

# **PRESIDENT SAM HOUSTON'S EFFORTS IN THE CASE OF TEXAS' ANNEXATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (1841-1845)**

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## **Abstract**

The issue of the annexation of Texas to the United States of America was one of the most prominent events witnessed by the American continent in the late first half of the nineteenth century, and the accompanying political repercussions that affected the presidential election race of 1844, and the prominent role played by Texas Governor Sam Houston in crystallizing the annexation project. As well as foreign interference, foremost of which is the British role obstructing the project of Texas joining the United States of America.

**Keywords:** Sam Houston, Texas, United Kingdom of Great Britain

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## **Introduction**

Since December 1845, Texas has become the twenty-eighth state of the United States of America after a years-long conflict between Mexico, the United States of America and Britain, as the godfather of that annexation was President Sam Houston, who made great efforts to annex his republic to the United States of America

The process of the annexation of Texas became a pivotal point in the political history of the United States, as it enabled it to acquire the lands located southwest of it, as the annexation project was a decisive point in the elections of 1844 and the political struggle between the right-wing and Democrats, as was the debate over Texas after an important constitutional dimension, which raised fundamental questions About the structure of the United States of America.

In this research, entitled (President Sam Houston's Efforts in the Case of Texas's Annexation to the United States of America (1841-1845)), we touched upon three points. Britain included the annexation of Texas to the United States of America), while the third demand dealt with (the treaty of annexation of Texas to the United States of America).

## **President Sam Houston's efforts in the case of Texas' annexation to the United States of America (1841-1845)**

### **First - Houston's role in the process of annexing Texas to the United States of America**

After Houston headed the Texas government, he decided to activate the annexation negotiations with the United States, and assigned that task to his Secretary of State, Anson Jones <sup>(1)</sup>, the man who followed in the first government almost all the policies set by Houston <sup>(2)</sup>, so Houston decided early in the year 1841, re-opening the door of negotiations with the United States of America to reach a treaty related to trade and other matters such as the looting carried out by the Indian tribes, especially as Houston realized that John Tyler <sup>(3)</sup> assumed his duties as President of the United States after winning the elections The presidential candidate, who is a strong advocate of the annexation process, will facilitate things a lot, especially since Taylor disagreed with his party on the issue of high tariffs, and found himself devoid of partisan support, so he went to the Southern Democrats for support, and found his lost in the Texas issue because it would give him public support At the same time, it will strike his political opponents on the other hand <sup>(4)</sup>.

Therefore, Houston, his Plenipotentiary Secretary in the United States of America, feels that the time has become appropriate for me to continue the dialogue with the Secretary of State, Daniel Webster. Indeed, the American Secretary of State Webster, who received him in a friendly manner, invited me to open the subject of a treaty, and the Secretary suggested to me continuing the negotiations. In Texas, Webster preferred to accomplish it in Washington, and despite Texas' enthusiasm to reopen the treaty proposal, Secretary B failed to act, leaving the responsibility to his aide Nathaniel Amory, who had received instructions from his government that ensured the powers needed to sign the treaty, he quickly informed Webster that his government was eager to reach a speedy treaty with the United States <sup>(5)</sup>.

Emory quickly completed writing the terms of the treaty and sent to Sam Houston asking him to authorize him to conclude an agreement with Washington on its basis, proposing several matters on which the negotiations and the treaty would be based. border rivers for the transportation of goods to foreign places from one country to another, and to negotiate the question of Indian tribes along the border <sup>(6)</sup>.

During his first year in office, Texas Secretary of State Anson Jones <sup>(2)</sup> showed little dynamism to his work, and requested extended leave from his duties, and during Jones's long absence and Texas' need for an experienced negotiator, Houston dispatched James Reily on March 8 1842, to the United States, to represent Texas and follow up on Secretary Jones' business, and while Riley was in the United States, he sent several letters to Texas asking for information and advice after being left without specific instructions, and after several correspondence Riley got an answer from his government, especially the negotiation of an annexation treaty. It stated, "With regard to the negotiation of a treaty, the President wishes you not to act hastily and to act calmly until the government of the United States agrees to the policy of annexation" <sup>(7)</sup> and the purpose of the government in Texas was to secure the approval of Congress, especially since the debate in it is on the issue of approval. The annexation of Texas did not receive attention in the council sessions, except during the administration of President John Taylor, because he had been in favor of the principle of annexing Texas since the declaration of its independence <sup>(8)</sup>.

