General Advertiser

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CORRESPONDENCE.

[CONTINUED.]

APPENDIX.

Extracts from the Private Correspondence between Mr. Monroe and General Jackson, on the Seminole affair referred to in the letter of the 29th May.

C

James Monroe to Gen. Andrew Jackson.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 20th, 1818.

DEAR SIR:—I received your letter of the 19th of August, while, I was at home on my farm at Albemarle; and there appearing to be no necessity for giving it an immediate answer, I delayed it until my return here.

I am sorry to find that you understood your instructions relative to operations in Florida, differently from what we intended. I was satisfied, however, that you had good reason for your conduct, and have acted in all things on that principle. By supposing that you understood them as we did, I concluded that you proceeded on your own responsibility alone, in which, knowing the purity of your motives, I have done all I could to justify the measure. I well knew, also, the misconduct of the Spanish authorities in that quarter, not of recent date only.

Finding that you had a different view of your power, it remains only to do justice to you on that ground. Nothing can be further from my intention to expose you to a responsibility in any sense which you did not contemplate.

The best course to be pursued seems to me to be for you to write a letter to the Department, in which you will state, that, having reason to think that a difference of opinion existed between you and the Executive, relative to the extent of your powers, you thought it due to yourself to state your view of them, and on which you acted. This will be answered, so as to explain ours, in a friendly manner by Mr. Calhoun, who has very just and liberal sentiments on the subject This will be necessary in the case of a call for papers by Congress, or may be. Thus we shall all stand on the ground of honor, each doing justice to the other, which is the ground on which we wish to place each other.

I hope that your health is improved, and Mrs. Monroe unites in her best respects to Mrs. Jackson.

With great respect, and sincere regard,
I am, dear sir, yours.
JAMES MONROE.

Maj. Gen. ANDREW JACKSON, Nashville, Tenn.

D

Extract from Gen. Jackson's letter of November 15, 1818, to Mr. Monroe.

DEAR SIR: On my return from the Chickasaw treaty, I found it necessary to pass by Milton's Bluff, where I had established some hands for the culture of cotton, hearing it had been laid out for a town and the lots sold, to have as much of my crop preserved as existing circumstances would permit. From thence I took Huntsville in my route, and did not reach the Hermitage until the 12th instant, and on the 13th received your letter of the 20th ult.; from an attentive perusal of which, I have concluded that you have not yet seen my despatches from Fort Gadsen, of the 5th of May last, which it is reported reached the Department war, by due mail, and owing to the negligence of the clerks was thrown aside as a bundle of revolutionary and pension claims This I sincerely regret, as it would have brought to your view the light in which I viewed my orders. The closing paragraph of that despatch is in the following words:

I trust, therefore, that the measures which have been adopted in pursuance, of your instructions, under, a firm conviction that they alone are calculated to ensure peace and security to the southern frontier of Georgia.

The moment therefore that you assume the ground that I transcend my power, the letter referred to above will, at once, unfold to your mind the view I had taken of them, and make manifest the difference of opinion that exists. Indeed, there are no data at present upon which such a letter as you wish written to the Secretary of War can be bottomed. I have no ground that difference of opinion exists between the government and myself, relative to the powers given me in my orders, unless I advert either to your private and confidential letters, or the public prints neither of which can be made the basis of an official communication to the Secretary of War. Had I ever, or were I now to receive an official letter from the Secretary of War, explanatory of the light in which it was intended by the Government than my orders should be viewed, I would with pleasure give my understanding of them.

E

Gen. Jackson to James Monroe.

HERMITAGE, near Nashville, Dec. 7, 1818.

DEAR SIR: I have just received your message to both Houses of Congress, forwarded by you, and have read it with great attention and satisfaction. The Florida question being now fairly before Congress, I hope that body will take measures to secure our southern frontier from a repetition of massacre and murder.

From the report of Col. King, received and forwarded to the Department of War, you will discover that the Indians had concentrated their forces on the Choctaw Hotchy, which gave rise to the affair between them and Capt. Boyles, which Col. King reports.

