ANSON JONES AND THE DIPLOMACY OF TEXAS ANNEXATION

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CHAPTER I

EARLY POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC CAREER

Because of the tremendous hardships and difficulties found in early Texas, one would suppose that the early Anglo-American pioneers were all hardy adventurers. Although many early Texans were of this variety, some were of a more gentle, conservative nature. Anson Jones, a man in the latter category, was not the type one usually pictures as a pioneer. He was a New Englander with a Puritan streak in his blood which almost seemed out of place in early Texas.¹ His yearning for power and prestige, coupled with a deep bitterness inherited from childhood, combined to give Jones an attitude that destined him for an unhappy existence and helps explain many of his caustic remarks concerning his associates. In all of his writings he has a definite tendency to blame others for failures and give himself credit for the accomplishments. When Anson Jones referred to his early life, these references were usually filled with bitterness and remorsefulness. According to Jones, his home life was extremely dismal and bleak, and he blamed his family for some of his early sorrow.²

¹Herbert Gambrell, Anson Jones, The Last President of Texas (Garden City, N. Y., 1948), pp. 22-23.
Almost all of his early professional years were filled with failure. From 1820 to 1824 he was having difficulties with creditors. In 1824 his luck changed when he went to Venezuela for two years. After his return to the United States, he was successful with lodge work but once again failed in his profession. The primary cause for his failure was his lack of love for his profession. In his writings he often blames his family for compelling him to enter a profession for which he had no taste. Jones continued to search for success but he seemed to be doomed to continual failure. In New Orleans he invested in a business and began practicing medicine again. In both of these ventures he once again failed.\(^3\) It was this type of background that helped mold his basic attitudes and personality.

There were several reasons for Anson Jones's choice of Texas as the place where he would once again attempt to succeed. The low state of his finances naturally caused him to search for a more profitable area. As a result of his early Puritan training, he had an aversion to many of the temptations found in a city such as New Orleans. Jones decided that he should leave these influences which were so detrimental to his morals. Although at that time the popular conception of Texas was that it was merely an uncivilized

\(^3\)Jones, Memoranda, pp. 5-7.
refuge for pirates, Jones decided to go to Brazoria, Texas, and judge for himself.  

With only $50.00 in medicine, $17.00 in cash and a $2,000 debt in New Orleans, Jones had little to lose and the possibility of great gain when he arrived in Brazoria. After careful consideration, Jones decided to remain in this rather crude and undesirable location. Texas in 1833 was in great need of doctors and also in need of educated men. Jones believed that it was destiny that brought him to Texas. Indeed it was his personal belief that providence worked through him to save Texas as well as himself. In his autobiography Jones explained this feeling when he wrote:

In Texas, therefore, I commenced the world anew. Profiting by my severe experience in its roughest ways, I have also had constantly before my eyes a conviction from which I have been unable to escape, that somehow or other the destiny of Texas was interwoven with my own, that they were indissoluble and that the one depended materially upon the other.

Because of the unhealthy climate, which caused the spread of fever, as well as the scarcity of doctors, Jones was able to build up a large practice which caused him to travel twenty to forty miles in each direction from Brazoria. Although from this period until his death Jones had few financial problems, he seemed to be obsessed with the idea that he was not properly honored or appreciated.

\[4\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 8.\]

\[5\text{Jones, Memoranda, p. 9.}\]

\[6\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 10.\]
When Jones first arrived in Texas, he claimed that his interests only concerned the furtherance of his profession. If this were true, only a short time later a broadening of interest took place which included politics. Although he strongly denied the possibility that he had entered the field of politics for any but patriotic reasons, his actions seemed to indicate that he had a tremendous love for the glory and power connected with affairs of state.

Late in 1835 when the discord between Mexico and Texas reached such proportions that a revolt seemed imminent, Jones began to take an active interest in the political situation of his adopted land. When the Texas leaders met in San Felipe for a consultation concerning problems with Mexico, Anson Jones, the representative from Brazoria, met for the first time many of the political leaders of Texas. His report of this meeting, which was written many years later, was extremely critical of these Texas leaders and the consultation. Since he was on friendly terms with these same men during the period of the Republic, there is an indication that he was deliberately trying to destroy the prestige of these men in order to enhance his own fame. Between 1835 and 1849, when he wrote the report, much had happened to embitter and cloud his memory. The following is his description of the consultation.

My impressions of the consultation taken as a whole were unfavorable—it was near the close of the session. There appeared to me a plenty of recklessness and
selfishness, but little dignity or patriotism. Still there were some good men there. But I felt sick at heart at the prospect. I was introduced to Bowie—he was dead drunk; to Houston—his appearance was anything but decent or respectable, and very much like that of a broken-down sot and debauche. The first night after my arrival, I was kept awake nearly all night by a drunken carouse in the room over that in which I "camped." Dr. Archer and General Houston appeared to be the principal persons engaged in the orgie to judge from the noise.7

When referring to successful Texas ventures, Jones usually revealed his tendency to exaggerate the effects that he had on these various events. For example, Jones claimed in his autobiography that he was the leading figure in bringing about Texas' independence from Mexico. He stated in his book, "I took the first efficient step for the independence of Texas, and offered and advocated the first resolutions for that purpose."8 All through his work one can find countless references to the tremendous part that he played in the successful creation of a strong Texas. He seemed to have deluded himself into thinking that all the successes were a direct result of his efforts and the failures were all caused by other Texas leaders. In reference to the Texas Revolution Jones implies that it was his idea to end the retreating policy and fight at San Jacinto. In a conversation with General Houston on April 15, 1836, Jones informed Houston that "the men were deserting, and if the retreating policy were continued much longer he would be pretty much alone."9

After the Texas Revolution was successfully concluded, Jones returned to Brazoria and consented to be a candidate for the office of Representative from Brazoria. Later, when Jones referred to his acceptance of this office, he claimed he would have preferred to remain out of politics. He stated that "I had fought, bled, and died for the country in the first place, and this has increased my desire to see it prosperous and successful." According to Jones, his service in the government was a personal sacrifice to which he consented only out of patriotism.

During the first session of the Texas Congress, Jones, with little deviation, followed the conservative policies advocated by Houston. This legislative program was based on the plan to develop a sound system of finance, peace with the Indians and the avoidance of war with Mexico. Jones later denied that he followed Houston's lead, but the record indicated that there was little difference between the policies of the two men.

Although there were many important problems facing the Texas people after the revolution, the issue that received the most attention was annexation. Most evidence indicated that the people of Texas were willing to become annexed to the United States from the time they decided to separate from Mexico. Most people believed that independence was merely

10 Ibid., p. 18.
a step toward annexation, and the Republic was only considered to be a permanent situation by a few. A large majority of the people were of the opinion that only annexation would solve the many governmental and economic problems which they were so ill-equipped to solve.\textsuperscript{11} This was evidenced by the September elections of 1836 when the people of Texas voted overwhelmingly for immediate annexation. Although the new government attempted to follow the people's wishes concerning annexation, Houston's administration also followed the policy of strengthening the government in case annexation failed by gaining recognition and agreements from other nations. This foreign policy was basically the same until Texas entered the Union. Jones claimed that this was his own personal plan, but it had been used before he entered the diplomatic field.\textsuperscript{12}

Memucan Hunt, who as the Texas Minister to the United States had worked for annexation from the beginning of the Republic until 1838, seemed to have developed the plan which eventually brought success in the annexation venture. He suggested that Texas make no further moves toward annexation, but that the United States should be allowed to pursue the subject. It was his contention that when the United States discovered that Texas was making agreements with other nations


\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 32.
concerning trade and recognition, they would decide to annex Texas. 13

By the spring of 1838 prospects for annexation dimmed and many Texans believed that Texas should officially withdraw the proposition for annexation. Although a majority of Texans continued to favor annexation, there were many obvious reasons why the plan to withdraw the proposition would certainly be a more reasonable policy. According to J. Pinckney Henderson, Texas Minister to Great Britain, "the desire to see what disposition the Congress of the United States will make of the question of annexation" would have a definite influence on British favor or disfavor of recognition. Henderson indicated that the only hope for foreign recognition was through revocation of the proposition for annexation. 14

In following the advice of the Texas Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to introduce legislation which would withdraw the annexation proposition, Anson Jones took his first positive action concerning annexation. On April 23, 1838, he offered a joint resolution withdrawing the proposition for annexation. This resolution passed in the House but failed in the Senate thirteen to fourteen. The following


14 J. Pinckney Henderson to R. A. Irion, January 5, 1838, George P. Garrison, editor, The Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas (Washington, D. C., 1903-1909), (hereafter cited as Texas Diplomatic Correspondence.)
day, after several amendments had been added, the resolution was again introduced and was again defeated.\textsuperscript{15} The course which was taken by the Texas Senate, in spite of all the counter arguments, strongly indicated the feeling that Texas had for annexation.

Although the joint resolution withdrawing the annexation proposal failed, Houston decided to proceed with his plans to withdraw annexation. Jones replaced Hunt as Minister to the United States and was given instructions concerning the foreign policy of Texas.\textsuperscript{16} Jones carried out the instructions given him by the Texas Government concerning annexation by "unconditionally" withdrawing the proposition of annexation.\textsuperscript{17} This action was not approved by Congress until President Mirabeau B. Lamar, who was definitely opposed to annexation, became president.

R. A. Irion, Secretary of State of Texas during Houston's first administration, was aware of the disadvantage in foreign affairs that Texas worked under as a result of the annexation proposal. In a letter to J. Pinckney Henderson, Texas Minister to Great Britain, he wrote,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{16}R. A. Irion to Anson Jones, August 7, 1838, \textit{Texas Diplomatic Correspondence}, I, 342-343.
\item \textsuperscript{17}Jones to Aaron Vail, October 12, 1838, \textit{William R. Manning, editor, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States} (Concord, N. H., 1939), XII, 173-174.
\end{itemize}
I now leave the pleasure to announce to you that on the twelveth of October ultimo, Anson Jones, our minister near the Government of the United States at Washington City, acting under special instructions from this government formally withdrew the proposition for the annexation of this Republic to that of the United States of America. The question of annexation which embarrassed our negotiations in Great Britain so much, being now definitely settled, I hope the recognition of our independence by that Government and France will soon follow.18

This belief was widespread among most of the Texas governmental officials and could not be credited to any one group or individual.

As a result of temperament, basic beliefs and circumstances, Anson Jones and Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, the newly elected President of Texas, seemed to have had a hearty dislike for each other. It was difficult for Jones, the cautious perfectionist, to appreciate a poetic dreamer of Lamar's proportions. There was a great deal of misunderstanding between these two men concerning the replacement of Jones by Colonel Barnard E. Bee as Minister to the United States. Jones was extremely disturbed because he was not notified that he had been replaced but had to read it in the newspaper. In a letter to James Webb sent on March 19, 1839, Jones requested that he be given official word of his release along with a letter to the United States President. This letter displayed

18Irion to Henderson, November 28, 1838, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 864-865.
the usual tone of bitterness used by Jones when he felt that he had been slighted.\textsuperscript{19}

Although Jones in almost all of his writings had a great deal of criticism for Lamar, there is some indication that if Lamar would have encouraged a friendship along with political prizes, Jones would not have been so opposed to Lamar. In a letter to Lamar, S. A. Roberts, Secretary to the Texas Legation, wrote the following in reference to the possibility of making amends and of improving the relationship between the two men.

I think he is satisfied and if Judge Webb will call on him on his arrival and make the amends honorable which I think he ought to do, I believe he may be made a friend of. He speaks highly of your state papers, approves the general course of your measures, but says he does not know you—that he has often tried to form an acquaintance (an intimate one I mean), but that you have never met his advances in the spirit in which they were made, and many things of a similar character.\textsuperscript{20}

Later when Jones was running for the Texas Senate, Roberts wrote that he believed Jones, if elected, would give support to Lamar's Administration.\textsuperscript{21} Evidently Jones had given that impression in his campaign for Senator.

After Jones returned to Texas, he was elected to the Senate and served in that capacity during Lamar's administration.

\textsuperscript{19}Jones to James Webb, March 19, 1839, \textit{Texas Diplomatic Correspondence}, II, 378-379.

\textsuperscript{20}S. A. Roberts to M. B. Lamar, May 15, 1839, \textit{The Papers of Mirabeau B. Lamar} (Austin, 1920-1924), II, 573-574.

\textsuperscript{21}Roberts to Lamar, \textit{Papers of Lamar}, III, 1286-1287.
Instead of aiding Lamar as S. A. Roberts had prophesied, Jones opposed the administration. In his autobiography Jones was extremely critical of the Lamar administration but professed to believe that little could be done to stop the waste so he decided "to let the vessel drift."\(^{22}\)

Although Jones admitted that he personally did little to stop Lamar's wasteful program, he openly criticized Houston's methods of dealing with the situation. On November 19, 1839, he wrote that

> General Houston is not so strong in what he does himself, as in what his enemies do: it is not his strength but their weakness--not his wisdom but their folly. Cunning, Indian cunning is the secret of his success.\(^{23}\)

The next month Jones wrote that "Houston was allowing Lamar to ruin the country for political reasons."\(^{24}\) There was probably a lot of truth in this assumption but along with these statements there also seemed to be a great deal of jealousy.

Consequently, it is evident even at this early date that Jones did not have the qualifications to be a political leader. However, after the many failures in his early life, he felt his little success in Congress was an indication of a glorious future in politics. Even at the beginning of his political


\(^{23}\)Ibid., p. 35.

\(^{24}\)Ibid., p. 36.
career he failed to take the initiative in legislative matters. He, therefore, began his climb up the ladder of political success by following the great Texas politician, Sam Houston. Jones continually became more jealous and bitter because he could not replace Houston in the affections of the Texas people.
CHAPTER II

ANSON JONES, SECRETARY OF STATE

After the passing of the somewhat disruptive Lamar Administration, the "Old Hero" once again headed the Texas Government. He offered the highest cabinet post to Anson Jones, the man who had previously followed almost all the policies established by Houston. In the letter sent to Jones offering him this office, Houston promised that he would have "worthy associates" and salaries paid in "good money." Jones claimed later that "the pledges contained in his letter were subsequently violated." In this endorsement Jones seemed to display the bitterness he felt for Houston.¹

Jones was not overly eager to begin his work as Secretary of State and had to be encouraged to take charge of the department. Houston wrote him on December 14, 1841, and asked him to "proceed to the organization and discharge of the duties thereof, the business of the department requiring early attention."² There is some indication that Jones resented this and other letters of similar nature.

