

Louis McLane to Daniel N. Pope, 7 May 1834

*Mr. McLane to Mr. Pope.*

Department of State,

*Washington*

*May 7, 1834.*

Sir:

Copies of letters containing charges of a serious nature, brought against you as consul of the United States, by Aaron Leggett, were transmitted, some time since, from this Department to Colonel Butler, who was instructed to make inquiry into the case, and report upon it; but no answer having arrived, I have caused duplicates to be sent to Colonel Butler, with renewed instructions to proceed in the examination.

Mr. Leggett has again complained at great length, and copies of his charges will immediately be forwarded to Colonel Butler, with instructions similar to those already given; and you are called upon to furnish a full explanation to your Government of these charges, which, in substance, are as follows:

1st. That you countenanced and secretly encouraged the commandant, commissary general, and collector of Tabasco, to exercise unlawful powers, in threatening to seize and appropriate specie dollars, the property of an American citizen, to the use of their nation, immediately on its arrival at the port of Tabasco; and on being applied to for protection, as United States consul, and to note a protest of an American citizen against said threat of seizure, you refused.

2d. That, as United States consul, you countenanced and lent your aid to an unlawful and ruinous prosecution against a citizen of the United States, on account of the captain and owners of the English barque Miriam and Jane, knowing the same to be both ruinous and unlawful; and that, without the aid and influence of your office, said prosecution could not have been sustained.

3d. That you countenanced and justified the imprisonment of different citizens of the United States, and that you refused the applications of those citizens for protection; that you refused to obtain for them a trial or specification of the charges alleged against them, and that you also refused to call at the prison to see them, or in any way to afford them succor and relief.

4th. That you countenanced and promoted the seizure and use of the American steamboat Bellona (Hidalgo) by the commandant at Tabasco, and inculcated the idea that said boat was Mexican property, and therefore lawfully seized.

5th. That you made a demand upon him (Aaron Leggett) for three months' pay for each of the crew of the schooner Consolation, and threatened him with prosecution for the same, after the crew had returned to the United States in his (Aaron Leggett's) own vessels, and had been paid their voyages in full, the schooner having been sold in a condition unseaworthy.

6th. That you knowingly misrepresented the character and ownership of the steamboat Bellona at Tabasco, threatened to return her register on account of her being Mexican property; which you did do, with wrong information that she had been sold.

7th. That in open court, in a violent and furious manner, you seized hold of his person, and with your fist struck him several times on his face and head.

These are substantially the charges made against you by Mr. Leggett, of which the details will be communicated to Colonel Butler, with directions to make use of them in the investigations he is directed to make into your official conduct.

I am, sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

LOUIS McLANE.

Daniel N. Pope, Esq.,

*United States Consul, Tabasco.*

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