The collection of the Indians is said to have taken place at this point on their hearing that Pennsacola was to be restored to Spain, and that the Indians have declared they will never submit to the United States. If this be the fact, and as to myself I have no doubt, as soon as Spain is in possession of Pensacola, we may expect to hear of a removal of all the horrid scenes of massacre on our frontier that existed before the campaign, unless Captain Boyles, on a second visit, may be fortunate enough to destroy this operation, which you may rely springs from foreign excitement.

Col. Sherburne, Chickasaw agent, requested me to name to you, that he was wearied with his situation, of which I have no doubt; his age and former habits of life but little calculated him for happiness amidst a savage nation. But being dependent for the support of himself and sister on the perquisites of his office, he cannot resign; but it would be a great accommodation to him to be transferred to Newport, should a vacancy in any office occur that he was competent to fill. I have no doubt but he is an amiable old man; and from his revolutionary services, I sincerely feel for him. He is unacquainted with Indians, and all business that relates to them; but at the treaty, as soon as he did understand our wishes and that of the government, he sided us with all his might. The Colonel never can be happy amidst the Indians. It would afford me great pleasure to hear that the Colonel was comfortably seated in an office in Newport, where he could spend his declining years in peace and happiness with his own countrymen and friends.

Accept assurances of my high respect and esteem, and believe me to be, respectfully, your most obedient servant.
ANDREW JACKSON.

James Monroe, President of the U. States.

F

Mr. Monroe to General Jackson.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21, 1818.

Dear Sir: I received your letter of November 15 some time past, and should have answered it sooner but for the great pressure of business on me, proceeding from duties connected with the measures of Congress.

The step suggested in mine to you of October 20, will, I am inclined to believe, be unnecessary. My sole object in it was to enable you to place your view of the authority under which you acted in Florida on the strongest ground possible, so as to do complete justice to yourself. I was persuaded that you had not done yourself justice in that respect, in your correspondence with the Department, and thought that it would be better that the explanation should commence with you, than be invited by the Department. It appeared to me that that would be the most delicate course in regard to yourself. There is, it is true, nothing in the Department to indicate a difference of opinion between you and the Executive, respecting the import of your instructions, and for this reason, that it would have been difficult to have expressed that sentiment without implying by it a censure on your conduct, than which nothing could be more remote from our disposition or intention.

On reviewing your communication by Capt. Gadsden, there were three objects pre-eminently in view: the first, to preserve the Constitution from injury; the second, to deprive Spain and the allied powers of any just cause of war; and the third, to improve the occurrence to the best advantage of the country, and of the honor of those engaged in it. In every step which I have since taken, I have pursued those objects with the utmost zeal, and according to my best judgment. In what concerns you personally, I have omitted nothing in my power to do you justice, nor shall I in the sequel.

The decision in the three great points above stated, respecting the course to be pursued by the administration, was unanimously concurred in; and I have good reason to believe that it has been maintained since, in every particular, by all with perfect integrity. It will be gratifying to you to know that a letter of instructions has been drawn by the Secretary of State to our Minister at Madrid, in reply to a letter of Mr. Pizarro, which has been published, in which all the proceedings in Florida, and in regard to it, have been freely reviewed, and placed in a light which will, I think, be satisfactory to all. This letter will be reported to Congress in a few days, and published of course.

On one circumstance it seems proper that I should now give you an explanation. Your letter of January 6, was received while I was seriously indisposed.—Observing that it was from you I handed it to Mr. Calhoun to read, after reading one or two lines only myself. The order to you to take command in that quarter had before then been issued. He remarked, after perusing the letter, that it was a confidential one, relating to Florida, which I must answer. I asked him if he had forwarded to you the orders of Gen. Gaines on that subject. He replied that he had. Your letter to me with many others from friends, was put aside, in consequence of my indisposition and the great pressure on me at the time, and never recurred to until my return from Loudoun on the receipt of yours by Mr. Hambly, and then on the suggestion of Mr. Calhoun.

G

George McDuffie to Mr. Calhoun.

WASHINGTON, May 14th, 1830.

