

combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities. Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course." Jefferson in writing to Thomas Paine in 1801 adopts the same point of view: "Determined as we are to avoid if possible wasting the energies of our people in war and destruction, we shall avoid implicating ourselves with the powers of Europe, even in support of principles which we mean to pursue. They have so many other interests different from ours, that we must avoid being entangled in them." In Jefferson's extreme old age, four years before Monroe's enunciation of the doctrine we find him writing in still more positive terms of the desirability of separating the political systems of the two continents. "From many conversations with him," he says, referring to a newly appointed minister to Brazil, "I hope he sees and will promote in his new situation, the advantages of a cordial fraternisation among all the American nations, and the importance of their coalescing in an American system of policy totally independent of and unconnected with that of Europe. The day is not distant when we may formally require a meridian of partition through the ocean which separates the two hemispheres on the hither side of which no European gun shall ever be heard, nor an American on the other: and when, during the rage of the eternal wars of Europe, the lion and the lamb, within our regions shall lie down together in peace. . . . The principles of society there and here, then, are radically different, and I hope no American patriot will ever lose sight of the essential policy of interdicting in the seas and territories of both Americas the ferocious and sanguinary contests of Europe."

The immediate cause of the issue of Monroe's message was the prospect of a European fleet being sent to the shores of South America to subdue the revolted colonies of Spain. During the troubles of the Napoleonic war when the Bourbon dynasty had been ousted from Madrid and the peninsula plunged in six years of desperate warfare, the South American colonies of Spain had shaken themselves free from the para-