

*John Black, United States Consul at Mexico City, to James Buchanan, Secretary of State of the United States*<sup>4</sup>

[EXTRACTS]

No. 363

MEXICO, *March 19, 1846.*

SIR: . . . Some days since M<sup>r</sup> Bankhead the English Minister, called on me, and stated that it was reported that M<sup>r</sup> Slidell had received an "Ultimatum", from his government, and that it had been sent up to Mexico, to be presented to the Government,—that many believed the report.—and that he felt interested, and was very anxious to know from me, (if it would not be asking Secrets,) if there was any truth, in said report, he expressed much regret that anything so serious should take place between the two Countries, and hoped that it might not be so. I told him if such a thing had happened I knew nothing of it, he replied then it cannot be true, as it would of course, have been sent through you, so it would appear that H. R. M<sup>s</sup> Minister takes interest in our affairs.

<sup>1</sup> Despatches, Mexico, vol. 12. Received "April 7, night."

<sup>2</sup> His No. 11 of this same date, above, this part, doc. 3657, and its accompanying documents.

<sup>3</sup> Above, this part, March 17, 1846, doc. 3656.

<sup>4</sup> Consular Letters, Mexico, vol. 9. Received April 27.

The omission at the beginning relates to a rumor that reinforcements for the British naval force in the Pacific were expected.

The question of monarchy here, is now at a stand, the projectors of this scheme having counted without their host—and many of its former warmest supporters see that this thing is not so practicable as they had at first imagined and are now withdrawing themselves and support, they find they have said too much, upon the subject, and have made their purposes, too well known to the public—and are now persuaded that their success depends upon quite a different course, that if Monarchy is to be established here, it must be done by force, by foreign intervention, and by stealth; and to the accomplishment of which there are many obstacles which are daily becoming more visable to its votaries,

The present agitation, of this question of Monarchy will I have no doubt, operate in the end, favourably to the interests of our Country—and to the civil rights of Mexico,

I have had several conversations with some of the leading federalists, of this place who complain bitterly of European management in the political affairs of Mexico—and that they would wish, if possible to enter into some alliance with the United States, to counteract this baleful influence and management; which was as prejudicial to the United States as to Mexico.—that there could be no doubt, that the present Government, had been established and was sustained by an undue exercise of this influence, aimed at the destruction of liberal principles, and free government, on this Continent, that they knew, (as I had before observed to them), that the United States, could not well interfere, in their domestic dissensions, but that this was an extraordinary case, and one that would justify its interference, on the principle of self defence, that the liberal party were well disposed towards the United States, and if they were to get into power again would hasten to have all existing differences, with it amicably and liberally adjusted,—that the people are determined, ready, and willing, to oppose the Contemplated European intervention, but they are without arms; and can only look to the United States, for succour and protection in this extremity, that they would rather become a Sovereign State of the American Union than submit, to this Monarchy with which they were threatened, and this is not alone the opinion of the liberal party here, but in all quarters of the republic. . . .<sup>1</sup>

It is generally thought that the present Government cannot sustain itself much longer, there is no doubt that General Paredes would wish to have, affairs arranged with the United States, but the position in which he is placed in relation to this question, is a very delicate one,—yet after making the proceedings of the former government in relation to the Texas question a pretext for the revolution, he has gone as far as the former Government did, in consenting to receive a Minister “*ad hoc*”—

I have the honor [etc.].

<sup>1</sup> This omission refers to an enclosed corroborating document said to have been signed by a fictitious name (not included in the copy) but really to have been written by an influential lawyer of Guadalajara to a leader of the Liberal party of that place.