Although during his later life Jones criticized Houston's policies and pointed out mistakes, while he was

¹Jones, Memoranda, p. 167.
²Ibid., p. 168.
Secretary of State he followed and approved almost all policies established by Houston. Both men advocated extreme measures to bring about economy in government, and in the field of foreign affairs both men believed in and followed the same basic course. This factor tends to disprove many of the claims subsequently made by Jones concerning the views and policies of the two men.  

Another example of how closely they worked is to be found in their handling of the problem of new settlers in Texas. Although they faced much opposition, both men believed that settlers should be encouraged to come to Texas and promoted the passage of laws to bring this about.

All during his public career Jones firmly believed that he had not been properly appreciated. Because of this feeling, Jones went to great lengths to prove his public work was not only essential to the welfare of Texas but that it was based on completely unselfish patriotic motives. He claimed that because Houston's first term "had been characterized by many errors and follies and by a wide-spread ruin," it was necessary for someone to step in and save the country. In his Memoranda he wrote:

I then entered upon this new field of duty, with a determination to snatch the country from the verge of destruction upon which she was tottering and to save her if possible, notwithstanding the almost insurmountable

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3Jones, Memoranda, p. 225.

4Bernice Barnett Denton, "Count Saligny and the France-Terienne Bill," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XLV (October, 1941), 140.
difficulties with which she was surrounded. In this purpose I never faltered nor ceased until complete success had crowned my efforts.\(^5\)

No one could honestly deny that when Houston's second term began, Texas was confronted with many seemingly insurmountable problems. Not the least of these problems was Mexico's continuing attempts to recapture Texas. Lamar had angered the Mexicans by his ill-fated attempt to capture Santa Fe late in 1841. Houston's major project was to bring peace and calm out of a chaotic situation. He apparently had two basic plans to bring about this peace that Texas needed if she were to survive; one plan was to obtain protection from Great Britain and France or the United States, the other was for the United States to annex Texas. Houston and Jones seldom varied from these two plans in their approach to the problem of Texas survival.

In the spring of 1842 the news from Texas was indeed bleak. Because the Texans who had engaged in the Santa Fe Expedition were being held prisoner in Mexico, many Texans believed that war with Mexico was necessary. As a result of the financial condition of Texas, a successful aggressive war would have been an impossibility. Houston realized this fact, and he worked for peaceful settlement of the problems between Mexico and Texas. Nathaniel Amory, the Texas Minister to the United States, was working with United States officials to

bring about the release of Texas prisoners in Mexico. Ashbel Smith, the Texas Minister to Great Britain, was instructed to use his influence to bring about British mediation between Texas and Mexico. In March, 1842, Smith was told that:

The attainment of peace between Texas and Mexico to the two parties directly and to England herself, in regard to her commercial interest, is an object of paramount importance. Texas is already fatigued and worn out with the annoyance of a Quasi War.

During the same month Houston wrote Jones that no order was to be given "for the troops to turn out" regardless of what news was sent about the enemy until he could consider the situation. He also wrote that "every report will be sent to excite the public mind," and indicated that he was having a difficult time keeping the people of Texas calm and rational.

During the summer of 1842 an attempt was made to bring the joint mediation of Great Britain, France and the United States to bear on the difficulties between Texas and Mexico. This so-called tripartite mediation attempt failed because of England's desire to remain the major influence in Mexican and Texas affairs.

Although Jones and Houston both favored this

6 Nathaniel Amory to Jones, January 15, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, I, 527-533.
7 Jones to Ashbel Smith, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 948-950.
8 Sam Houston to Jones, March 14, 1842, Amelia W. Williams and Eugene C. Barker, editors, Writings of Sam Houston, 1813 to 1863 (Austin, 1938-1943), II, 502.
plan, Jones in his instructions to Smith did not place much emphasis on this phase of his instructions, and because Smith realized that the relationship between Mexico and France would not be conducive to mediation, he was convinced that Great Britain could probably accomplish more alone.\(^{10}\) The United States seemed to be cold to the idea of mediation, and they informed Texas that they had no right to enter into the controversy.\(^ {11}\)

By the early fall of 1842 there was a noticeable change in the over-all attitude of the nations which had been asked by Texas to render assistance in the Texas-Mexican controversy. Although there were probably several causes for a favorable change in policy toward Texas, the blockade which Texas had erected against Mexico as well as the economic rivalry between these powers seem to have been the major causes. Because there was so little understanding between these countries, most officials believed that aid to Texas should be offered separately rather than jointly. In a conference held the 10th of September, 1842, between Sam Houston, Joseph Eve, and Charles Elliot both England and the United States claimed the blockade hurt them more than it hurt Mexico. It was agreed at this conference that if Texas could revoke the blockade,

\(^ {10}\)Smith to Jones, *Texas Diplomatic Correspondence*, II, 1385-1387.

\(^ {11}\)Joseph Eve to Joseph Waples, *Texas Diplomatic Correspondence*, I, 581.
the ministers would do all in their power to persuade Mexico to end hostilities.\(^1\)\(^2\) Because Jones was not on the job during this important negotiation, Joseph Waples, his clerk, was acting Secretary of State.

Charles Elliot, the British Minister to Texas, was a veteran diplomat with a great deal of experience. Elliot, who probably understood the Texas situation as well if not better than any other person of his day, agreed with the British policy of working alone on the Texas problem because he felt the United States could not be trusted to stay out of Texas. It was his contention that not only would the United States eventually go to war with Mexico but that because of depressed conditions in Texas, the United States would annex Texas.\(^1\)\(^3\)

During 1842, an extremely critical period in Texas, evidence indicates that Anson Jones was somewhat negligent of his duties. While he was taking an extended vacation from his duties, Waples, his clerk, remained to care for the State Department. According to Smith, the lack of instructions from Texas made his task in Europe more difficult. In connection with this problem Smith wrote, "I am sometime placed in a

\(^{1}\)\(^2\)Conference among Houston, Eve, and Charles Elliot, September 10, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, I, 606-607.

\(^{1}\)\(^3\)Elliot to Addington, December 16, 1842, Ephraim Adams, editor, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XVI (July, 1912), 92-94.
disagreeable position by being left wholly without advices from home of the condition of our affairs except as I learn it from the newspapers." Another factor which increased the problems of Smith was the news received from the United States that San Antonio had been captured. Because of the lack of official information, it was very difficult for Smith to cope with the situation.\textsuperscript{14}

When Houston first took the control of government from the Lamar administration, Texas had collected several problems, many of which concerned the United States. Many of these diplomatic problems which the Houston administration encountered had been inherited from the previous government. In order to replace Colonel Barnard Bee, Texas Minister to the United States, with a man of his own choice, Houston used as his excuse Colonel Bee's failure to complete a commercial treaty with the United States.\textsuperscript{15}

James Reily, Bee's replacement as Texas Minister to the United States, was eager to begin negotiations with the United States for a Treaty of Amity, Navigation, and Commerce, and he wrote Secretary Jones, February 2, 1842, for authority to start proceedings for such a treaty.\textsuperscript{16} The Texas authorities

\textsuperscript{14}Smith to Jones, November, 1842, \textit{Texas Diplomatic Correspondence}, II, 1395-1397.

\textsuperscript{15}Barnard E. Bee to Jones, January 27, 1842, \textit{Texas Diplomatic Correspondence}, I, 534-536.

\textsuperscript{16}James Reily to Jones, February 2, 1842, \textit{Texas Diplomatic Correspondence}, I, 536-537.
were hesitant in their answer to Reily, apparently favoring
a waiting policy. Nevertheless, during the early part of
March, Reily met with Daniel Webster and discussed the possi-
bilities of free transportation for Texas on the Red River.
In a message to Jones, Reily was not very optimistic concerning
the possibility of receiving this privilege unless Texas would
be willing to give the United States special considerations
in trade. Reily also wrote that Webster was of the opinion
that Texas was "too grasping" because she had extended her
jurisdiction to the Pacific.\(^\text{17}\)

Later in the month Reily discussed the Indian problem
with Webster. The Indians from the United States had raided
settlements along the Texas border and there was a juris-
dictional question involved. During the conference Webster
promised to retain the Indians within the United States bor-
der but refused to work out a treaty until United States
problems with England and Mexico were solved.\(^\text{18}\) During this
stage of diplomatic maneuvering, there was little that Texas
could do to hurry negotiations since she was more or less at
the mercy of powers beyond her control. Any success would
have to come almost entirely from outside forces.

Relations with the United States were further disturbed
by the fact that France had been given an advantage in trade

\(^\text{17}\)Ibid., pp. 540-542.

\(^\text{18}\)Reily to Jones, March 25, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Cor-
respondence, I, 545-547.
over the United States. According to a treaty made with Mexico in 1831, Texas was not to give a better trade agreement with European countries than to the United States, and the United States warned Texas that there would be trouble if this treaty was continually broken. By the end of March, however, Reily rendered an optimistic report in which he stated the opinion that both the people and the government of the United States not only favored Texas against Mexico but also would demand that the Santa Fe prisoners be released.

Because Reily's instructions were extremely general, he was left to his own devices as to how he could best serve Texas. One of his suggestions, which was unauthorized by the Texas government, called for the United States to mediate between Mexico and Texas. According to Reily's plan, three alternatives would be offered to Mexico. The first was a complete recognition of the independence of Texas with the 1836 boundaries being accepted. The second idea was that independence would be recognized but that the question of boundaries would be left for later negotiations. The third idea was for a five year armistice to be established between Texas and Mexico. This plan was presented by Waddy Thompson.

19Eve to Jones, February 27, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, I, 537-538.

20Reily to Jones, March 29, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, I, 547-550.
to Mexico, but Mexico was hostile to this proposal.\textsuperscript{21} Therefore, in this case as in many others the Texas diplomats were left to their own devices and the officials in Texas had little influence on the outcome of many of these negotiations.

By late summer Webster had completed most of his negotiations with Asburton concerning the Maine dispute, and his attention turned to consideration of the various problems that had developed between Texas and the United States. Reily wrote Jones that an agreement had been reached with the United States which gave Texas the river rights she had been seeking. The Indian problem was dealt with, cotton could be sold without duties for five years, and many other items were given the same privilege as cotton.\textsuperscript{22}

Tyler supported this treaty and seemed interested in supporting good commercial relations with Texas. One reason for this interest was the strong possibility that Great Britain would present Texas with a better offer.\textsuperscript{23}

Although the treaty solved many of the more troublesome problems, a few other problems still had to be considered. By early fall Jones had taken leave from his duties, and while Jones was attending to private affairs, George W. Terrell,

\textsuperscript{21}Reily to Jones, June 24, 1842, \textit{Texas Diplomatic Correspondence}, I, 563-566.

\textsuperscript{22}Reily to Jones, August 3, 1842, \textit{Texas Diplomatic Correspondence}, I, 576-580.

\textsuperscript{23}James D. Richardson, editor, \textit{Messages and Papers of the Presidents} (Washington, D. C., 1899), V, 2030-2031.
the Secretary of War, along with Waples acted as Secretary of State. Among the problems in which Terrell was involved were the problems of postal service between the two nations and also the smuggling activities carried on along the Sabine River. On December 23, 1842, Jones, who was once again filling his position after an extensive vacation, wrote Van Zandt, new Texas Minister to the United States, that a council was to be held with the Indians. Jones asked the United States to join this council. On this same date Jones wrote Smith that the Treaty of Amity, Navigation and Commerce had been completed with the United States.

Because Great Britain had a tremendous influence on Mexican affairs and was a possible customer for Texas cotton and other raw materials, she was of prime interest to the Texas government. If Texas had any possibility of survival, much less a gain in over-all strength, she had to establish strong trade agreements with other nations. On the other hand, in order to have a third power to slow up the advance of the Americans, there was a strong desire on the part of Great Britain to have Texas remain an independent country. Hence, conditions were ripe for a Texas-British understanding.

24George W. Terrell to Eve, August 28, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, I, 601-603.
25Jones to Isaac Van Zandt, December 23, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, I, 629.
26Jones to Smith, December 23, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1405-1407.
Soon after the inauguration of Houston in 1842, William Kennedy, an unofficial diplomat for Great Britain, wrote Lord Aberdeen of the situation in Texas. According to Kennedy the conditions in Texas from a British viewpoint were in a rather poor state. Britain desired to defeat any possible plan of annexation, but it was Kennedy's observation that not only was Texas in such a bad condition that she would not survive without outside help but that Great Britain's policy would be further hampered because the United States president was for annexation.27 This report seemed to represent the majority opinion of the British officials. Although most of the British realized that defeat of annexation was unlikely, they believed the slim chance would be worth the effort.

Substantiating Kennedy's rather pessimistic report to England, Eve, United States Minister to Texas, wrote the following to President Tyler on January 12, 1842:

I have conversed with the citizens of Texas from every county and have not a doubt but that at least nine tenths of them are anxious to become annexed to the United States; on the 6th Inst, I wrote to Mr. Webster on the subject, and will not trouble you with the reasons given in that communication but respectfully request you at your leisure to read it.28

27 William Kennedy to George Aberdeen, January 10, 1842, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XV (January, 1912), 253-256.

Later the same month Kennedy sent another message to Aberdeen which seemed to verify the information that Eve had given the United States government concerning the popular desire of the Texas people. On January 28, 1842, Kennedy wrote, "Popular feeling is indubitably swaying strongly towards annexation to the United States and if this feeling is to be alloyed, Great Britain must interpose her mediation with effect for an early settlement of the differences between Mexico and Texas." 29

Because Great Britain had discovered through reliable sources that the people of Texas were definitely interested in annexation, Ashbell Smith, Texas Minister to Great Britain, was faced with a somewhat difficult task in attempting to explain to Great Britain the necessity of working out any treaties.

