

New Orleans, 8<sup>th</sup> April 1853

Mr. Caleb Cushing

Dear Sir

As certain facts having an important bearing on the subject of our relations with Mexico have come to my knowledge since my arrival here and as I deem it a matter of public duty that they should be made known at Washington I have thought it proper to address you this letter in continuation of the history of the Tehuantepec affair which I gave you in our interview at Washington -

I have ascertained that Mr. Sloo's agent in Mexico drew his two bills on Mr. Sloo each for \$150,000 at 60 and 90 days' sight which he endeavored to negotiate in order to raise the \$300,000 which by the terms of the grant were to be paid in cash on the signature of the Contract. That being unable to negotiate these bills some Mexican and British capitals advanced the money which was paid through the banking house of Jackson & Co. on a transfer to them, by way of security, of the title to the grant; this transfer to become indefensible in the event of the dishonor of the bills - These arrangements were all made with the approval of the Mexican Government -

The bills have been dishonored! The protests for non-acceptance have been sent to Mexico: the first of the two will be protested for non-payment on the 24<sup>th</sup> inst

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as it is known that no funds will be here to meet it - The whole Contract thus passes into foreign hands and this is effected with a Court Contempt for the position assumed by our Government, that the most powerful nation on earth would long hesitate to evince -

But what is totally inconceivable is the news which reached here yesterday that Mr. Conkling, who must know these facts, has made a treaty for the protection of these foreign holders of the Sloc grant, not only without authority but almost in violation of the very letter of his instructions which were shown to me by the State Department last year -

It seems to me that nothing can more urgently demand the attention of the Executive than this very important subject, and your character reputation and position are such as to assure me that you will act with promptness and efficiency in bringing it to the notice of the President.

I am very resp<sup>ly</sup>  
Yours  
J. P. Benjamin