

to the Russian American Company, renewing the monopoly privileges it had been granted in 1799 for a further period of twenty years. However, the area subject to the monopoly would be governed by the ukase of 1821 rather than by that of 1799, and thus it would extend down the Pacific coast of North America to 51° (i.e., the northern tip of Vancouver Island) rather than just to 55°. ¹⁰

Both British and American governments protested strongly against these measures as quickly as possible after receiving official notification of them. Although efforts to coordinate their protests fell through because of the evident conflict between their own claims, nevertheless the negotiations they carried on separately soon caused the Russian government to begin to moderate its stand. In a letter to Russian Ambassador Pierre de Poletica on February 25, 1822, American Secretary of State John Quincy Adams expressed the concern of the president over the terms of the ukase, and inquired whether he was "authorized to give explanations of the grounds of right, upon principles generally recognised by the laws and usages of nations, which can warrant the claims and regulations contained in it."¹¹ De Poletica's "explanations", given in a letter of February 28, ¹² were firmly rejected by Adams in a further letter of March 30, ¹³ and lengthy negotiations followed which involved mainly a Russian retreat from the position originally adopted. It was while this dispute was in progress, and partly although not wholly because of it, that President Monroe, in his message to Congress on December 2, 1823, proclaimed his famous "doctrine", to the effect that the American continents were "henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers."¹⁴ When the two powers agreed upon a settlement, as embodied in the treaty of April 17, 1824, Russia abandoned her extreme claims, and it was specified that