Dear Sir: In answer to the inquiries contained in your note of this morning, I submit the following statement. I very distinctly recollect to have heard Mr. Crawford (I think in the summer of 1818) in conversation with Eldred Simpkins, Esq. relative to the proceedings of Gen. Jackson, in the Seminole war and to the course pursued by the cabinet, touching those proceedings. Mr. Crawford spoke without any kind of reserve as to the respective parts taken by the different members of the cabinet while the subject was under deliberation. He stated that you had been in favor of an inquiry into the conduct of General Jackson, and that he was the only member of the cabinet that had concurred with you. He spoke in strong terms of disapprobation of the course pursued by Gen. Jackson, not only in his military proceedings, but in prematurely bringing the grounds of his defence before the country, and forestalling public opinion, thus anticipating the administration. On this point he remarked, that if the administration could not give direction to public opinion, but permitted a military officer, who had violated his orders, to anticipate them, they had no business to be st Washington, and had better return home. I also remember that the National Intelligencer, which was lying on the sofa where Mr. Crawford was sitting, contained an article explanatory of the grounds upon which the administration had proceeded in regard to Gen. Jackson's military movements. Mr. Crawford adverted to some part of the article, which laid down a principle of the law of nations, if I mistake not, which went to show that a neutral territory could only be invaded in fresh pursuit of an enemy, and added, 'Mr. Adams denies all that.' He represented Mr. Adams as going much further in justifying Gen. Jackson than even Mr. Monroe, stating that the latter was induced to pass over the conduct of Gen. Jackson without public censure, not from a belief that he had not violated his orders and exceeded his power, but firm political considerations connected with our relations with Spain.

Your obedient servant,
GEO. McDUFFIE.

H

Extract of a letter from the Honorable Robert Garnet, formerly a member of Congress from the State of Virginia, dated Tappahannock, January 12, 1831.

'My dear sir: A very extraordinary letter I have seen in the Constitutional Whig, purporting to give a correct account of the part, which the several members of Mr. Monroe's cabinet took when the conduct of General Jackson was before them, has induced me to offer the following statement:

'Soon after Colonel Taylor's election to the Senate and arrival at the seat of Government, we paid a visit to Mr. Monroe, and in the course of the day, Col. T. desired Mr. M. to give him some account of the course that had been pursued towards General Jackson in regard to the Seminole war, &c. In this conversation Mr. Monroe declared that there had been no division in his cabinet, as to the course which should be pursued towards the General. This excited my astonishment, because, in a conversation with Mr. Crawford, either before the debate commenced, or while it was pending, Mr. Crawford had used this expression to me—'Gen. Jackson ought to be condemned.' I noted this expression down in a journal I kept, and subsequently repeated it frequently. Mr. C. Beverly told me he had mentioned it to General Jackson when he was at his house in Tennessee, and I think said that the General expressed much surprise.

'Hon. J. C. CALHOUN.'

Extract from Mr. Garnet's Diary for the 1st. February, 1819, referred to above.

'The night before last, Col Taylor proposed we should go up and see the President, as Everett said he frequently complained of our not going, though we lived so near. Newton would not go, because he had to shave and put on a clean shirt. We found him in the drawing room, with Hay, Everett, Moore, and Findlay Moore, Findlay, and Everett soon went out, and so did Hay, who was going to Secretary Thompson's. The President then talked very freely about public affairs—gave us an account of the proceedings of the Government in relation to the Seminole war. He stated what I have frequently heard before, that the whole cabinet were perfectly agreed that he should not censure General Jackson.—It is, however, well understood that Mr. Crawford, out of the cabinet, used his endeavor to have Cobb's resolution passed; and I could not forbear telling the President, that, in conversation with me about Cobb's resolutions, while they were pending, Mr. Crawford said Jackson ought to be censured. He expressed surprise and seemed to look with regret. He says the members of the cabinet are still in harmony among themselves apparently.'

J

John C. Calhoun to Mr. Monroe.

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1830.

Dear Sir: It has become important to me, in consequence of a recent circumstance, to ascertain whether Gen. Jackson's letter to you of the 16th January, 1818—I mean the one in which allusion is made to Mr. J Rea—was seen, when received, by any one except myself, and, if it was, by whom. I will thank you to inform me by return mail; and, also, whether the letter above alluded to was before the cabinet, or was alluded to by any of its members, during the deliberation on the Seminole affair.

With sincere regard, I am, &c. &c.
J. C. CALHOUN.

J. MONROE, Esq.

K

James Monroe to John C. Calhoun.

OAK HILL, May 19, 1830.

