

the entire Pacific Ocean should be open for navigation and fishing by the citizens or subjects of both nations. The treaty also established the parallel of 54° 40' N. lat. as the dividing line between Russian and American settlements on the northwestern coast of North America and adjacent islands.¹⁵

The British government received official word of the ukase on November 12, 1821, in a letter from Russian Ambassador Baron de Nicolay to Foreign Secretary Lord Londonderry (Castlereagh).¹⁶ Londonderry was advised by King's Advocate G. Robinson to declare Britain's intention of upholding ordinary principles of international law and protesting any infringement of British rights.¹⁷ Ambassador Sir Charles Bagot in St. Petersburg informed him that the main purpose of the ukase was to prevent the "commerce interlope" of American adventurers and that the justification for the measure was supposed to be Article 12 of the Treaty of Utrecht.¹⁸ He then wrote to the new Russian ambassador Count Lieven on January 13, 1822, "to make such provisional protest against the enactments of the said Ukase as may fully serve to save the rights of His Majesty's Crown." Specifically, he said, Great Britain reserved all her rights regarding Russian claims to exclusive sovereignty over the land and exclusive right of navigation in the water, as described in the ukase, and could not admit that non-Russian trade therein was illicit or that Russia could legally prevent foreign ships from approaching within one hundred Italian miles of the coast.¹⁹

The claims of the Russians, and also those of the Americans in the same region, were of great concern to the Hudson's Bay Company, which had joined with the North West Company in 1821 and in its new form held the former rights of the Nor'Westers in the territories west of the Rocky Mountains.²⁰ Later in 1821