but the undersigned assures Mr Forsyth that such endeavors will not proceed from any naked feelings to the Government and people of the United States; and he would take this occasion to reiterate the friendly disposition of the Government and people of Texas towards the Government and people of the United States which he had the honor to communicate in his note of the 4th of August. Should however, the foreign commercial and other relations of the republic of Texas necessarily become such as seriously to effect the interests of the U. States, or any portion thereof, the undersigned conceives that it would be unreasonable for the Government and people who had been freely proffered all she could bestow and yet declined the offer to complain of her on the ground of looking to her own interest primarily. Texas has generously offered to merge her national sovereignty in a domestic one and to become a constituent part of this great confederacy. The refusal of this Government to accept the overture must forever screen her from the imputation of wilfully injuring the great interests of the United States should such a result accrue from any commercial or other relations which she may find it necessary or expedient to enter into with foreign nations.

Should it be found necessary or expedient hereafter for the proper promotion of the interests of her own citizens to lay high duties upon the cotton-bagging so extensively manufactured in the United States and upon the pork and beef and breadstuffs so abundantly produced in that region such as would amount to an almost total prohibition of the introduction of those articles into the country, much as her Government and people would regret the necessity of the adoption of such a policy, she would be exculpated from the slightest imputation of blame for taking care of her own welfare and prosperity after having been refused admission into this Union.

The efforts which the Government of the undersigned is making to open a commercial intercourse with Great Britain and France, it is believed, will succeed. Apart from the disposition of those two Powers to avail themselves of the great advantages which must result to every nation with which Texas may form intimate commercial relations, it is believed that they, as well as the United States, cherish a liberal sympathy for a people who have encountered the most cruel treatment at the hands of Mexico—a nation which has so little regarded the laws of civilized countries, in prosecuting a savage war of extermination, against the citizens of the Government of the undersigned, and that too, against a people who proudly claim the realms of Britain and France as the homes of their ancestry. And the undersigned expresses a belief that the crowned heads of England and France and their majesties' ministers, will not be without some feelings of grat-