In a letter to Jones on June 3, 1842, Smith wrote,

Lord Aberdeen inquired the probability of Texas becoming annexed to the United States, observing there would be no use in concluding treaties if Texas were soon to be merged in another country. I replied, I thought not: and that the establishment of diplomatic relations with other states will increase the obstacles to annexation. 30

Another factor which made diplomatic action between Great Britain and Texas difficult was the anti-slavery feeling in Great Britain. Smith wrote that "the anti-slavery feeling pervades every class and is very active. The sympathy of the

29 Kennedy to Aberdeen, January 28, 1842, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XV (January, 1912), 257-258.

30 Smith to Jones, June 3, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, 11, 960-961.
English people and the present interest of English commerce are in favor of Mexico. "31 This problem over slavery tended to drive Texas even more toward the direction of annexation. More and more Texas found herself in a situation which could be controlled not by Texas but by outside forces.

British agents in Texas were openly worried about the Texas situation. In the summer of 1842 the Prime Minister of Great Britain received information that both Americans and Texans were working for annexation. Many feared that if the United States were not stopped at Texas, she would be able to spread over much larger areas. 32

During this vital first year of Houston's second administration, Jones was of little value to the new Republic. He had taken an extended leave from his duties during his first year. Houston sent the following note to Jones giving him permission to leave: "Sir--You have leave to absent yourself from Austin until such time as you can arrange your private affairs so as to give your attention to the duties of your office." 33 In dealing with the United States, Reily was

31 Smith to Reily, June 6, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 983-984.

32 Power to Robert Peel, June 20, 1842, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XV (April, 1912), 301-303.

33 Houston to Jones, February 5, 1842, Writings of Sam Houston, II, 478.
severely hampered by Jones's long absence. During the negotiation for a United States-Texas treaty, Reily was almost completely left to his own devices. He sent several dispatches to Texas asking for information and advice, and after many such inquiries, Waples informed Reily that the "several dispatches" had been received and that Houston had read all of them. In the absence of Jones, Waples replied as instructed.

With regard to your course relative to the negotiation of a treaty, the President wishes you not to act hastily, and desires that you "suffer matters to glide along quietly until the United States Government decides upon the policy of annexation." This letter indicated that Houston, not Jones, set the basic policy in dealing with the United States. This basic idea with little change was carried out during the remaining years of the Republic.

The continued absence of Jones during the summer of 1842 eventually caused Houston to write July 19, requesting him to return to the seat of government. According to Houston, who was working with Congress on the problems of and location for the seat of government and of the war with Mexico, the continued absence of Jones had brought about embarrassment for Houston. At this particular time Houston

34 Reily to Jones, April 14, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, I, 551-554.

35 Waples to Reily, May 12, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, I, 559.
had no knowledge of when his Secretary of State would return to his work. Houston in this letter asked,

Is it in your power to make me a visit? Your doing so would afford me much gratification. Do so if you can, and if not, please apprise me what I am to expect or calculate upon. Please present me with my compliments to your lady.

Jones in his endorsement to this letter claimed that this session of Congress was "useless and pernicious, therefore, as the President has made his bed, so he must lie." Jones also stated that he would "have nothing to do with such petty squabbles."36

In dealing with the various other problems which arose in the State Department in the summer of 1842, Waples and other members of the administration were forced to bear this burden. For example, on July 26, 1842, Reily, Texas Minister to the United States, was replaced by Van Zandt. Waples, who did not have the proper form, had to sign a blank sheet and instructed Van Zandt to fill it out. Because Reily was leaving the first of August, Van Zandt was urged to proceed without delay to Washington.37 Terrell, the Secretary of War, also filled in as Secretary of State while Jones was on his extended vacation.38

36 Houston to Jones, July 19, 1842, Writings of Sam Houston, III, 111.

37 Waples to Van Zandt, July 26, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, I, 571-572.

38 Terrell to Van Zandt, August 19, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, I, 596-598.
By September 19, 1842, Houston was not only without the services of his Secretary of State but the remaining cabinet members had also taken leave of the government. It was during this period that tremendous pressure was placed on Houston to preserve a war policy. In answer to the pleadings of Houston, Jones excused his absence from the seat of government by claiming that "everything necessary in the Department of State had been accomplished and that the claims of his family had to be fulfilled." Jones also complained that he had not been paid in "par" funds thus making it necessary for him to "do something for a support from office." 39

As late as December 10, 1842, diplomatic relations were still being carried out by the President assisted by Terrell and Waples. Jones was still absent from his duties in the capital. 40 Thus, for almost a year Jones, who claimed to have played such a decisive role in the affairs of Texas, was absent from his post.

In dealing with other members of the diplomatic corps Jones was extremely negligent in sending instructions. Van Zandt referred to this negligence in a letter of March 16, 1843. He was extremely careful not to insult Jones but obviously needed information concerning official policy.

39 Houston to Jones, September 19, 1842, Writings of Sam Houston, III, 196-197.
40 Terrell to Smith, December 10, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1403-1404.
In answer to a somewhat critical earlier letter from Jones, Van Zandt replied:

You say again, that when you were here the government seldom wrote you, and that you did not complain, but supposed the Secretary of State knew his business better than you did. Now if this is designed to apply to me, let me assure you that it does not fit. I am too conscious of the ability, the knowledge, the experience, and wisdom of the incumbent of that high office, to think one moment of vying with him in the knowledge of the important duties of his exalted station.41

During the remaining part of Jones's term, other complaints indicated a certain amount of negligence. For example, in a message to Ashbel Smith, William Henry Daingerfield, Texas Minister to the Netherlands and the Hanseatic League Cities, wrote:

Since my arrival here in fact since my landing on the shores of Europe I have not had a line from the Secretary of State nor indeed from any one connected with the government at home. . . . The interesting position which our affairs with Mexico have assumed since my departure the opening of negotiations with that government if the newspaper statements are correct, render me exceedingly anxious to have something like an official statement of the true position of our affairs not only for the purpose of satisfying my own very natural interest on the subject, but to the end that I may be enabled to answer with reasonable certainty the many inquiries which are made by the authorities of the country to which I am accredited.42

Ashbel Smith, Texas Minister to Great Britain and France, also issued complaints of the same type. In January of 1844 Smith wrote: "I wish you would write as often as you conveniently

41Van Zandt to Jones, March 16, 1843, Memoranda, pp. 214-216.

42Daingerfield to Smith, November 8, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1474-1476.
can: it is **always** serviceable to be able to say I have late intelligence from home." In the same note he also asked Jones to give him information on what to expect.43

Although during Houston's second term as President the relationship between Houston and Jones had been extremely friendly, this friendliness later turned to bitterness. In fact, Jones tended to be very contradictory in his appraisal of Houston. In a letter to Charles Elliot, the British Minister to Texas and a close friend, Jones wrote the following somewhat flowery praise of Houston and Elliot:

> Few—very few—men, indeed, could have had the moral firmness to withstand the storm of malignant, fiend-like opposition, with which he was assailed and to persevere in conquering the obstacles, embarrassments and difficulties with which he was surrounded, and he might have failed, but for the aid and encouragement you have so nobly given him; for amid the fury of the tempest your voice was always heard cheering him onward, and telling him he could and would overcome it.44

In contrast to this letter of September 1843, which was written partly for diplomatic reasons, the notes written in his **Memoranda** probably more nearly expressed his true feelings. On December 31, 1843, Jones wrote:

> The close of the year 1843 the conclusion of Gen. H's second year of his second term of office, and of the second year of my term as Secretary of State. Affairs in the main have been managed agreeably to my wishes

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and advice, and the country has recovered from its extreme depression. I have had nothing to do with the "seat of government policy," and have been opposed to Gen. H's course upon it; knowing this, he has ceased to counsel with me upon it. I have also strenuously opposed his system of petty and vindictive warfare upon individuals, and the "Honorable Congress," which are gotten up by him to make political capital for himself, but are injurious to the interests and character of the country. Gen. H. and myself are drifting away from each other hourly.45

At this same time Jones further implied that he, not Houston, was the real policy maker for Texas. There is little evidence that Houston, while President, ever allowed any other to guide the policies of Texas. However, Jones wrote:

The whole safety of the country and the successful issue of the important measures not pending require that we should co-operate; for, however powerless he might be to do good, his position as President puts it in his power to do great harm; and the condition of public affairs is becoming too critical to sustain any violent jar or shock. It therefore became my duty to yield to much private wrong, which I am resolved cheerfully to do.46

Jones offered no real evidence of this wrong but indicated that lack of appreciation was his chief complaint. However, there was little evidence that Houston relied on Jones for direction.

During the year 1843 one of the most pressing problems with which the Houston Administration was forced to contend was the continued unsettled problems with Mexico. When Houston took over the administration of the government, Texas and Mexico were engaged in hostilities which Houston tried to end.

45Jones, Memoranda, p. 39.

46Ibid., p. 40.
In carrying out this policy, Houston did not follow a policy of appeasement or aggression but followed the only practical plan, which was to stand firm, issue warnings to Mexico, and prepare for a defensive war. In June Houston sent word to Jones that although Texas desired peace, a warning must be issued to Mexico to stay west of the Rio Grande or be prepared to go to war. This was a continuation of the policy which had been followed by Houston since the beginning of his administration. As a result of Houston's policy, along with Mexican internal problems, Mexico agreed to an armistice with Texas. Although Houston realized there would be little chance of a complete agreement with Mexico, at this time he felt the proposed settlement would give Texas a more powerful position in dealing with other nations. In his instructions to Jones concerning the meeting between Texas and Mexican commissioners, Houston asked for a diplomatic delay of the meeting in order to postpone the ultimate outcome and probable failure of the meeting. The plan was to keep both the United States and Great Britain in doubt as to the plans of Texas. This procedure was not basically changed under Jones.

47Jones to Smith, June 15, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1093.

48Notes for the Secretary of State, June 10, 1843, Writings of Sam Houston, IV, 210.

49Houston to Jones, July 30, 1843, Writings of Sam Houston, III, 422.
Texas policy toward Mexico was partly dependent upon the action or lack of action of the United States. Van Zandt was convinced that if the jealousies of the United States could be properly aroused, Texas would have plenty of protection against Mexico, and in order to receive support from that country, Van Zandt suggested that the United States offer to mediate with Mexico. According to information which was sent from Van Zandt to Jones, the disastrous Mier Expedition had hampered the Texas cause in the United States. Because of this unfavorable publicity concerning the affairs of Texas, the United States was extremely hesitant in giving any outward assistance. Consequently, Van Zandt suggested that Texas proceed cautiously in her actions toward Mexico. Realizing that a cessation of hostilities was necessary and that the United States understand the Texas position, Houston in the absence of his Secretary of State wrote Joseph Eve, United States Minister to Texas, and assured him that Texas was doing all in her power to end the hostilities with Mexico. Unwilling to return to Mexican rule and temporarily rejected by the United States, Texas was forced to turn to

50Van Zandt to Jones, January 25, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 115-118.
51Van Zandt to Jones, March 13, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 132-137.
52Houston to Eve, May 6, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 174-175.
Europe for security. Because of the many advantages Great Britain could gain from an independent Texas, she openly welcomed a chance to replace the United States as Texas' number one benefactor and protector. In order to strengthen its position as well as excite the fears of the United States, Texas under Houston's leadership worked closely with the British diplomats to further the idea that Texas was seeking peace and needed British support in order to gain peaceful independence. Elliot, British Minister to Texas, was convinced both by Houston's diplomacy and other obvious evidence that if Texas were to remain independent, it would be necessary to prevent Mexican aggression. Elliot reported the following concerning the Texas-Mexican affairs:

The chance of permanent reestablishment of Mexican authority in Texas is gone, but this harassing mode of warfare on the part of Mexico is vast expense and danger to itself, and this futile response on the part of Mexico presents a high probability of one or two results: Texas will have to join the United States or there will be war between the United States and Mexico. If this trouble is not solved the United States will annex Texas.

However, at this time the British did not encourage Smith concerning British aid because they did not wish to ruin British relations with Mexico. On June 16, 1843, Smith wrote concerning British mediation, "I do not believe that

53Jones to Smith, January 23, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1084-1087.

54Elliot to Aberdeen, January 28, 1843, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XVI (October, 1912), 191.
we possess the sympathies of the British government in a
greater degree than Mexico does.\textsuperscript{55} Although the British
were sincere in their expressed desire to see Texas an inde-
pendent nation, Santa Anna convinced them that he would lose
power if he entertained the idea of independence for Texas.
Therefore, the British were extremely cautious in their
mediation attempts. All during 1843 Houston encouraged both
Great Britain and France to intervene on the side of Texas.
There is no indication that Jones developed this plan which
brought ultimate success to the Texas cause.

Despite all the various foreign diplomatic endeavors of
the Texas government, the overriding theme in both Texas and
United States thought was the question of annexation. Most
of the other diplomatic action hinged on this most important
issue. Although diplomacy played a large part in its final
culmination, the politics of the period eventually was the
deciding factor. This political phase took several differ-
ent forms in the various countries involved.

The English abolitionists, who were a powerful political
force, were instrumental in moving the Texas question from
the intrigues of diplomacy to the American political stage.
These abolitionists had the hope and desire that Texas might
be influenced either through loans, use of land to buy slaves,

\textsuperscript{55}Smith to Jones, June 16, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Cor-
respondence, II, 1095-1096.
or the promise of more English immigration to end slavery in Texas. In reference to this situation Smith wrote:

It has been distinctly intimated that slavery being abolished in Texas, the British Government would interpose more efficiently with Mexico to obtain from that country an acknowledgement of the independence of Texas. From the paramount influence of England in Mexico I doubt not the British Government might without difficulty procure this result.56

Smith further claimed that the abolition of slavery in Texas was part of a British plan to end slavery in the United States. Smith, along with the southern leaders in the United States, felt this British policy would harm the United States. The fear of having southern expansion blocked by a free and independent Texas as well as the possibility of having a nearby asylum for slaves brought the Texas question to the forefront as a United States political issue.

