

Fully aware as Adams was of the danger that threatened both America and liberty, he was not in favor of accepting Canning's proposal for the co-operation of England and the United States. He based his opposition upon two fundamental objections. In the first place he was not prepared to say that the United States desired no more Spanish territory. Not that Adams desired or would tolerate conquest. At the time of the Louisiana Purchase he had wished to postpone annexation until the assent of the people of that province could be obtained. But he believed that all the territory necessary for the geographical completeness of the United States had not yet been brought under the flag. He had just obtained Florida from Spain and a claim westward to the Pacific north of the forty-second parallel, but he considered the Southwest — Texas, New Mexico, and California — a natural field of expansion. These areas, then almost barren of white settlers, he expected time to bring into the United States, and he also expected that the people of Cuba would ultimately rejoice to become incorporated in the Union. He wished natural forces to work out their own results, without let or hindrance.

Not only was Adams opposed to Canning's proposed self-denying ordinance, but he was equally