Dear Sir: I have received your letter of the 17th, and hasten to answer it. I well remember, that, when I received the letter from General Jackson, to which you allude, of the 16th of January, 1818, I was sick in bed, and could not read it. You were either present, or came in immediately afterwards, and I handed it to you for perusal After reading it, you replaced it, with a remark that it required my attention, or would require an answer; but without any notice of its contents. Mr. Crawford came in soon afterwards, and I handed it to him for perusal. He read it, and returned it in like manner, without making any comment on its contents, further than that it related to the Seminole war, or something to that effect. I never showed it to any other person, and I am not certain whether it was he or you who observed that it related to the Seminole war. Having made all the arrangements respecting that war, and being some time confined by indisposition, the letter was laid aside and forgotten by me, and I never read it until after the conclusion of the war, and then I did it on an intimation from you that it required my attention. You ask whether that letter was before the cabinet in the deliberation on the despatches received from the General, communicating the result of that war, or alluded to by any member of the administration. My impression decidedly is, that it was not before the cabinet, nor do I recollect or think that it was alluded to in the deliberation on the subject. Had it been, I could not, I presume, have forgotten it. I received the despatches alluded to here, and had made up my mind before I left home as to the part I ought to take in reference to its management, especially if I should be supported in the opinion formed by the administration. That support was afforded it, and I pursued the course which my judgment dictated, with a view to the honor and interest of my country, and the honor of the General who commanded.

With sincere regard, I am, dear sir, yours,
JAMES MONROE.

Hon. J. C. CALHOUN.

L

John C. Calhoun to Mr. Wirt.

WASHINGTON, May 28, 1830.

Dear Sir: Circumstances which I need not explain render it necessary for me, in self-defence, to call on you for a statement of my course in the meeting of the cabinet, in the summer of 1818, on the Seminole war. I wish you also to state, whether a private letter from Gen. Jackson to Mr. Monroe, such as discovered in the enclosed extract of a letter from Mr. Crawford to Mr. Forsyth, was before the cabinet during the deliberation, or whether any allusion was made to any letter of that description.

With sincere regard, I am, &c. &c.
J. C. CALHOUN.

Hon. Mr. WIRT.

M

Mr. Wirt to Mr. Calhoun.

WASHINGTON, May 28, 1830.

Dear Sir—Your letter of yesterday relates to a meeting of the cabinet in the summer of 1818, relative to the Seminole war. I should not feel myself at liberty to disclose the proceeding of any cabinet meeting without the concurrence of the President and of all the members who attended it; but as your inquiry relates to your own course, only, and I can speak of that without involving any one else, I see no impropriety in doing so at your request. Among other ideas thrown out for consideration, according to the usual course of cabinet consultations, I think that, at the first meeting, you suggested the propriety of an inquiry into the conduct of the commanding general, but I remember that the course ultimately adopted had your hearty concurrence; and I remember it the more distinctly, because you mentioned it repeatedly to me afterwards, as a striking evidence of the practical wisdom of the President who suggested it Thus much I feel myself authorised by the call to say of those deliberations.—The circumstances mentioned in the extract you enclose, purporting to be an 'extract of a letter from W. H. Crawford, Esq. to John Forsyth, Esq. dated April 30, 1830,' have no place in my recollection. The letter from General Jackson to President Monroe, therein mentioned is entirely new to me. According to the description of the letter given of it in the extract, it is one of so singular a character, that, if it had been exhibited at any meeting at which I was present, I think that I could not have forgotten it. The occurrence is said to have taken place twelve years ago.—I kept no notes in writing of any of those deliberations, and am speaking merely from memory. But still I think, that if such a letter had been produced and read in my presence, I should have retained some recollection of it; whereas it strikes me, in the description, as a thing perfectly new, and of which I never heard before. In the close of the extract, the writer says: 'After that letter was produced, I should have opposed the infliction of punishment upon the General, who had considered the silence of the President as a tacit consent.' I have no recollection that punishment had been proposed by any one, unless an inquiry into the official conduct of the General can be regarded as punishment. It strikes me, too, that if that letter had been produced, and Mr. Crawford had placed his implied change of opinion on the inference of acquiescence, which he supposed the General to be authorized to draw from the President's silence, it could not have escaped observation, and such a discussion as would have tended to have fixed the occurrence on my memory, that the General had not asked the President for an acquiescence to be inferred from silence, but for a positive hint of his approbation through 'some confidential member of Congress, say Johnny Ray.' Upon the whole, Sir, if these things did really occur in my presence, I can only say that they have left not the slightest trace on my memory.