The amount of support given by the British to the promotion of peace between Mexico and Texas was directly proportionate to the amount of fear the British had of annexation. The British seemed to have been well informed concerning the diplomatic and political affairs of Texas and the United States. Early in 1843 annexation was remote, so British leaders were not overly concerned with peace for Texas. Later this attitude changed to one of concern over the Texas problem.57

56Smith to Jones, July 2, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1099-1103.

57Smith to Jones, January 28, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1407-1409.
Because Charles Elliot was extremely friendly with both Jones and Houston, his interest concerning Texas was greater than would normally have been expected. Because of this close understanding, Elliot was convinced that Houston and his administration would be fair in their consideration of British interest. Although this confidence in Texas officials was justified, by the spring of 1844 the desire on the part of the Texas citizens for annexation had reached great proportions. On March 25, 1844, Jones wrote Elliot:

The friendly interest which Her Majesty's Government have on this as well as many previous occasions expressed for the welfare, prosperity, and independence of Texas has been received by the President with the liveliest satisfaction, and it is due to that friendly interest that the request made by Her Majesty's representative should be answered with frankness and unreserve. Texas will view the policy of annexation as the most proper one left it, under all existing circumstances, at the present time, to pursue.58

In reply to this letter Elliot encouraged Texas officials with promises that the Mexican situation would be cleared and that Texas could be guaranteed permanent independence. He also wrote in this same letter that because he had information that many of the United States statesmen were opposed to annexation, he was convinced that Texas would have a difficult time in gaining annexation. At this particular time this information proved to be correct.59

58 Elliot to Jones, April 3, 1844, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XVIII (October, 1914), 210-211.

59 Elliot to Jones, April 3, 1844, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XVIII (October, 1914), 213-214.
From the period of independence until the achievement of annexation a majority of the Texas people yearned for the day when they could have the protection of the United States. As a result of this strong desire on the part of the Texas people, the Texas leaders were in the extremely precarious position of being pressured by the people to do something about annexation and yet of not appearing too eager in the eyes of the United States.

President John Tyler was convinced both by Texas diplomacy and by his own unique situation of being a president without a party that he had much to gain and nothing to lose by claiming the cause of Texas as his own. In his third annual message to Congress Tyler expressed this view by condemning Mexico for her continuation of hostilities and by claiming that the United States would not allow Mexico to dominate United States foreign policy. In this same speech he also expressed the fear that Great Britain, by guaranteeing an independent status for Texas, would block further western expansion for the United States.60

The Texas leaders were fully aware of the special problems in dealing with the unstable United States political situation. Van Zandt gave a very good analysis of this condition when he explained in a letter sent to Jones March 15, 1843, that the annexation proposal was closely connected to

60Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, V, 2113-2116.
United States politics. Tyler, who was very much in favor of annexation, told Van Zandt in a private interview to "encourage your people to be quiet, and to not grow impatient. We are doing all we can to annex you to us but we must have time." In a letter sent April 19, 1843, Van Zandt repeated the same evaluation of the situation. According to Van Zandt, Tyler desired to annex Texas and help Texas reach an understanding with Mexico but his hands were tied. In order to bring public pressure to bear Van Zandt was convinced that the facts of annexation should be published in the United States.

Because Webster, Secretary of State during the first part of Tyler's Administration, was rather cold to the idea of annexation and had been busy working out agreements with Great Britain, Van Zandt had had considerable difficulty in meeting with Webster. The results of a conference with the secretary, which according to Van Zandt was to have been kept secret, was published by the Texas officials. Van Zandt complained to Jones that if United States officials believed the results of secret conferences would be revealed, there would be little chance for success between the two countries. In his endorsement on this letter Jones wrote:

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61Van Zandt to Jones, March 15, 1843, Memoranda, pp. 211-214.

62Van Zandt to Jones, April 19, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 164-167.
When the publications complained of were made the treaty was dead and buried in the United States Senate. They did not reach Washington City until twelve days after Congress adjourned. I no longer think it policy to maintain an attitude of supplication towards the United States, but will try a different course. We have begged long enough--too long, indeed.

Evidently because Van Zandt was not made aware of this "different course," his situation was made difficult by the exposure of his conference with Webster.

When Webster resigned in May, 1843, and was replaced by Abel P. Upshur, the annexationist groups in both Texas and the United States had definitely found a new champion for their cause. Upshur, being very much concerned with British interest in Texas, was convinced both by Van Zandt and by his own political associates that the United States should take a more active interest in the affairs of Texas. Van Zandt was convinced that both Upshur and Tyler were very friendly toward Texas but that others prevented a course of action toward annexation.

By the fall of 1843, partially through Upshur's influence, efforts were made on the part of the United States to renew official negotiations for annexation. The interest in Texas was also heightened by reports sent by Murphy, United States Minister to Texas, concerning the danger of British influence. Murphy was convinced that Houston was

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63Van Zandt to Jones, March 16, 1843, Memoranda, pp. 216-219.

64Van Zandt to Jones, August 12, 1843, Memoranda, pp. 243-244.
under British influence. On September 23, 1843, he wrote the following appraisal of the Texas situation:

That whilst the people of Texas are sincerely attached to the United States, the President and his cabinet have been for years endeavoring to bring the United States into disrepute with the people and thereby fit and reconcile them to the dominion of Mexico or England.65

Meanwhile, because of the explosive situation which could possibly develop with Mexico in case the United States and Texas negotiations took place, Texas leaders were hesitant about entering into negotiations with the United States. Houston eventually agreed to consider the annexation question but only if the United States offered proper protection for Texas. Houston was of the opinion that when Texas started its negotiations with the United States, Mexico would terminate the armistice.66 The United States eventually agreed to these terms and sent troops to the Texas border. Elliot claimed in a letter to Aberdeen that the United States actually promised to guarantee Texas independence if annexation failed.67

Unfortunately for the Texans who desired annexation, the issue was hopelessly entwined in the political squabbles of

65William Murphy to Abel P. Upshur, September 23, 1843, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, XIII, 299-309.

66Jones to Murphy, February 14, 1844, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, XII, 326-327.

67Elliot to Aberdeen, April 7, 1844, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XVIII (July, 1914), 104-108.
that year. Both Whigs and Democrats were unable or unwilling to keep the Texas question from being the major political issue of 1844. As has been mentioned earlier, one of the major factors which brought Texas into the forefront as a political issue was the highly controversial issue of slavery expansion. Except for an unfortunate accident which took the life of Secretary of State Upshur, this phase of the campaign could probably have been played down. Because John C. Calhoun, the leading proponent for slavery, replaced Upshur as Secretary of State, annexation of Texas was considered to be merely a plot of the slave holders to spread slavery.68

As early as April, 1844, the Texas government was aware of the political implications and had been sent information that annexation was unlikely. In a note to Jones, W. D. Miller, Secretary to the Commission on Annexation, wrote that

Both Clay and Van Buren are out against annexation in extenso. I send the elaborate essay of the letter to General Houston, which you will see. You may now be fully assured that the treaty will be lost; I verily believe it will not receive ten votes in its favor.69

Miller further stated that although Tyler and his friends would "get up an excitement for political partisan effect," the United States would never annex Texas. Jones in his endorsement on this letter made the somewhat conceited brag

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69 W. D. Miller to Jones, Memoranda, pp. 345-346.
that "if I should live and be elected to the Presidency of Texas, I will falsify the predictions of this letter in regard to ultimate annexation."70

Houston was probably convinced that the annexation treaty would fail when he wrote the following note to Jones, "If the treaty is not ratified between Texas and the United States, I will require the negotiations to be transferred to Texas. You and myself can manage them tolerably well!"71 Houston at this time was developing the plans which both he and Jones used after the Senate rejected the annexation treaty.

After the rejection of annexation on June 8, 1844, by a vote of thirty-five to sixteen, President Tyler offered his apologies and promised that United States troops would remain on the border in case of trouble with Mexico. Because of the politics involved, this information was kept secret.72 Although this rejection by the United States was extremely disappointing to Texas, many had the foresight to realize that this was certainly not the end of the proposition. In fact, Van Zandt was aware of the continued strong feeling for annexation. In a note to Jones concerning the presidential election and annexation he wrote "I have great confidence

70Ibid., p. 346.

71Houston to Jones, May 8, 1844, Memoranda, p. 350.

72Van Zandt and Henderson to Jones, June 15, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 286-287.
that Polk will be elected, if so, annexation will be certain, if Texas continues to desire it, which I trust she may."73

During this period when Texas was a vital issue in United States politics, British diplomats had been busily working against annexation. Because of the precarious nature of United States politics, however, the British had to be somewhat cautious in their approach to the problem. They realized that if knowledge of their interest became widespread in the United States, the annexationists would have some very potent arguments to use in the campaign. Although the annexationists were eventually able to use the British threat to gain their objectives, this threat was based more on hearsay than evidence.

Another factor which caused concern among the British diplomats was the knowledge that a majority of the Texas people favored annexation. Almost all observers of the period were convinced that the people, much more than the Texas leaders, favored annexation. For example, on December 29, 1841, Joseph Eve, United States Minister to Texas, wrote:

From various conversations which I have had with intelligent gentlemen from all parts of this Republic, I do not entertain a doubt but that a very large majority of the citizens are anxious to become annexed to the United States; nor can I bring my mind to doubt but that it would promote the interest of both nations.74

73Van Zandt to Jones, September 11, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 309.
Although the British leaders received much more encouragement from Texas government officials, there was always a doubt as to which side Houston or Jones favored. This seemingly paradoxical action by Houston was not nearly as inconsistent as appeared at first appraisal. Houston wanted Texas either to solve its problems through annexation or, if this plan failed, to be able through strong ties with Great Britain to maintain its own independence. Because of the various shifts in diplomacy, Houston varied his own approach to meet these changes. Jones continued to follow Houston's approach with little or no variance.

In the latter part of 1841, William Kennedy, an unofficial agent sent by the British government to further British interests, sent back word to the British government that "the United States are actively intriguing to effect the annexation of Texas, and that the newly elected President, General Houston (the friend and protege of General Jackson) is not unfavorable to their object." In contrast to this letter of discouragement, in other instances the British received information which indicated that the Texas government favored continued independence. For example, on February 5, 1843, Elliot wrote Aberdeen that Houston believed many people in Texas wanted annexation because they felt it was the only

75 Kennedy to Aberdeen, November 9, 1841, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XV (January, 1912), 226.
way to have peace but that he was of the opinion that Great Britain could guarantee peace. He further stated that annexation could be prevented if the British would aid Texas in dealing with Mexico. ⁷₆

It was at this particular time that Texas was somewhat desperate for help from any nation willing to give aid. In May of the same year Houston wrote a much more critical note concerning the United States. ⁷⁷ In that note he claimed that Texas would be used in United States politics and that the United States would regard the continent of North America as their birthright. In this letter Houston wrote that he wanted continued independence for Texas. All during 1843 Houston followed this policy of giving open encouragement to the British. Because of the critical attitude of the United States as well as the rather cold treatment which was given the Texas Ministers, Houston was not on good terms with the United States.

Instead of offering any objections to this plan, Jones actively pursued the same policy. There is little evidence that Jones was instrumental in changing Houston's ideas or establishing new ones during his term in office. In pursuing

⁷₆Elliot to Aberdeen, February 5, 1843, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XVI (October, 1912), 197–199.

⁷⁷ Houston to Elliot, May 13, 1843, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XVI (April, 1913), 321–325.
this basic policy Jones sent word to Van Zandt to take no further action concerning annexation. Houston believed that the Mexican problem would be solved, thus releasing Texas of her need for the United States.78

Through all this period of British negotiation, Elliot always seemed to have the utmost confidence that Houston would treat the British fairly. He was also of the opinion that Jones would always act in the same manner. In a letter sent to Aberdeen in the fall of 1843, Elliot noted that both Jones and Houston assured the British that the annexation question was no longer open. However, they claimed that Texas independence did not close the door to annexation but that negotiations had been cut off so that the United States would not interfere with Texas policy. According to Elliot, both Jones and Houston claimed that the Texas government was opposed to annexation. Although Elliot was assured by Houston that British interests would be given utmost consideration, he was convinced that the Texas government would be unable to completely dominate the foreign policy of Texas. Elliot was also of the opinion that unless a man was elected to the presidency who completely followed Houston's policies, all would be lost. The reason for this British concern was the knowledge that there had been a tremendous amount of

78Jones to Van Zandt, July 6, 1843, Memoranda, II, 198.
annexation agitation. Of course, by the spring of 1844 the pressure both in Texas and the United States had increased to such a degree that action could not be further withheld. However, Elliot still maintained that the President of Texas was "steadily determined to sustain the durable independence of the country." He further reaffirmed his belief that should public opinion become too strong, the Texas government could not resist annexation.

In the early spring of 1844 the relationship between Texas and Great Britain became of increasing concern to the United States. According to Murphy, United States Minister to Texas, Elliot was using his influence to convince Texas that the treaty proposal would fail. Murphy also had some very interesting comments concerning the views of the Texas leaders. According to Murphy, the arrival of information from the United States had a good effect on both Houston and Jones. He wrote that these

... strengthened the resolutions of the President and have had a salutary effect on the Sect. of State, who had been rather coerced into favorable action, by the President and myself. Yet he is cool, on the subject—and I fear entertains the hope (though faint) of the unfavorable results of the measure of annexation.

79 Elliot to Aberdeen, October 31, 1843, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XVII (April, 1914), 415-421.

80 Elliot to Aberdeen, February 17, 1844, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XVIII (July, 1914), 99-100.

