

some equivalent concession can be obtained in respect to the longitudinal demarcation to the Westward in the higher latitudes I may perhaps find it advisable to exceed (very largely I admit) the letter of your instructions by assenting to some such limit rather than submit to the inconvenience which might, and probably would arise from a protracted delay in the settlement of the question. But I shall in no case venture to make any further cession, and I shall feel it my duty to suspend the whole negotiation if any further advantage is insisted upon by the Russian Government.

When I write to you officially upon this matter I shall of course send you in greater form the details above of the negotiation, but as it has been protracted rather more than I at first expected, I have thought that you would like to know privately and shortly how we are going on.

The negotiations with the American Ministers are not yet concluded.

I am &c

CHARLES BAGOT

Sir Charles Bagot to Mr. George Canning

St. Petersburg,
March 29, 1824

Private, by Messenger Draffin

You will perhaps think from my long despatch about N. W. Coasts that I have worked myself into a rage upon the subject. This is not so—but I now know this Government *well*, and I wish to impress upon you that in a question such as that in hand, they must be dealt with as you would deal with a horse-dealer. Their whole conduct in the late negotiation has been of the most huckstering and pedlarlike character, and in my opinion they will not be brought to reason, unless they are told roundly that if they will not arrange the matter equitably and according to our mutual present conveniences, they shall not be *allowed* to settle any where upon the islands or continent South of their present lowest establishment, viz: Sitca. They have not a shadow of claim below this point, and very little above it, to stand upon. It is too much to claim to the 51st degree (they might equally well have claimed to the 42d) and then to treat their retraction of a preposterous pretension as a concession with which they may be permitted to market. The Emperor Paul's pretension to the 55th degree in 1799 was never notified to any Power upon earth. In the affair of Nootka Sound, only nine years before, the Empress Catherine told the Court of Spain (see Annual Register, 1790), that she had no pretensions on these coasts which interfered with theirs, and theirs extended to the 60th degree. In the instructions given by Louis the XVIth (no bad geographer) to La Perouse in 1785, it was never supposed that Russia had any claims whatever upon the Continent and it was doubted whether She had the right of occupancy in all the Kurile and Aleutian Islands. These instructions are so remarkable that I cannot resist enclosing to you an extract of them.

I hope that you will read my despatch and its enclosures with the map before you, but that you may see at once how very liberally I have been dis-