I remain, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
WM. WIRT.

The Hon. JOHN C. CALHOUN,
Vice President U. S.

N

Copy of a letter to Mr. Adams, 12th Jan. 1831.

WASHINGTON, 12th Jan. 1831.

Sir—A short time before the last adjournment of Congress, a copy of a letter from Mr. Crawford to Mr. Forsyth, in relation to the deliberation of the cabinet on the Seminole question, was placed in the hands of Gen. Jackson, and became the subject of a correspondence between him and myself. In the course of that correspondence, it became necessary, in order to ascertain the truth or error of some of the statements made by Mr. Crawford, to refer to some of the other members of the cabinet, and I accordingly addressed notes to Mr. Monroe and Mr. Wirt, from both of whom I obtained statements. In selecting those gentlemen, instead of yourself and Mr. Crowninshield, I was not in the least degree influenced by any want of confidence in either of you, but simply by feelings of delicacy growing out of political relations, and which I trust to corresponding feelings on your part properly to appreciate.

I learn by a letter from Mr. Crawford, addressed to me subsequent to the close of my correspondence with Gen. Jackson, that he has written to you, and obtained your answer on the subject to which it refers, though he has not furnished me with a copy of his letter to you nor that of your answer.

This step on his part, has, of course, removed the delicacy which I at first felt, and which then prevented me from addressing you.

The part I took in the cabinet deliberation was dictated by a sense of duty, uninfluenced by either the feelings of friendship or enmity. That Gen. Jackson transcended his orders in taking St. Marks and Pensacola, I have never doubted then or since. In my opinion, the Executive neither did or could constitutionally give orders to take either of those places or any other Spanish post. Under this impression, I was decidedly in favor, in the early stage of the deliberation, of bringing the subject before a court of inquiry, but finally yielded my opinion to considerations growing out of the political aspect of the question, as connected with Spain, which were presented by you and Mr. Monroe; but, in yielding to them, I still believed, and do now, that, apart from them, and considered under the military aspect of the subject, as at first view, my opinion was correct.

Having thus concurred in the final decision of the cabinet, I give it faithful support, without however abandoning the correctness of my conceptions. I make the preliminary statement in order that you may perceive why my inquiry should be directed only to what might seem a mere collateral circumstance, whether the letter of General Jackson to Mr. Monroe, in which allusion is made to John Ray, was before the cabinet, which, though not calculated to affect the question of the correctness of my course, however decided, from the prominence that Mr. Crawford has given it, has assumed no small degree of importance in the correspondence. He, in his letter to Mr. Forsyth, says: 'Indeed my own views on the subject had undergone a material change after the cabinet had been convened. Mr. Calhoun made some allusion to a letter the General had written the President, who had forgotten that he had received such a letter, but said, if he had received such an one, he could find it, and went directly to his cabinet, and brought the letter out. In it General Jackson approved of the determination of the President to break up Amelia Island and Galveztown, and gave it also as his opinion, that the Floridas ought to be taken by the United States. He added, that it might be a delicate matter for the Executive to decide, but, if the President approved of it, he had only to give a hint to some confidential member of Congress, say Johnny Ray, and he would do it, and take the responsibility of it on himself.'

The object of my addressing you is to obtain a statement from you, whether such a letter was; or was not, before the cabinet during its deliberation.

As connected with the subject of my inquiry, I must ask of you the favor to furnish me, if you can with propriety, with a copy of Mr. Crawford's letter to you, and a copy of your answer. I make the request on the assumption that the correspondence can contain nothing that would render it improper that a copy should be placed in my possession. I would make the request of Mr. Crawford himself, instead of you, had I not declined all communication with him in relation to the subject of the correspondence between Gen. Jackson and myself, except thro' the General, through which channel no opportunity to make the request has been afforded me.
JOHN C. CALHOUN.

O

John Q. Adams to J. C. Calhoun.

WASHINGTON, 14th Jan. 1831.