81 Murphy to Upshur, February 22, 1844, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, XII, 340-341.
Later in the spring, Murphy had reached the conclusion that

President Houston and his cabinet, as well, as all his leading confidential friends are secretly opposed to annexation. That he and they have apparently entered into the measure heartily in consequence of the undivided and overwhelming sentiment of the people in its favor—the President, having been much influenced by the urgent letter of General Jackson lately written to him in favor of the measure. 82

At this particular phase of Texas diplomacy the first real divergence of views between Houston and Jones developed. There are several possible conclusions that can be drawn as to why Jones was more reluctant to negotiate with the United States than Houston. It was possible, as Murphy believed, that Jones was more opposed to annexation than Houston. According to the version given by Jones, "There was by General Houston about this time, an officious interference with my department, (with the view of ultimately defeating annexation) which was productive of no benefit to our public affairs; and by which he disgraced himself and the country." 83 Of course, this was advantageous for Jones to claim that he foretold of its failure. There was some indication that neither man had much faith in the outcome of this proposal. Houston, a very astute politician, was probably more aware of the agitation which had developed in Texas for annexation. Houston realized

82 Murphy to John Tyler, March 16, 1844, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, XII, 344.

83 Jones, Memoranda, p. 342.
that nothing could be gained if his administration lost the confidence of the people. Therefore, in order not to allow the whole project to be destroyed, he was willing to compromise on certain issues.

Early in his political career Jones had given some consideration to the idea of becoming President of Texas. Because of this ambition, Jones and Houston were possible potential political enemies. It was difficult for Jones to continue to be in the shadow of the much more popular Houston. This was one factor which eventually led to the rift between Houston and Jones.

During Houston's second administration Jones received several letters concerning his candidacy for the presidency which caused friction between Jones and other prominent men of the nation. In July of 1843 Henderson wrote Jones that many people thought he could not win because he was not from east Texas. Jones contended that Houston and east Texas were against him because of an earlier argument over the supreme court. Not only was there no evidence which indicated opposition from Houston concerning Jones's candidacy for the Presidency but Houston's support was considered by most to have been a major factor in his victory. Much of the correspondence

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85Henderson to Jones, July 23, 1843, Memoranda, pp. 231-232.
concerning Jones's candidacy mentioned the widespread belief that Jones was Houston's choice. For political reasons some of his supporters wanted him to disengage himself from the close connection he had with the Houston Administration. For example, James Burke, a citizen from Brazoria wrote:

I fear that many of your personal friends and admirers will be prevented from voting for you, by the generally prevailing impression that you are not running upon your own strength, but upon the popularity of Sam Houston. I would suggest, as a friend, that it would be for your interest to "define your position" on this subject so plainly, that all who desire to do so may understand exactly "the ground you cover." I do not think any one would require of you to assure a position of opposition to the President, but that your friends who are opposed to H. should know that by voting for you they are not aiding to perpetuate the objectionable measures of the present administration.86

Although Jones specifically denied that he had a close connection with Houston, he was extreme in his criticism of Houston for the opposite reason. Because Houston had agreed to support another candidate if Jones dropped out, Jones accused him of being a traitor.87 Later in the summer of 1844 Jones wrote that Houston's group did not offer their support until they were sure he was going to win.88

Although many disagreed, according to Jones, his connection with the Houston Administration was not a positive aid in his political victory; as he later stated,

86James Burke to Jones, January 4, 1844, Memoranda, pp. 296-298.

87James Norton to Jones, May 8, 1844, Memoranda, pp. 350-351.

88J. W. Henderson to Jones, June 20, 1844, Memoranda, pp. 365-366.
My nomination and election to the presidency was the spontaneous act of the people of Texas, and without any agency on my part. Party had nothing to do with it, unless those who wished to see the great measure of peace, independence, and annexation, and economical administration of the government measure with which I was fully identified, carried out, might be called a party. The speculators and "war dogs," and some in the West who misunderstood my position on the seat of government question, opposed me, as well as the personal enemies of General Houston generally. I probably lost more than I gained by my association with him. 89

However, contemporaries of Jones as well as later historians failed to agree with Jones's assertion. Frances Richard Lubbock, prominent figure in Texas politics and author of Six Decades in Texas, was convinced that Houston carried a great deal of weight in this election. According to Lubbock, most people of the period believed that Jones would follow the same policies which had been laid down by Houston. Therefore, many voted for Jones because of this widespread belief. 90

Another observer who tended to disprove the theory of Jones was James Morgan, one of the early settlers of Galveston. In a letter to a Samuel Swartout, Morgan wrote the following comments concerning the election of Jones. "Doctor Anson Jones is certainly elected to the Presidency . . . there is no doubt of it . . . though all the returns are not in. . . . He had no popularity of his own . . . rode on old Sam's shadow." 91

89Jones, Memoranda, pp. 265-267.


The British, meanwhile, were keeping abreast of the Texas political situation. Kennedy sent a report in September which summed up political affairs in Texas. He noted that a letter had been written by Houston advocating annexation and that this letter had been published in order to help to elect Jones. Kennedy further claimed that Jones was elected President as a direct result of Kennedy's influence.92 In pursuing the same topic later in the year, Kennedy wrote "The Polk Party or rather Jackson Party are in the ascendant here, as well as in the United States—the new President Mr. Anson Jones, owing his election almost entirely to the support of General Houston."93

Although Jones bitterly charged that Houston had waited until victory was certain before offering help, Houston as early as August 3, 1843, promised his support. At that time Houston wrote,

If anyone is to be preferred by my friends in a contest for the Presidency, I am sure they will concentrate most readily upon a man who has sustained my administration by his exertions and capacity. . . . You can weather the storm in my candid opinion and I can see no reason why my friends cannot rally upon you, as you will most directly represent the principles which they advocate.94


93Kennedy to Aberdeen, December 5, 1844, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XIX (April, 1916), 301-303.

94Houston to Jones, August 3, 1843, Memoranda, pp. 241-242.
In answer to a letter received from friends concerning the presidential election, Houston wrote,

I am not opposed to his election, if I have not been a noisy advocate for his success, it has not been because I did not confide in him. I had confidence in him in the army of 1836 at San Jacinto. As executive, I appointed him Minister to the United States in 1838, I knew him in the Senate for two sessions at Austin. When I was elected President and assumed the duties of the office in 1841, I selected him as the first officer of my cabinet. Since then I have been intimately associated with him. He has concurred in my policy and with distinguished ability he has conducted the foreign relation of the government and I have confidence that if the choice of the people should devolve the duties of the President upon him he would consult the true interest of the country, and that he would endeavor to carry out the policy which he might conceive would best promote its honor and prosperity.95

Like many good politicians, Jones continually denied that he had any personal interest in becoming president. In his Memoranda he wrote that

I have no expectation that the presidential chair will be anything else than one of thorns; nor do I desire the office; and my only object in consenting to take it is to consummate a policy which has already cost me great labor and great sacrifices and thus give peace, security, and happiness to Texas.96

Actually Jones was very much interested in becoming president, but his involvement with Houston took from him much of the glory. Houston was mentioned in many of the notes of congratulations received by Jones. One well-wisher, along with his congratulations, wrote, "The impression here is, that you

95Houston to Citizen's Group, August 5, 1844, Writings of Sam Houston, IV, 354-356.
96Jones, Memoranda, p. 301.
will be led in leading strings by Sam Houston. This I know to be false, that while you will carry out many of the leading features of General Houston's Administration, because this is the true policy, but that your whole movements will be emphatically your own."97 These references to the obvious connection between Houston and Jones were a constant irritation to Jones and probably accounted for some of his bitter denunciations of Houston.

The most important political issue in the presidential campaign of 1844 was the extremely controversial topic--annexation. Although Houston was a valuable asset in any campaign, victory in this case was also dependent upon how well a candidate could cope with the annexation problem. It was necessary for Jones to more or less follow the same middle course that had been established by Houston. Because of the popularity of annexation, Jones had to issue warnings to his anti-annexation friends not to campaign against annexation.

In answer to one of these warnings Judge Norton wrote,

You request me in one of your letters to quit piping against annexation, as that course will ruin us. You cannot be more sensible of this than I am; and I do assure that I have used every effort to prevent Smith taking the course he has, that lay in my power, but without effect.98

Later on February 26, 1844, Judge Norton in a letter to Jones promised

97 Thomas Johnson to Jones, September 20, 1844, Memoranda, pp. 383-384.
98 Norton to Jones, February 14, 1844, Memoranda, p. 311.
... to hold the question of president where it now is until we know where we are. I am willing to agree to an armed neutrality on that matter for sixty days; and I trust that if annexation shall fail, as I fear it may, that our candidate will be able to furnish evidence that it was not owing to any want of friendship to the measure, on his part, or of exertions to effect it.99

Evidently this policy of being extremely vague was practiced by Jones during this political campaign. While keeping the British satisfied that he was firmly on their side in the controversy, Jones was able to convince expansionists such as Duff Green that he was for annexation. In regard to the election Duff Green wrote,

The rumor here today is that Doctor Anson Jones is elected President by a small majority, but this is not a proof that the people are opposed to annexation. On the contrary he and his friends pledge themselves in favor of annexation.100

After the election and the subsequent inauguration, Jones moved from the State Department into the top position of the Texas Government. Although Jones firmly denied that Houston had established the diplomatic and political trends of the Texas Republic, most of the evidence clearly indicated that to this point Houston was the leader and Jones merely followed his lead.

99Norton to Jones, February 26, 1844, Memoranda, p. 322.

100Duff Green to John C. Calhoun, September 27, 1844, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, XII, 368.
CHAPTER III

ANNEXATION VS. INDEPENDENCE

When Anson Jones assumed the presidency of the Republic of Texas, the most vital political issue in the minds of most Americans, Texans, and Mexicans was whether Texas would remain independent or be joined to the United States. Of course, this interest in annexation was certainly not confined to the North American Continent. Because of its obvious importance to Great Britain and France as well as other nations in Europe, each of these nations was involved in different projects to bring about the desired results for their own national interests. Because these interests were in many cases of a conflicting nature, keen competition developed between the various groups involved.

One problem which continued to hang over the fortunes of Texas like a dismal cloud was the continued threat from the south. All during the previous years of the Republic, Mexico had continually refused to agree to the many persuasive British diplomatic endeavors for permanent peace. Many British observers as well as others could see the utmost necessity of solving the tension which had developed between Texas and Mexico. The British were convinced that the only possible way to defeat annexation was to guarantee permanent peace for Texas.

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Although the Mexican threat was a continuing problem, there were changes in the seriousness of the situation. Jones's outward desire for annexation, which was the same as Houston's, seemed to be directly hinged to the intensity of the Mexican threat. For example, during 1843 when peace between the two nations was arranged and an armistice was signed, Jones wrote to Van Zandt the following summary of the situation:

The interposition of foreign friendly governments, by which an armistice has been established between Texas and Mexico, and the prospect of a permanent peace with that power given, has been extended by the particular governments, mostly influential in obtaining these most desirable results chiefly with a view that in the event of Mexico's agreeing to acknowledge the independence of Texas she should continue to exist as a separate and independent nation.¹

Because the Mexicans wanted to re-establish their sovereignty over Texas, hostilities between the two nations were renewed. As a result of this change as well as the overwhelming interest in annexation, Jones completely reversed his instructions to Van Zandt. In this later communique Jones claimed that because of Mexico's attitude, annexation had become "more desirable and necessary to the welfare of Texas than ever."² Of course, after the failure of annexation in 1844, many feared an attack from Mexico. According to Van

¹Jones to Van Zandt, December 13, 1843, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 232-234.

²Jones to Van Zandt, March 26, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 265-266.
Zandt, this fear was unfounded because of Mexico's involvement with other problems. Not only was Mexico having internal troubles but also she was having problems in her foreign relations with the United States, France, and Great Britain.\(^3\)

In spite of the reassurances concerning Mexico that had been given by Van Zandt, Jones and Houston had received information which convinced them that Santa Anna was collecting money and building up his army for an attack on Texas. The United States had promised protection from Mexico in case the annexation treaty was defeated. According to this agreement, T. A. Howard, United States minister, was to have authority to use United States troops. Because Howard was hesitant in using this authority, the Texas officials were so concerned that they even threatened to break off negotiations with the United States.\(^4\) Later Texas was reassured by Calhoun that the United States would offer protection in case of trouble. Mexico was also sent a note concerning this protection of Texas.\(^5\)

By the latter part of 1844 there was almost a complete change in the foreign policy of Mexico. In fact, Texas and

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\(^3\)Van Zandt to Jones, June 18, 1844, *Texas Diplomatic Correspondence*, II, 287.

\(^4\)Jones to Charles H. Raymond, August 6, 1844, *Texas Diplomatic Correspondence*, II, 295-297.

\(^5\)Raymond to Jones, September 12, 1844, *Texas Diplomatic Correspondence*, I, 311.
Mexico seemed to have had a reversal of position between 1842 and late 1844. During the earlier period Mexico had continually refused to accept any reasonable agreement with Texas, but by 1844 and 1845 Texas had become somewhat hesitant in accepting any agreement with Mexico. The British had eventually been successful with Mexico only to discover they had been too late.  

In December, 1844, the warlike Santa Anna was deposed and Herrera became president. Because this new government wanted peace, they were willing to cooperate with Great Britain and France in order to prevent annexation. Terrell reported that Mexico would be willing to recognize Texas if Texas would promise not to join the United States.  

Jones was aware of this favorable situation; therefore, he was eager for Elliot to proceed to Mexico and work out a favorable agreement for Texas. Because both Bankhead and Elliot believed in the sincerity of Jones, they were of the opinion that Texas would not be annexed if Mexico signed the treaty. Although the mission was supposed to have been secret, rumors were floating around which caused the United States to be extremely indignant.

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6Adams, British Interests and Activities in Texas, p. 200.


8Jones To Aberdeen, March 31, 1845, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XX (July, 1916), 83-84.
The United States believed that Great Britain had secret designs on Texas.  

