

## William Charles Cole Claiborne to Andrew Jackson, August 21, 1814, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

New Orleans, August 21, 1814.

*Dear Sir,* The report of *an armistice* alluded to in my last, not being confirmed, is now generally discredited.

Contrary to what I had anticipated, the Battalion of free men of Colour have not acted *today* , with their accustomed propriety. The great majority were absent from Parade, and much discontent is said to prevail. The officers have assured me, that this discontent is local, or rather of a personal nature, and not directed against the Government. I however strongly suspect, that some Spanish or English agent has made injurious impressions on the minds of these people; but the subject shall be fully probed, and the result communicated to you; for charged as you are Sir, with the defence of the 7th Mil. Dist. in which Louisiana is included, I shall consider myself wanting in duty, not to keep you advised of every occurrence which may in any manner affect the safety of this State.

The Pirates and Smugglers who have so long infested the shores of Baratavia (in this vicinity) are still in force and, in the daily violation of all laws human and divine. The Legislature of Louisiana, not having furnished me the means (which I so earnestly solicited) of directing a militia Expedition against this *Banditti* , it is left for the United States to *destroy or disperse them* . I have recently addressed a communication *upon* this subject to Colo. Ross of the 44th Regt., and to Capt. Patterson the naval commander on this Station. These gentlemen seem disposed to act with effect, and a combined effort by water and land is in contemplation.

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It would seem that nothing was wanting to make Pensacola an English Garrison, but rearing the English flag. I am informed and believe, that Indians in British uniforms and under English officers, work daily on the fortifications, mount guard regularly, and patrol the streets at night. Is all this no infringement of the rights of neutrality? Is it admissible for a beaten enemy to retreat to a neutral territory, and there refresh himself and make the necessary preparations to recommence hostilities? If I mistake not, the writers on the laws of Nations answer in the negative—and state positively, that under such circumstances, it is lawful *to pursue and destroy your Enemy* : Of one thing I am assured, that such is the doctrine which common reason approves, and I shall be greatly disappointed, if you do not soon receive orders, to advance toward Pensacola.

Genl. Brown appears to have conducted a well fought action in Canada, 1 and if our fleet on Ontario should prove successful, all will yet be well in that quarter.

1 Chippewa or Lundy's Lane.e

It seems to be well understood, that King Ferdinand and his army are at war with the Cortez and their adherents. This may prevent Spain from turning her arms against the United States, for if all her energies should be equal to the *quelling of the dissentions at home* , I much doubt and sincerely hope *they may not be commensurate* to the reduction of the revolted provinces. The Bourbons, assisted as they lately have been by fortune, are not (I suspect) destined to repose on beds of roses. The reign of Louis the 18th promises to be tempestuous and late accounts indicate the renewal of hostilities between France and the allies, as an event by no means improbable.

I am Sir, with respect and Esteem, Yr. Hum'le Sevt.