In light of these moves by the Texas government to annex to the United States of America, the British government tried to thwart the annexation plans in various ways. During 1842, William Kennedy, the British envoy to Texas, wrote to Lord Aberdeen about the situation in Texas, and according to what Kennedy wrote, "The situation in Texas is very disturbing." Kennedy's remarks did not only indicate the bad condition of Texas and that it would not be able to withstand without foreign aid, but also indicated the size of the obstacles facing British policy in Texas represented by the US President's desire to annex it, and it appears that That report reflected the perception of many British officials, and although most of them affirmed that thwarting the annexation efforts is futile, they felt that it was an effort worth the effort. President Taylor on January 12 said, "I have spoken to the citizens of Texas in every county, and I have no doubt that at least nine-tenths of them are eager to join the United States of America," and wrote the same to Mr. Webst. R said: "I will not bother you about the topics mentioned in the communication... but I respectfully ask you to read it at your leisure" <sup>(9)</sup>.

Later that month Kennedy sent a second letter to Aberdeen on January 28, 1842, writing: "The popular sentiment undoubtedly swayed strongly to the joining of the flanks to the United States, and therefore Great Britain must enter into their mediation for an early settlement of the differences between Mexico and Texas" <sup>(10)</sup>, and Britain's awareness of these concerns prompted the improvement of its relationship with Texas, as Britain had several reasons to prevent Texas from becoming a part of the United States of America, so if Texas remained an independent country, it would become a profitable trade ally for Britain, so it started working On helping Texas make peace with Mexico, and preventing it from being swallowed up by the United States of America <sup>(11)</sup>.

Although Houston sponsored those negotiations, he realized that maintaining balanced relations with European countries in general and Britain in particular in light of his country's desire to annex the United States is impossible, especially with Britain's desire to put its hand on cotton production in Texas and monopoly trade across the Gulf, both of which are a threat To the Monroe Doctrine, and in the face of that the United States of America will not stand idly by towards it, so I

suggested in September 1843 that the new American Secretary of State Abel Apshur <sup>(12)</sup>, who replaced Webster after he was retired, open discussions of annexation Immediately, however, President Houston did not receive an answer to his proposal, and instead Minister Upshur wrote a note in October to President Taylor informing him that the proposed discussions between Texas and the United States had reached the ears of the Mexicans, and as a result, the Mexican government announced that the annexation, if what happened, would be tantamount to “an act of war” <sup>(13)</sup>.

President Taylor, for his part, rejected Mexican impressions, and showed in his annual message to Congress in December a determination to stand firmly on the side of Texas, and despite President Taylor's statements, President Houston was more cautious, lest it provoke annexation negotiations if the position of all From France and Britain, which at that time were working to push Mexico to recognize the independence of Texas, but they could withdraw from those efforts if Texas did not break the annexation negotiations with the United States of America, especially with the absence of real and firm guarantees of Taylor's position, the least of which is the guarantee of the position of Congress Behind Taylor's efforts, Houston, therefore, instructed his new minister in Washington, Isaac van Zandt, that he should obtain guarantees for any agreement he signed with the United States government <sup>(14)</sup>.

Meanwhile, the US Secretary of State, Upshur, had died suddenly, and John C Calhoun <sup>(1)</sup> was appointed in his place. The possibility of foreign intervention in Texas, and that Britain seeks to end slavery in Texas, which would have serious repercussions for the entire Union.

In fact, the threat of a British invasion was so exaggerated that the British repeatedly denied these allegations and made clear that they had no interest in interfering with the system of slavery anywhere on the continent <sup>(15)</sup>.

#### **Second - Britain's position on the annexation of Texas to the United States of America:**

The Anglo-American rivalry put Texas in an ideal position to reap the rewards offered by both countries, and Houston was keen to maintain the sensitivity of Texas' position, as he tried to show that the United States of America needed the annexation of Texas much more than Texas needed the American union, while Great Britain knew that Houston preferred the annexation, but she was unable to determine the extent of his desire to do so, while Houston promised Britain an unshakable alliance and valuable friendship, as it would help them reach a lasting peace with Mexico <sup>(16)</sup>.