Mexico was not the only nation that continually changed to policies concerning Texas. Similar changes took place in the other nations involved. For example, during the early years of the Republic, Great Britain was extremely hesitant in taking any overt action to promote the continued independence of Texas. This hesitancy was not based on any lack of desire but was the result of the British plan to promote their own commercial interests in Mexico. In 1842 Smith was well aware of the situation and claimed that Texas could not expect help from Great Britain. Of course, this attitude on the part of Great Britain eventually changed.

There were several reasons for British interest in Texas. Primarily this interest was based on the British desire to prevent annexation. One reason that Great Britain was determined to prevent annexation was because of the commercial competition with the United States in the Gulf of Mexico. Another factor that concerned the British was the expansionist tendency of the United States. The British even feared for Mexico's safety because of American expansion efforts. The British also had high hopes that Texas as an independent nation


10Smith to Jones, October 21, 1842, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1389-1390.
would offer tremendous economic opportunities. Although abolitionism was a minor factor in the British anti-annexation feeling, there were some groups in Great Britain who were extremely interested in this phase of the project. These groups did not, however, have the official sanction of the British government.¹¹

The British were certainly not without friends in the Texas government. Most of the Texas officials were either non-committal or vague on the subject, but some were outspoken in their support of the British. According to Kennedy, George Terrell, Texas attorney general, was so much opposed to annexation that he wanted to travel to England in order to work against the project.¹² A significant fact connected to this information was that later in the same month Terrell was made Texas minister to Great Britain.¹³ This appointment would seem to indicate that the Texas Government was either trying to encourage the British or was actually for continued independence. Because of this open encouragement given to Great Britain by the various Texas officials as well as other


¹²Kennedy to Aberdeen, September 9, 1844, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XIX (October, 1915), 204-206.

circumstances, Great Britain refused to give up the idea that annexation could be defeated.

One of the most ambitious endeavors attempted by Great Britain to defeat annexation was usually referred to as the "diplomatic act." Smith in a letter sent June 24, 1844, to Jones explained this so-called "diplomatic act":

The British and French Governments would be willing, if Texas desired to remain independent, to settle this whole matter by a "Diplomatic Act"—this diplomatic act in which Texas would of course participate would ensure peace and settle boundaries between Texas and Mexico, guarantee the separate independence of Texas, etc., etc.;—the American Government would be invited to participate in the "act" as one of the parties guaranteeing etc., equally with the European Governments; that Mexico, as I think I clearly understand his Lordship, would be invited to become a party to the Diplomatic Act, and in case of her refusal, would be forced to submit to its decisions;—and lastly, in case of the infringement of the terms of settlement by either of the parties, to wit, Texas or Mexico, the other parties would be authorized under the Diplomatic Act, to compel the infringing party to compliance with the terms.\(^1\)

Aberdeen was encouraged by Smith's assurances that the treaty had some chance of passing if annexation were defeated. When the United States rejected annexation on June 8, 1844, Houston issued orders to agree to the "diplomatic act." Although Jones claimed he did not carry out this order because he realized it would defeat annexation, the British records indicated that the British refused to be drawn into the treaty after they discovered through their minister, Richard Pakenham,

\[^{1}\text{Smith to Jones, June 24, 1844, }\text{Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1153-1156.}\]
the strong annexation sentiment in the United States. The British realized that obvious efforts against annexation such as the "diplomatic act" could aid the annexationists in the United States presidential election.\textsuperscript{15}

Although France was certainly interested in the Texas question, it was only after much British persuasion that she agreed to work for the recognition of Texas. France was reluctant because of the various inconsistencies in Texas maneuvers. It was not until early in 1845 that France agreed to go along completely with Great Britain in order to prevent the annexation of Texas.\textsuperscript{16}

After the defeat of Clay, the British felt very discouraged over prospects in Texas, but their hopes were revived after reassuring news from Elliot that Jones, the newly elected president of Texas, was still trying to prevent annexation.\textsuperscript{17} However, the British were not overly confident that Jones could or would stem the annexationist tide. Aberdeen did not share the tremendous confidence in Jones that Elliot had. A few days before the United States Congress passed a joint resolution admitting Texas into the Union, Aberdeen in a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{15}Adams, \textit{British Interests and Activities in Texas}, pp. 194-196.
\item \textsuperscript{16}Terrell to Smith, January 21, 1845, \textit{Texas Diplomatic Correspondence}, II, 1170-1173.
\item \textsuperscript{17}Adams, \textit{British Interests and Activities in Texas}, pp. 198-199.
\end{itemize}
letter to Elliot reviewed the events which led to the somewhat dangerous situation for Great Britain. He also wrote:

Under the present state of excitement, the Legislature might be pledged by a rash vote, and thereby force the executive government, and perhaps not altogether against their will into a course of action from which the national pride, if one engaged in it could not easily allow a retreat.18

Because of the obvious problems connected with British diplomatic endeavors, some extremely difficult choices were forced upon the British diplomats. A decision favoring an all out effort for continued Texas independence might lead to diplomatic defeat or bring about war with the United States. A less aggressive course, however, would seem to have even less chance of success by driving Texas into the arms of the United States.

As has been mentioned before, the annexation of Texas was not only a diplomatic question but was deeply entwined in United States politics. Annexationists both in Texas and in the United States were convinced that in order to be successful in their quest for annexation, victory must come both in politics and diplomacy. Even before the defeat of annexation in 1844 the Texas officials were aware of the significant part that American politics would play in the future of Texas. Van Zandt was of the opinion that even if the

18 Aberdeen to Elliot, January 23, 1845, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XX (July, 1916), 50-54.
treaty were rejected, the question would be favorably decided in the presidential election. In reference to this political question Van Zandt wrote:

The question of annexation is creating great excitement here and generally throughout the Union. The fate of the treaty is of course uncertain. The indications are however decidedly against the ratification. Nothing can change the scale but the fear of its controlling and overpowering weight with the people. There is now an evident reaction in public sentiment in favor of annexation, the current which seems to swell as it advances bids fair to sweep down its opponents. 19

Even after the rejection of the annexation treaty, Van Zandt was still convinced that the popularity of the annexation proposal would eventually bring about its passage. Many of the senators who had voted against annexation claimed to be for the proposal at some later date. 20

Moreover, as far as the annexation proposal was concerned, both Van Zandt and Charles H. Raymond, his assistant, believed that the Texas officials would prove more of a hinderance than the United States. Indeed, along with the extremely favorable reports which both men sent to Texas were veiled warnings that if annexation failed it would be the result of activities in Texas and not the United States. For example, on June 13, 1844, Van Zandt sent the following appraisal of the situation:

The indications of popular sentiment in almost every quarter seem favorable to its ultimate success, should

19 Van Zandt to Jones, May 11, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 280-281.

20 Van Zandt to Jones, June 10, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 284-285.
Texas in this country are determined to press the question, unless our Government shall decline its further prosecution. 21

A note of similar sentiment was sent by Raymond, December 4, 1844. According to Raymond, annexation was the great and all-absorbing question of the day in this country. The whole south and a considerable portion of the north are in its favor and determined on its accomplishment. It will be for Texas to say whether she will consent to annexation, and upon what terms. 22

By the spring of 1845 Raymond seemed even more concerned about the situation. He sent a warning to Ebenezer Allen, acting Secretary of State for Texas, that the people of the United States were very critical of the cautious course followed by Jones. He added that they were eager for fast action. 23

The presidential election of 1844 was one of the few United States elections in history that was dependent upon foreign affairs for its major campaign issue. Although the two main leaders of the major political parties had planned to steer clear of the annexation problem, pressure from the annexationist groups brought about the defeat of Van Buren at the Democratic convention and then forced Clay to hedge.

21 Van Zandt to Jones, June 13, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 285-286.

22 Raymond to Jones, December 4, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 323-324.

23 Raymond to Allen, April 30, 1845, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 374-375.
on the Texas issue. Because of the somewhat confused sentiments of Clay and the narrow victory of James K. Polk, the election results could not have been as clear a mandate from the people for annexation as Polk claimed. However, the margin of difference between the beliefs of Polk and Clay indicated that the annexationists were in the majority.\textsuperscript{24}

Although many considered the desire to annex Texas as only a slaveholders' plot to extend slave territory, this was only one element of the overwhelming impulse to annex both Texas and Oregon. Therefore, all other considerations in the election were subservient to this main idea that the United States should expand regardless of consequence.\textsuperscript{25}

Meanwhile political and other forces in Texas were increasing the pressure for annexation. Even under President Lamar, an open spokesman against annexation, the people of Texas continued to favor annexation.\textsuperscript{26} Although any open attempt to defeat annexation would have been politically unwise, some Texas officials seemed to lean in that direction. In fact, there was widespread fear among the people that Jones would probably reject annexation. Indeed this fear was so

\textsuperscript{24}George Rawlings Poage, \textit{Henry Clay and the Whig Party} (Chapel Hill, 1936), p. 151.


\textsuperscript{26}Ibid., pp. 1841-1850.
great that the people of Brazoria, Jones's hometown, held a convention in order to convince Jones that the people wanted annexation.27

From the spring of 1844, when Texas was considering annexation, until the spring of 1845, when Texas was again considering annexation, the foreign policy of Texas seemed to be traveling in several directions simultaneously with little correlation between the various parts of the diplomatic corps. In fact, the common practice apparently was to assign ministers to the various countries and then allow them to conduct affairs with little or no instructions or information from the government. Smith and Van Zandt both complained of this neglect and continually requested information as to what course the government was following. On May 6, 1844, Smith wrote:

I have received no dispatches from America. I have received no dispatches from your department since the meeting of the last Congress. My latest Texian newspapers are of the 16th March. Since the steps which have been taken in Texas relative to annexation, it has appeared to me desirable that I should at my first interview with the Earl of Aberdeen after reaching London, be possessed of the views of our government regarding this subject; and I have accordingly been waiting some time an arrival at Harve hoping it would bring me dispatches and instructions from your Department.28

There are several possible explanations for this lack of action from the State Department. It was possible that Jones believed


28Smith to Jones, May 6, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1483-1485.
his foreign ministers could be more effective if they were not tied down to any definite policy. Likewise, it was possible that Jones for political reasons did not even want his closest friends to know how he stood on the vital issues of the day. Of course, there may also have been the possibility that Jones had no overall plan and was merely carrying out orders from Houston or waiting for other developments.

During this critical period Smith was placed in the somewhat awkward position of having to explain the official diplomatic policy of Texas without proper instructions from his government. When asked why Houston had been so eager to "treat for annexation," Smith replied,

> In a representative government like ours, the wishes of the people clearly and deliberately expressed must be executed; and that the execution of wishes so unanimously expressed as in the matter in question by the members of Congress, in order to be faithful must be prompt.29

Smith made it plain during this conference that the various comments he made were his own and not those of his government.

It was probably during this conference with Aberdeen that Smith helped develop the plans which were later followed by the British and the Texas governments. Smith wrote the following concerning his encouragement to the British:

> I state to his Lordship that in my individual opinion, if a solid, permanent peace were established with Mexico and a treaty of commerce with Spain so as to enable us to trade with Cuba, Texas might prefer to remain independent; that if the British and French governments

29 Raymond to Jones, June 5, 1844, Memoranda, pp. 359.
would say authoritatively to Mexico you must forthwith make a solid and permanent peace with Texas, that Mexico would do so, and that the annexation of Texas to the American Union might not take place.  

Although the British were somewhat hesitant, they eventually followed this advice which was given by Smith. Later in the month of June, Smith wrote Jones concerning this same situation. In this correspondence Smith, with very little official aid, outlined the policy that Jones later claimed as his own. In explaining these diplomatic endeavors Smith wrote, "On no occasion have I expressed opinions counter to annexation;--my purpose has been to stimulate this government to a more vigorous employment of their influence with Mexico to obtain peace for Texas." 

After the rejection of annexation in the summer of 1844, many friends of the proposal in Texas became somewhat weak in their support of the measure. This situation caused Great Britain to regain some of her lost hope while pro-annexation forces in the United States realized they would be forced to campaign with renewed vigor in order to assure annexation. Consequently, in order to better promote the cause of the annexationists, Andrew Jackson Donelson, the nephew and ex-private secretary of Andrew Jackson, was sent 

30Ibid., p. 360.

31Smith to Jones, June 18, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1152-1153.

32Lubbock, Six Decades in Texas, p. 159.
to Texas as charge d'affaires of the United States in Texas. His primary mission was to sell the people of Texas on annexation. Because of his practical political experience as well as his connection with "Old Hickory," he was eminently qualified to carry out his mission.

According to Donelson the people of Texas had not lost their desire to become part of the United States. In one of his reports to Calhoun he wrote the following assessment of the relationship between the two countries:

It gives me pleasure to say to you that the tone of feeling manifested by the most prominent of the citizens of Texas I have yet met with is that of cordial friendship and good will to the United States; and I have no reason to apprehend that a different feeling animates the government, although some of its late appointments and particularly that of General Terrell would seem to warrant some distrust.

By early December Donelson's suspicions concerning Jones and the Texas government had increased to the point where he believed that Jones had made a definite advance toward Great Britain. However, Donelson firmly believed that annexation would not be affected by unfavorable action on the part of the president but that the people of Texas would decide the course of action.

33Kennedy to Aberdeen, October 12, 1844, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XIX (January, 1916), 296-298.

34Andrew J. Donelson to Calhoun, November 11, 1844, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, XV, 371-372.

35Annie Middleton, "Donelson's Mission to Texas in Behalf of Annexation," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XXIV (April, 1921), 256-257.
Surprisingly, Donelson's appraisal of the Texas situation was very similar to that of Elliot, his British counterpart. Although Elliot was prone to be slightly more optimistic concerning British success, he was nevertheless deeply concerned about the desire of the Texas people for annexation. Furthermore, Elliot also believed that Jones favored the British rather than the United States. According to Elliot, Jones and Allen, his attorney general, both declared that Texas "would abandon all thought of annexation to the United States if they could be formally certified of the recognition of their Independence by Mexico." Elliot further explained his confidence in Jones when he wrote the following to Aberdeen concerning the expressed convictions of the Texas government:

I believe that these are the sincere convictions of this government, and if the Independence of the country were recognized by Mexico and it consisted with the power of this administration to direct or control the subsequent course of the people of Texas, it is no doubt highly probable that the idea of annexation would soon be firmly replaced by wiser and more becoming principles.

