

ted an unlawful act, and therefore not entitled to salvage, and you appeal to the pride of this government to defend its sovereignty and thus prevent similar abuses. In reply to this new argument introduced, I am instructed to say to you that this government is not cognizant that Captain Croft has done anything with regard to the Regina Cœli that he was not urgently requested to do by your Consul residing here. The fact that neither your Consul nor Captain Simon had made any complaint to this government antecedent to your arrival, induced this government to naturally suppose that both your Consul and Captain Simon endorsed what Captain Croft had done as being in perfect consonance with their requests and wishes; and if there has been a violation of the sovereignty of our territory, I cannot see how Captain Croft is any more culpable than your Consul, and thus, even admitting the fact of what you assert for argument sake only, this government would have to make complaint to His Imperial Majesty's government, for having, by its representative residing here, procured a violation of our sovereignty. However, as this new argument involves a principle of international law, which makes it the duty of this government to inquire into the fact alleged as speedily as possible, especially as it has been introduced to its notice by diplomatic correspondence, the President has directed me to assure you that he has instructed the Attorney General to institute immediate inquiries and to ascertain if the fact can be established that Captain Croft has committed such acts on French property and interests within the jurisdiction of this Republic as will amount to a breach of international law, and if so, the proper proceedings against Captain Croft, will be had by this government on his arrival from the leeward and justice done to all parties; and so soon as ascertainment in the proper manner is made that our sovereignty has really been violated by Captain Croft by which French interest has suffered, which will not require more than two or three days, Captain Simon's ship will be immediately delivered to his possession, and which will prepare the way for damages in his favor.

I am informed that you were notified yesterday from the proper department to appoint and send a person in company with the surveyors to hold a survey on the ship Regina Cœli, so that her condition when taken possession of by the Marshal, might be properly verified, and to take an inventory of the remaining effects and cargo on board preparatory to her being delivered up to Captain Simon, all of which is essential in order to assist in arriving at the proper amount of damages in case such should be in future awarded against the reputed captors in favor of Captain Simon; and the President directs me to assure you, that no question arising out of the affair, over which the courts or government of this Republic cannot legally exercise jurisdiction in the final settlement of, will be acted upon in this Republic any farther than is necessary in order to

the establishment of facts, for reference to such foreign governments or Tribunals as may possess the proper jurisdiction for final adjustment.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient,  
Humble Servant.

(Signed)

J. N. LEWIS.

It will be seen that Mr. Pointel had changed his views in reference to the circumstances surrounding the "Regina Cœli," from what they were, as expressed by himself on his first arrival here, but we were not prepared for the recklessness, which he exhibited, in carrying out his plans in the roadstead of Monrovia, in first refusing to receive an official despatch from this Government, and then forcibly ejecting the marshal and his officers from the deck of the "Regina Cœli," and carrying her away beyond the jurisdiction of this Government.

This indignity to the government of Liberia,—the unprovoked and unwarrantable seizure and forcibly taking away of said ship, were made the subjects of remonstrances to the Government of His Imperial Majesty, in the form of Protests. Copies of which are here inserted.

#### A PROTEST.

I, STEPHEN ALLEN BENSON, President of the Republic of Liberia, for and in behalf of the Government and people of Liberia, do hereby make this my Protest against P. Pointel Esquire, "The Chief of the Staff of the French Naval Division of the West Coast of Africa?"—in that the said P. Pointel Esquire, aforesaid, did on the 8th day of May of this present month, refuse to receive, and did object to accept from the hands of an officer of this Government, an important official communication addressed to him by this Government, in reply to one which he Mr. Pointel, had addressed to this Government under date of May 5, 1858, in reference to the unfortunate French Emigrant Ship "Regina Cœli."

The circumstances are these. On the 4th day of this present month, the aforesaid P. Pointel Esquire, arrived in this Port from the Leeward Coast, on board the French Steam Ship of war "Renandin," and in the course of that day, Mr. Pointel had an interview with the President of Liberia upon matters in relation to the "Regina Cœli," then in charge of an officer of the British Mail Steam Ship "Ethiopia." The conversation at this interview was free and with-

#### Maryland Historical Society

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#### XIII. Colonization Pamphlets

#### 6. Message of the President of Liberia, ...January 6, 1859 Monrovia, 1859