

No. 9.

*Mr. Buchanan to Mr. Slidell.*

[Extract.]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,  
Washington, January 20, 1846.

I have the honor to transmit, herewith, your commission as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Mexican republic, under the appointment made by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Your despatches Nos. 2 and 3, under date, respectively, the 30th November and 17th December, have been received; and I shall await the arrival of others by the "Porpoise" with much solicitude. Should the Mexican government, by finally refusing to receive you, consummate the act of folly and bad faith of which they have afforded such strong indications, nothing will then remain for this government but to take the redress of the wrongs of its citizens into its own hands.

In the event of such a refusal, the course which you have determined to pursue is the proper one. You ought, in your own language, so to conduct yourself as to throw the whole odium of the failure of the negotiation upon the Mexican government; point out, in the most temperate manner, the immediate consequences of so unheard of a violation of all the usages which govern the intercourse between civilized nations; and declare your intention to remain in Mexico until you can receive instructions adapted to the exigencies of the case. This sojourn will afford you an honorable opportunity to watch the course of events, and avail yourself of

any favorable circumstances which, in the meantime, may occur. Should a revolution have taken place before the 1st of January, the day appointed for the meeting of Congress, (an event which you deemed probable,) or should a change of ministry have been effected, which you considered almost certain, this delay will enable you to ascertain the views and wishes of the new government or administration. The desire of the President is, that you should conduct yourself with such wisdom and firmness in the crisis, that the voice of the American people shall be unanimous in favor of redressing the wrongs of our much injured and long suffering claimants.

It would seem to be the desire of the Mexican government to evade the redress of the real injuries of our citizens, by confining the negotiation to the adjustment of a pecuniary indemnity for its imaginary rights over Texas. This cannot be tolerated. The two subjects must proceed hand in hand; they can never be separated. It is evidently with the view of thus limiting the negotiation that the Mexican authorities have been quibbling about the mere form of your credentials, without ever asking whether you had instructions and full powers to adjust the Texan boundary. The advice of the council of government seems to have been dictated by the same spirit. They do not advise the Mexican government to refuse to receive you; but, assuming the fact that the government had agreed to receive a plenipotentiary to treat upon the subject of Texas alone, they infer that it is not bound to receive an envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary without this limitation.

In the meantime, the President, in anticipation of the final refusal of the Mexican government to receive you, has ordered the army of Texas to advance and take position on the left bank of the Rio Grande; and has directed that a strong fleet shall be immediately assembled in the gulf of Mexico. He will thus be prepared to act with vigor and promptitude, the moment that Congress shall give him the authority.

This despatch will not be transmitted to you by the "Mississippi." That vessel will be detained at Pensacola for the purpose of conveying to you instructions, with the least possible delay, after we shall have heard from you by the "Porpoise," and of bringing you home, in case this shall become necessary.

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