Of course, Elliot still realized that the Texas people would actually decide the question.

Another American who actively supported the course toward annexation in Texas was Duff Green, United States consul for the Port of Galveston. Most of this agitation on the part of Green was based on selfish, not patriotic, motives. He was

36 Elliot to Aberdeen, December 10, 1844, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XIX (April, 1916), 405-407.

37 Ibid., pp. 405-407.
involved in several land schemes that caused him to lose favor with the Texas government. Eventually, because of threats and insults to Jones, Green was issued a passport and ordered to leave the country.38 Green not only had accused Jones of allowing Elliot to form Texas foreign policy, but he also had threatened to overthrow Houston if Houston refused to help him carry out his scheme. Donelson was informed by the Texas secretary of state that Green's credentials were being revoked because of the various money making schemes in which he had been engaged. Some of these schemes involved the use of federal troops to drive the Indians from Texas while others involved bribes of government officials. One of his plans called for the organization of an army to capture northern Mexico and California for Texas.39 Probably one of the primary effects of Green's activities was to plant doubts concerning Jones's desire for annexation in both the United States and Texas.

Although Jones was extremely hesitant in promoting any definite cause, some of his appointees were strong in their support of the British. For example, George Terrell, Texas minister to Great Britain, carried on a constant campaign against annexation. As has been mentioned earlier, it was his appointment to this position that had brought about so

38 Jones, Memoranda, pp. 412-413.

39 Elliot to Aberdeen, January 3, 1845, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XIX (April, 1916), 419-420.
much distrust of Jones and his administration. While in Great Britain, Terrell managed to gain promises from the British concerning non-interference with slavery and trade concessions for Texas.\(^4\) Of course, his vigorous campaign against annexation brought about repercussions in Texas. Because of the overwhelming sentiment for annexation in the Texas Congress, Terrell and Reily, Jones's choice for minister to the United States, were rejected by the Texas Senate.\(^4\) In regard to his rejection Terrell wrote,

> The very handsome manner in which the intelligence is conveyed on the part both of his excellency the President and the Secretary of State however strips the mortification which I should otherwise feel, of much of its poignancy.\(^4\)

Evidently Terrell believed that the administration was still firmly opposed to annexation, therefore Jones was certainly not responsible for his rejection.

Although Jones seemed to be especially apt at remaining neutral while allowing others in the government to take a positive course, there is strong evidence indicating that Jones was active in his encouragement to the British. According to information which Elliot had received, both Jones and

\(^4\) Terrell to Smith, February 13, 1845, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1177-1181.

\(^4\) Kennedy to Aberdeen, February 25, 1845, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XX (July, 1916), 72-73.

\(^4\) Terrell to Smith, May 3, 1845, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1183.
Smith were convinced that the people of Texas would reject annexation if independence were guaranteed. Jones was also eager to work out a trade agreement with Great Britain concerning sugar production because the pro-annexationist group had used sugar production grants as one of their foremost arguments for joining the Union. Elliot was of the opinion that Texas was unsuitable for the production of sugar. Elliot was convinced that the only reason the government leaders did not take a stronger stand against annexation was because of the strong popular support for the issue. Also, because of the rejection of Terrell and Reily, he believed that the Texas Congress was also for annexation. Because of this situation Elliot believed that "several leading men are only waiting for an opportunity and will probably declare themselves against it decisively, and energetically as soon as they think they can do so without mischief to their popularity." 

By March, 1845, the tide was definitely shifting more and more for annexation. Many mass meetings were being held for the purpose of promoting annexation. While Donelson was doing all in his power to encourage this growing popular feeling in Texas, he was certainly not neglecting the Texas

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43 Elliot to Aberdeen, March 6, 1845, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XX (July, 1916), 75-80.

44 Elliot to Aberdeen, February 8, 1845, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XX (July, 1916), 60-63.
leaders. Donelson was actively working with the leaders in order to gain their support for annexation. When he held a conference with Jones, he was unable to obtain a favorable report from Jones concerning annexation. Jones was evasive and refused to reveal his own stand on the subject of annexation. In fact, because many of his friends were concerned about his silence on the subject and his lack of action, they sent him information concerning the eagerness of the people for annexation.

Although Jones personally expressed to the British a desire for continued independence, Raymond, his agent in Washington, claimed he was for annexation. In answer to a question from the United States president concerning the acceptance of annexation, Raymond replied that he entertained no doubts that both the government and people would accept annexation. Of course, later after the culmination of annexation when Jones was pressured by political ambition and had gained the advantage of hindsight, he was no longer vague but was unequivocal in his praise of annexation.

Although Jones was certainly involved in the various intrigues which helped shape the destiny of Texas, he was


46 Jones, Memoranda, pp. 442-443.

47 Raymond to Ebenezer Allen, May 19, 1845, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 377-378.
never the real master of the situation. Whereas many gained high positions as a result of dynamic leadership, Jones was successful because he was considered by the people of Texas to be a cautious conservative person that would follow the policy of Houston. By the time Jones had assumed the office of president, many of the problems of Texas had already been solved and the ultimate outcome of the annexation question was considered by many to have been all but settled. In attempting to follow Houston's procedure of encouraging one side and then the other Jones lacked the political aptitude necessary for such a course. Although the plan was eventually successful, the political future of Jones was destroyed.

While there was a combination of factors involved in determining the diplomatic policies of Texas, in the final analysis the question of annexation had to be settled by the people.
ANNEXATION ACHIEVED

Although by the early spring of 1845 most of the anti-annexation forces realized that success for their cause was highly unlikely, many of these ardent anti-annexationists continued to work against odds in an attempt to bring about a situation where Texans would desire continued independence. While many of these enthusiasts were stimulated by selfish motives, others were sincere in their patriotic endeavors for continued independence. Some, like George Terrell, were thoroughly convinced that as an independent nation Texas would rise to greatness. In discussing this possibility Terrell informed Jones that if Texas were not blind to her own interest she may, within the next three years—yes, my dear Doctor, during your present term of service, she may become one of the most prosperous little communities on the face of the globe. I pray heaven in its mercy, and our rulers in their wisdom, to avert the evil of annexation, with all its dire calamities, insignificance, degradation, oblivion and annihilation which must follow in its train.¹

Of course, most of the open enemies of annexation were foreign officials or their representatives. While the British through their able diplomat, Charles Elliot, were most diligent in their activities against annexation, the French were extremely

¹Terrell to Jones, January 21, 1845, Memoranda, pp. 415-416.
hesitant concerning this involvement. The French were convinced that any obvious action against annexation would bring about a hostile attitude toward France in the United States. Although the British were also concerned with the same problem, they were more willing to gamble on their ultimate success.

Arrayed against these foes of annexation was a variety of forces which were involved ultimately in the consummation of annexation. Although there was subsequent controversy among participants concerning the relative importance of their work for annexation, most agreed that the major factor involved was the tremendous public interest in the question. Several United States ministers wrote of the desire of Texas to be annexed to the United States. For example, in August, 1844, Howard, United States minister to Texas, wrote to Calhoun that he had "found a very general sentiment prevailing in favor of annexation." Donelson, Howard's replacement, sent even more encouraging news from Texas. In December of 1844 he sent the following observation to Calhoun:

In a short time I doubt not the forces of this affection will be strong enough to place the question of annexation on as good a footing in Texas as it has ever occupied.

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3Howard to J. C. Calhoun, August 3, 1844, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, XII, 359.
so strong indeed that no leading men in the Republic would hazard an opposition to it. 4

Both friend and foe of annexation gave evidence of this view concerning the public pressure which was placed on the administration of Jones.

While many wrote encouraging Jones to take action in order to bring Texas into the Union, anti-annexationists had difficulty in explaining the position of Jones to the British. In answer to questions concerning pro-annexation action of Texas, Terrell explained,

that our government, both theoretically and practically, was emphatically the government of the people; hence even her rulers could not at all times act upon their own convictions of national policy, as to his information in regard to the sentiments and to the conduct of our new President. 5

In regard to Jones, Terrell assured the British

that the object at present, of both the late and present presidents, was to keep down excitement on the subject; to lead the people to believe they were to rely upon themselves; to keep the present Congress from being hurried into any imprudent action on the subject; that if both the Texas and United States Congresses adjourned without doing anything with the matter, we could in the meantime, before they would assemble again, carry out the measure now in progress in this country; that if our people saw a certain prospect of the recognition of our independence by Mexico without further molestation, there was a strong probability they might declare in favor of a separate national government. 6

Terrell and Jones both were aware of the political problems involved in taking a course that was so against the desires

4Donelson to Calhoun, December 5, 1844, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, XII, 378-381.
5Jones, Memoranda, pp. 422-430. 6Ibid., pp. 422-430.
of the people. On April 9, 1845, Francis R. Lubbock sent information to Jones to the effect that a large majority of Texas citizens were for annexation. He also asked Jones to use his influence in order to bring about annexation. According to Lubbock, if Jones would use his influence for the course, he would receive "merit and praise of having consummated one of the greatest political achievements on record and instead of receiving the thanks of 15,000 people, that of 14,000,000." A few days later Jones received a similar note from W. B. Ochiltree, a popular politician who later ran for governor of Texas. Because of the excitement on the subject of annexation, he advised Jones to lose no time in calling congress into special session.

Because of this overwhelming public support for annexation, the British, by late spring and summer, had little hope left that they could prevent annexation. On July 3, 1845, Aberdeen wrote, "his majesty's government sees no reason to entertain any sanguine hope that the President of Texas will be able to resist the popular clamor for annexation." Consequently, the decision to join the United States was not in the hands of Jones or his officials but was a decision which had to be made by the people, a people that for several years had been almost unanimous in their desire for annexation.

7 Lubbock to Jones, April 9, 1845, Memoranda, pp. 445-446.
8 Ochiltree to Jones, April 11, 1845, Memoranda, p. 450.
9 Adams, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XX (July, 1845), 189-191.
Although James K. Polk had been elected in 1844, John Tyler was in office until March, 1845. It was his desire to bring Texas into the Union before he left office. Since it was thought impossible to overcome enough of the opposition in the senate to have a two-thirds majority vote to pass a treaty, it was decided to bring Texas into the Union with a joint resolution. The resolution passed the House of Representatives in January 25, 1845, by a vote of one hundred twenty to ninety. A month later the senate passed the same resolution by a vote of twenty-seven to twenty-five. Tyler signed the resolution on March 1, 1845, only a short time before his term ended.

After the adoption of the joint resolution by the United States, the British realized that more drastic measures would have to be taken if their campaign to defeat annexation had any chance of success. Both Charles Elliot and Alphonso de Saligny, the French minister, went to Washington on the Brazos in order to prevent or delay Texas acceptance of the proposition. At this time Jones and Secretary of State Smith told them that they personally were for continued independence but that the country clamored for annexation. At this meeting Smith signed an agreement with the British and French which guaranteed that Texas would not enter into any negotiations to annex herself to any other nation for ninety days.10

10Ibid., pp. 208-211.
Considering the public pressure which was placed on the Texas administration, this was a diplomatic victory for the British and French. Preliminary conditions for a treaty of peace with Mexico were also devised at this meeting. The four main points included in this document were: Mexico would acknowledge the independence of Texas; Texas would not annex herself to any country; limits and other conditions would be decided in the final treaty; and Texas would agree to have all disputed points decided by arbitration.\textsuperscript{11}

Of course, Elliot was still very much aware of the pro-annexation feeling in Texas. On April 2, 1845, Elliot wrote that Texas was deeply committed to the course of annexation but that both Smith and Jones were against the proposition. It was Elliot's opinion that Jones could be depended on to delay the calling of congress.\textsuperscript{12} Evidently Elliot was right; Jones delayed as long as was feasible.

After news of the United States' annexation proposition had spread to the Texas people, tremendous pressure was put on Jones to take action. When Donelson met with Jones in April, he was confident that the public pressure was so great that Jones would be forced to accede to the people's will. By the middle of April, Jones had promised Donelson he would

\textsuperscript{11} Jones, Memoranda, p. 473.

\textsuperscript{12} Elliot to Aberdeen, April 2, 1845, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, XX (July, 1916), 84-91.
not stand in the way of annexation but would allow the people to decide the question. Jones issued a call for congress to meet on June 16, thus giving the British and French two more months to complete their negotiations in Mexico.  

Because the people of Texas were so disturbed over this delaying action, they were ready to convene with or without a call from Jones. Many were not satisfied with a call for congress to reconvene but were so eager to accept annexation that many areas planned to send delegates to a convention in May. This decisive action forced Jones to issue a proclamation calling for the election of delegates to meet in a convention called for July 4, 1845. Although this date allowed sufficient time for the news from Mexico to reach Texas, Terrell was concerned because the agitation for annexation was so strong. However, he made it very clear to the British that Jones, if at all possible, would resist the pressure to call the convention early.  

In late May, Count de Saligny sent word to Jones that Mexico had agreed to the terms previously worked out by Great Britain, France and Texas. Jones expressed his feelings concerning this information when he wrote the following endorsement of this letter: "I have it now. Eureka! -- annexation and

13Donelson to Buchanan, April 16, 1845, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, XII, 403-404.
15Terrell to Smith, May 9, 1845, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1190-1192.
Others in the United States and Texas were not so pleased with this diplomacy. Donelson was convinced that Jones had attempted to create an issue in order to defeat annexation. Donelson claimed:

The disclosures already made are creating the belief that it was the design of President Jones to defeat annexation, no matter in what form presented by the United States: and that he will not have it in his power to say that he recommends the acceptance and ratification of our joint resolution without disappointing the British government and misleading Mexico greatly to her injury.\textsuperscript{17}

According to Ebenezer Allen, acting Secretary of State, the desire for annexation was so great that Elliot's mission actually caused little excitement in Texas. Allen advised Jones to avoid blame by offering both annexation and independence to the people. Apparently Jones agreed with this neutrality policy.\textsuperscript{18} While the British were extremely pleased with the actions taken by Jones, claiming that he had acted with "courage, honor and prudence," the United States agents were extremely suspicious and hostile toward Jones.\textsuperscript{19} Donelson wrote that the delay brought about by Jones not only would

\textsuperscript{16}Count de Saligny to Jones, May 19, 1845, \textit{Memoranda}, pp. 463-464.