Sir: I received this morning your letter of the 12th instant, and, in giving to it an immediate and explicit answer, I trust you will perceive the propriety of my confining myself to the direct object of your inquiries.

In the course of the last summer I received a letter from Mr. Crawford, referring to the consultations of Mr. Monroe with the heads of the Departments in the summer of 1818, upon the proceedings of General Jackson in Florida, on the occasion of the Seminole war, and alluding to a letter from General Jackson to Mr. Monroe, which he stated to have been produced at one of those meetings, and to which his own letter appeared to attach some importance.

Mr. Crawford did not state to me the purpose of his inquiries, nor was I aware that any previous correspondence in relation to the subject had taken place. But as the contents of his letter appeared to me to be peculiar interest to the character of Mr. Monroe, I answered him that I had no recollection of the production of such a letter as that to which he referred, and requested his permission to communicate his letter to Mr. Monroe himself. To this answer I have received no reply.

Neither the letter of Mr. Crawford, nor the letter book containing the copy of my answer to it, are at this moment in my possession, having left them both at my residence in Quincy. The letter from Mr. Crawford did not purport to be confidential; but as it related to transactions sacredly confidential in the cabinet of Mr. Monroe, I have not thought myself at liberty to furnish a copy of it without his permission, even to Mr. Monroe: the same principle applies to your request for a copy; but I will immediately write and direct a copy of my answer to be made, which when received, shall be cheerfully communicated to you.

I am, with respectful consideration, sir,
Your obedient servant,
JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

JOHN C. CALHOUN, Esq.

P

Mr. Crowninshield to Mr. Calhoun.

WASHINGTON, January 30, 1831.

Dear Sir: My recollection having been called to a letter received from the Hon. W. H. Crawford in July, 1830, wherein he asks my attention to 'circumstances that transpired during the cabinet deliberations on the events of the Seminole war,' and my reply thereto: It is proper for me to state, that I answered Mr. Crawford as though he alluded to transactions, which took place while I was in Mr. Monroe's cabinet; but since my arrival here this session, I learn for the first time, that the cabinet meeting alluded to by Mr. Crawford, was held after I retired from the cabinet.* I left Washington in company with President Monroe and yourself, for Norfolk, by the way of Annapolis, on the 28th May, 1818. Now, sir, I do not pretend to know one word of what was said or done at any subsequent meeting; and I do therefore disclaim and say that my letter in answer to Mr. Crawford, must not be interpreted so as to affirm or deny any cabinet transactions which took place after I left the cabinet.

It is difficult for me to account how I could have blended other things, so as to connect them with events of which I could know nothing. It is a long time since those things occurred, and memory is treacherous; and that, I beg you to believe, is the only reason of the misapprehension on my part.

I am, with high consideration,
Your obedient servant,
B. W. CROWNINSHIELD.

Hon. J. C. Calhoun, Vice President.

*Mr. Crowninshield could not have been present at any cabinet council on the Seminole affair. The first meeting on that subject took place on the 15th or 16th of July, 1818; Mr. Monroe having returned on the 14th, from his residence in Loudoun. The National Intelligencer of the 17th July, announced the arrival of Mr. Crowninshield at his residence in Massachusetts, on the 9th. He resigned in October following, without having returned to Washington. Nor could he have been present at *any* meeting of the cabinet on the subject of the capture of St. Marks or Pensacola, in which I was. The Intelligencer of the 29th May, 1818, announces the departure of the President (Mr. Monroe,) Mr. Crowninshield and myself, for Norfolk, before information was received at Washington of either St. Marks or Pensacola. The two former returned to Washington. I proceeded to my residence in Carolina, and did not return to Washington until the 9th of July, subsequent to Mr. Crowninshield's arrival in Massachusetts.

Q

Mr. Calhoun to Mr. Crawford, returning his letter of 2d October, 1830.

FORT HILL, October 30, 1830.

Sir: The last mail brought me your letter of the 2d instant, but post marked the 25d, which I herewith return.

I cannot consent to correspond with you on the subject to which it refers. The controversy is not with you, but General Jackson. You, from the first, voluntarily assumed the character of the informer. Under that character only can I know you, which of course precludes all communication between us in relation to the controversy, except through General Jackson. Regarding you in the light I do, you may rest

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