

these extensive pledges. We had only to say on that occasion, that, if the Holy Alliance, which had nothing to do on this continent, interfered in favor of Spain, we should stand by the new republics, and that England was ready to join us in that course. That was really all that the thing meant—the practical part of it; and all that exceeded this only served (as may be seen in Mr. Richard Rush's late book) to embarrass us in another important question then pending. But mark, in what speedily followed, how valid we ourselves held the declaration, as capable of being opposed to the subsisting claims of European nations. Immediately afterward, we recognised, by treaty, the claims of Russia (never before established) down to 54° 40'. Moreover, in 1827, some two years only after Mr. Monroe's declaration, we offered Great Britain the line of 49°, and the navigation of the Columbia; and these being refused, we renewed the convention of joint occupation. Both these acts overthrow all pretence of excluding the territorial claims of a European power by a resort to President Monroe's declaration.

But, now, what is that declaration, examined by the rules of reason? Either it is founded on a previously received law of nations or upon one then established, or it is a mere *dictum*. I need not say it was not the first; if the second, nobody made it but ourselves; and we have never put it in force. It is, then, our own occasional *dictum* only. That *dictum* is to set aside, at our pleasure, the rights of all others; it is to vacate titles that conflict with it any where on this continent, and to bind, without their consent, not only all European, but all American States. In other words, it is an appeal to arbitrary will and force by this Government against the entire earth!

Or consider it historically. How came we to be independent? In part, by procuring the interference of France upon this continent to aid us. How can that right be denied to other American States at this day? How came we by Louisiana? We bought it of a European power, which had acquired it only two years before. Mr. Monroe's very declaration was made under a regular understanding with England that she should interfere along with us on this continent. Unpopular as it may be, I, then, humble individual as I am, take this occasion to say, that the principle of this famous declaration, and the use to which it is now put, are mischievous, unsound, wicked; and that, if it is meant for any thing but an idle boast or pretence—if this Government ever means to act upon it, regularly to enforce it—your present institutions must give way to something stronger, more despotic; they must take an entirely military form and spirit; we must set on foot an army like that of Russia, and a navy like that of England.

While I thus denounce the principle, I am perfectly willing to admit that a case may arise (as it had arisen when we interfered for the Spanish colonies in 1824) when the United States would be called on, by every consideration of interest and of legitimate policy, to tell any Government of Europe, "You shall not touch this or that American island or State; it will place us in jeopardy." This, however, is the exception. Turn it into the general, it is false, pernicious, and will lead to the overthrow of our Government if the people sanction it. Have we any right to object to the Empire of Brazil? What is it to us if Europeans colonize Patagonia or Peru? An infusion of intelligence from any where into the South American States would benefit them, and indirectly us. In the time of Mr. Monroe we interfered under hopes and sympathies which have proved to be illusory; the Governments in which we expected to see such blessings have been little but a scourge to the countries setting them up. We can no longer interpose for them, under the idea of sustaining the cause of free principles, but must confine ourselves to cases where we have a direct, important, and just interest of our own to guard. In a word, we must return to that just and peaceful policy so wisely and virtuously recommended by the Father of his

country. This declaration is very bad and could end—to say the least—however, it is on which

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Sir, it is gentlemen on titles to the principles that admit

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Now, we us by the fore 1790.