\textsuperscript{17}Donelson to Buchanan, May 22, 1845, \textit{Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States}, XII, 416-417.

\textsuperscript{18}Allen to Jones, June 1, 1845, \textit{Memoranda}, pp. 466-467.

\textsuperscript{19}Elliot to Aberdeen, June 12, 1845, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," \textit{The Southwestern Historical Quarterly}, XX (October, 1916), 176-177.
cause war with Mexico but had already given the Mexicans a great advantage in case of war.20

Although the Texas Congress in its special session in June accepted with a unanimous vote the annexation proposal, Texas still had problems which had to be settled. The convention which had been called by Jones and approved by the Texas Congress met July 4, 1845, and voted fifty-five to one for annexation, unanimously signed an ordinance for annexation and after two months' work unanimously adopted a state constitution. The relationship between Jones and this convention was rather strained. Because of the widespread distrust of Jones, some of the delegates advocated the establishment of a provisional government until the annexation would become final in 1846. Jones received several letters asking him to appear at the convention in order to calm the radical group. However, Jones refused to attend the convention and claimed he stayed away to prove he was not frightened.21

Jones was also of the opinion that the convention was exceeding its authority by assuming part of the power of the existing government. William D. Lee was sent on September 6, 1845, as Texas minister to the United States. The United States was hesitant in receiving him because they believed that Texas was part of the United States. Lee informed the

20Donelson to Buchanan, June 4, 1845, Diplomatic Correspondence Concerning Texas, XII, 424-425.

21Irion to Jones, July 29, 1845, Memoranda, pp. 480-481.
United States government that by assuming that the convention was the government of Texas they were encouraging revolution. He also mentioned the fact that United States troops had been sent into Texas while Texas was still an independent nation. In this connection he even warned that there was a possible chance for impeachment of the United States president. 22 Since nothing serious developed from this disagreement, on October 13 the people of Texas ratified the new constitution as well as the annexation proposition. After congress approved the Texas Constitution, Polk signed the resolution admitting Texas into the Union, although the new state government of Texas was not inaugurated until February 16, 1846.

22W. D. Lee to Jones, September 6, 1845, Memoranda, pp. 485-490.
CHAPTER V

ASSESSMENT

Because the people of Texas were convinced that Jones had deliberately delayed annexation in order to promote British interests and defeat annexation, they turned their back on his further political ambitions, though he continued to hope that some day he would regain his lost prestige. In order to accomplish this feat as well as free his name from the stigma which had been attached, Jones wrote and published his Memoranda. In writing this book Jones not only exposed all the bitterness that he had withheld for many years, but he also presented a lengthy personal defense.

In answer to charges that he was opposed to annexation, Jones wrote that he could have silenced all clamor, and defeated the hopes of demagogues, if I had consented to violate my faith towards France and England; and, by leading in the excitement, have been the most popular man in Texas. But by so doing the measure might have been defeated. The faith and honor of the nation would certainly have been violated--the position of the country lowered to that of a suppliant--the recipient instead of the dispenser of a favor, and the promises of ultimate advantages to Texas by the United States would not have been obtained.¹

He further claimed that it had been his duty not only to place before the people of Texas the choice of independence or

¹Jones, Memoranda, p. 63.
annexation, but that in doing so it was also his duty to remain neutral. However, Jones did admit that he might have sympathized a little with the loser since he was certain that the people would choose annexation.² He also admitted that at times he would claim to be for one group then the other, depending upon the circumstances. According to Jones, he had worked for both ideas all during his term as Secretary of State as well as during his term as president.³ In further discussion of the forces which eventually brought about annexation, Jones claimed that he had encouraged interference from the European powers in order to "arouse the slumbering jealousies of the people of the United States." Another claim made by Jones concerning annexation was that Andrew Jackson had not played a major role in annexation but that "the prime part was played by Texas herself."⁴

During the period when annexation proceedings were in progress, one of the disagreements which took place between Jones and the United States concerned the subject of United States protection of Texas. In fact, Jones changed his ideas concerning this topic between the fall of 1844 and the spring of 1845. On October 16, 1844, Jones wrote,

The subject of most pressing and immediate importance, is that of the aid and protection to be rendered this country by the United States in the event of a

²Jones, Memoranda, pp. 66-67. ³Ibid., pp. 73-76. ⁴Ibid., p. 80.
resumption of active hostilities by Mexico, under the pledges and assurances given.5

Later, after Jones assumed the office of president, he claimed that "Texas never actually needed the protection of the United States after I came into office; and the protection so much talked about at this late period was all a trick, so far as the United States was concerned."6 Jones was convinced that troops were sent in as part of Polk's policy to start war with Mexico.7

Because of Jones's secretive attitude, it was difficult for even his friends to discover exactly which cause, if any, he was supporting. In regard to annexation most Texans believed Jones was either indifferent or opposed to the measure. Several years later when Jones was seeking a place in the United States Senate and needed to free himself of the anti-annexation stigma, he pointed to his failure to carry out the diplomatic act of 1844 as instructed by Houston as evidence that he was for annexation. However, there were several conflicting versions concerning the diplomacy which had been involved in this action. Almost all the men that had been personally connected with Jones during that period disagreed with his arguments. Indeed, Jones himself either changed his own ideas on the subject or he decided for political

5Jones to Reily, October 16, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 315-316.
6Jones, Memoranda, p. 53. 7Ibid., pp. 46-47.
reasons to stay out of the controversy altogether. In a letter written August 1, 1844, to Smith, Jones gave evidence that he was in favor of the diplomatic act of that year. He wrote:

Should either England or France separately or both powers conjointly be disposed to make any offers to guarantee to Texas a trace of convenient form and duration, or freedom from further molestation by Mexico, or an acknowledgment of our separate independence by that power, based upon assurances from this government of maintaining that separate independence, and upon reciprocal commercial privileges and advantages, it is the wish of this government that their representatives here should be instructed at the earliest day possible on this subject and fully empowered to conclude the necessary arrangements for carrying these purposes into immediate effect.8

It is noted, therefore, that Jones indicated no opposition to the diplomatic act prior to his victory in the September, 1844, presidential election. Although he did not take office until December, undoubtedly his victory influenced his change of course. In late September, after receiving instructions from Houston to carry out the proposed arrangements, he refused to comply. On the back of the original instruction Jones placed the following endorsement:

The within order cannot be obeyed for it would either defeat annexation altogether, or lead to a war between Europe and America. Besides it would directly complicate our relations and entangle us with France and England--produce disturbances and revolution at home and probably render it very difficult if not impossible for me to administer the government of Texas successfully--General Houston has furnished no explanation of his motives for this course of policy.9

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8Jones to Smith, August 1, 1844, Texas Diplomatic Correspondence, II, 1160-1161.

9Houston to Jones, September 24, 1844, Writings of Sam Houston, IV, 311-312.
Jones also discussed at length in his Memoranda his actions concerning the diplomatic act. He explained that he prevented the defeat of annexation by refusing to follow Houston's instructions concerning the diplomatic act. Because of a continual growth of political disagreements, he decided in 1848 to expose Houston's desire for Texas to remain a republic.

In January, 1849, he wrote:

I also resolved to keep the order a secret, so far as the public generally was concerned and only showed it in confidence to some few persons, but when he joined the "free soil party," in his vote with Mr. Benton on the Oregon Bill, I became satisfied of his unfaithfulness to Texas, and felt no longer at liberty to withhold from the people so important a fact with respect to his course on the subject of annexation.  

In answer to this charge made by Jones, Houston in a letter to the editors of the National Intelligencer wrote that a possible advantage could have resulted "for Texas if the order had been carried out." Of course, as has been mentioned, according to the British records the decision was not left to Jones but was one made by the British to drop the subject.

Another agent, Ashbel Smith, who was personally involved with the diplomatic act added still another explanation of why Jones disobeyed Houston. In a speech delivered to the Galveston Historical Society in 1876, Smith claimed that Jones

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10Jones, Memoranda, pp. 43-45.

11Houston to the Editors of the National Intelligencer, January 1, 1848, Writings of Sam Houston, V, 28-29.

12Adams, British Interests and Activities in Texas, 1838-1846, p. 201.
refused to carry out the diplomatic act because he wanted to make it part of his own policy. He further claimed that because the forces for annexation were so powerful, annexation would not have been defeated even if the diplomatic act had been carried out.\(^{13}\) Therefore, it is evident that the various diplomats involved in the events surrounding the diplomatic act were not in agreement with Jones concerning his supposedly important role in its eventual failure.

In 1857, after being all but neglected by the Texas politicians, Jones was asked to consider the Senate. Jones made the reply:

I have made it an invariable rule never to seek office, and on the other hand never to decline it when there appeared to me to be a necessity for my accepting public trust, as was the case in my view of the matter from 1835 to 1846. . . . I sincerely regret that circumstances have recently arisen and do now unfortunately exist in the public affairs of the country, which will no longer permit me to decline a call of my fellow citizens to serve them, should such a call be made upon me.\(^{14}\)

Although Jones certainly encouraged the political leaders to accept him as a candidate, the call he so eagerly awaited never came.

Partly because of his political affiliations and partly because he had grown steadily more vengeful, Jones's attacks against Houston grew in intensity. Much of this resentful feeling on the part of Jones can be traced to the extreme jealousy which Jones felt for Houston's tremendous popularity.

\(^{13}\)Ashbel Smith, *Reminiscences of the Texas Republic* (Galveston, 1876), pp. 61-65.

However, this bitterness did not fully develop until long after the annexation question had been settled. In connection with the political activities of the pre-Civil War period, Jones worked with the anti-Houston group by writing a summary of their relationship. According to Jones, his estimation of Houston varied; but from 1842 they "gradually drifted apart, until in 1848 when he joined the free-soil party, they separated forever." Jones claimed that Houston was so selfish that he tried to ruin his administration and "failing in this, to appropriate to himself the credit" for all the acts carried out by Jones while he was Secretary of State and President of Texas. In fact, Jones became so bitter about his relationship with Houston that he changed the name of his first child from Sam Houston to Samuel Edwards. In reference to Houston's ambition and character Jones wrote that Houston's first and greatest object has been office and political distinction. In fact, he has lived and acted for these alone. He possessed in perfection the art of appropriating all the merit of the good deeds of his associates, and of shifting on to them the odium of his own bad ones.

Houston apparently did not possess the animosity toward Jones that Jones had for him. Houston even suggested to Terrell that Jones be his running mate for the senate. He also expressed the belief that instead of harming Jones, his actions on annexation "would eventually be of service rather than

16Ibid., pp. 253-254. 17Ibid., p. 69.
an injury."18 When Jones took office as president, Houston was extremely complimentary in his congratulatory message.19

From the end of his political career until his death, Jones continued to claim that annexation had been accomplished "in direct opposition" to the policy of Houston.20 However, there is little evidence that their policies were basically different in any way. Both admitted that they encouraged the anti-annexationists as well as the annexationists. In answer to his critics Houston wrote that "there had been only one feasible plan to attain the desired object, and that was to excite jealousy and alarm on the part of the politicians and people of the United States, in relation to the future commercial and political connection of Texas with European nations."21 This answer was precisely the same that had been given by Jones in defense of his own actions.

According to contemporaries who actively worked with both Jones and Houston, there was very little difference between the policies of the two men. For example, Charles Elliot, a man who had not only reached the rank of captain by the age of twenty-seven and eventually became an admiral but also had been involved in the diplomacy which had gained Hong Kong for

18 Terrell to Jones, December 30, 1845, Memoranda, p. 507.
19 Houston to Jones, December 21, 1844, Memoranda, pp. 409-410.
20 Jones, Memoranda, p. 69.
21 Houston to F. L. Hatch, July 18, 1847, The Writings of Sam Houston, V, 14-18.
Great Britain, was convinced that under either Jones or Houston, British interest would be protected. When annexation eventually came, Elliot explained to Aberdeen that both men went as far as they could to secure independence. He maintained that the people through political pressure forced Jones and Houston to accept annexation. Although Elliot was described by some as a political dreamer, he was no more visionary than many others involved in Texas diplomacy. Actually he apparently had a rather clear conception of the many factors which were involved in the diplomacy surrounding annexation.

It was always the contention of Anson Jones that in his position as Secretary of State he, not Houston, determined foreign policy. This idea was refuted by contemporaries of both men. Frances R. Lubbock, later Civil War governor of Texas, claimed that after the United States rejected annexation, Houston's policy was to wait and allow the United States to make the next move. It was Lubbock's contention that Jones followed this policy which had been formulated


23Elliot to Aberdeen, January 26, 1846, "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXI (July, 1917), 94-95.

by Houston.25 Ashbel Smith, one of the leading diplomats, if not the leading diplomat, of the Texas Republic, re-emphasized this argument when he claimed that

Houston stood a giant of power in the land--he stood by President Jones and on his strong arm Mr. Jones visibly leaned for support. President Jones's administration was in all its leading policy a continuation of the preceding administration of President Houston.26

Although Jones spent the greater part of his last years working out a defense in his own behalf, he was never able to regain his lost popularity or the confidence of the people. The Texas people were never satisfied with his explanations concerning his actions on the annexation question. Although he strongly denied that he had any anti-annexation tendencies, his actions indicated that, like his predecessor, he would have been more than pleased for Texas to have remained an independent nation. Swayed by irrepressible forces he did what was necessary to stop the clamor, but too late to save his own political future.

25Lubbock, Six Decades in Texas (Austin, 1900), pp. 155-156.

26Ashbel Smith, Reminiscences of the Texas Republic, p. 69.
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