In January 1844, Houston ordered his Minister Plenipotentiary Isaac Van Zandt to resume annexation negotiations with the United States of America, but only in secret, and in a secret letter to the Senate, he made it clear that annexation was the best way to defend Texas from Mexico, and asked senators to support his government and support diplomatic efforts. In the matter and proceeding with the signing of the treaty of annexation, although the people of Texas preferred to annex the United States of America, Houston expressed his desire to preserve the friendly relations which had developed with Britain and France and which would fade with the annexation of Texas, moreover, the approval of the Senate remained In the United States unconfirmed <sup>(17)</sup>, Houston feared that Congress would not accept the terms of the annexation treaty, and confessed his fears to his old friend Andrew Jackson from the actions of the United States frustrating Texas' hopes of annexation, but despite the enormous internal and external difficulties and dangers faced by Texas, he remained determined to achieve annexation <sup>(18)</sup>.

The United States began moving to defend Texas and prepare to transfer the file of the army from the Republic of Texas to the Union authority, and for their part, many Texans welcomed this measure, while some in Texas feared that this would cause a Mexican invasion of Texas, which prompted the leaders of the Republic of Texas to A general conference was held in Austin on July 4, but Jones did not attend. Delegates elected Thomas Rusk president of the conference. He immediately adopted the Articles of Annexation and rejected the initiatives from Mexico. United States of America <sup>(3)</sup>.

In mid-September 1844 John was sent. bad. Calhoun, the US Secretary of State, and his Minister Plenipotentiary in Mexico, expressed the most explicit messages to Mexico that reflected American support for Texas, as he advised the Mexican government “that the United States decided to proceed with the annexation process and that any occupation of Texas by the United States would be

rejected by Mexico.”<sup>(19)</sup>, and when the British government learned of this, it tried again to block the issue of the annexation of Texas, but it transferred its diplomatic activities this time from the United States of America to Mexico. The US or any other country, but that coincided with the US Senate passing its resolution to the House of Representatives to obtain its approval to annex Texas to US sovereignty, and here Texas became close to achieving its ambition to join the United States of America<sup>(20)</sup>.

It seems that what encouraged Britain to continue blocking the issue of annexation before the United States agreed to it was the message that Houston sent to Captain Elliot, where he informed him that the annexation had not been seriously considered by Texas, and that he was sincerely grateful for Britain's previous efforts and wished them to continue and concluded the letter with soothing information that Britain should be assured that with "Mexico's recognition of the independence of Texas, the latter will never agree to any treaty or any other project for annexation to the United States of America"<sup>(21)</sup>.

### **Third - the treaty of annexation of Texas to the United States of America**

While Houston was telling Britain that the independence of Texas would prevent it from annexing any country, he instructed Van Zandt and Henderson to continue negotiations that provided not only US protection for Texas against Mexican attack while negotiations progressed, but that the United States should be prepared to secure Texas independence in In the event the Senate failed to ratify the annexation treaty, Van Zandt and his associates failed to obtain any guarantees from Secretary of State Calhoun when they signed the treaty, which angered Houston greatly because he realized that Texas was alone in facing Mexico in the event the Senate refused to ratify the annexation treaty. The treaty, especially since the European countries at that time will also abandon Texas because of its signing of annexation treaties with the United States of America<sup>(22)</sup>.

US President John Taylor presented the treaty of Texas annexation to the US Senate in 1844, warning the Senate against the moves that Texas is taking to establish friendship with other countries, stressing that the United States of America's surrounding lands owned by European countries that have treaties and trade alliances with them will definitely lead to restrictions on American politics<sup>(23)</sup>. On April 12, 1844, the United States and the Republic of Texas finally signed the Treaty of Annexation, which included several conditions, including Texas ceding all public lands to the United States of America, and that the United States government bears the debts of Texas. With that they accepted the agreement, and soon the treaty went to the US Senate for ratification, and while Congress considered the proposal renewed opposition from John Quincy Adams, who described it as a dark day. ...and with it went the freedom of the human race"<sup>(24)</sup>.

While other opposition voices considered the annexation treaty as a declaration of war with Mexico, the war between the United States of America and Mexico took place in 1846 and did not end until 1848<sup>(25)</sup>.

### **Conclusion**

It became clear from the foregoing that there were a number of factors that contributed to the formulation of Sam Houston's position and vision in joining the American Union, including those related to the nature of his political formation and American upbringing and his sense of belonging to a country with long-standing institutions that could contribute to the development of Texas in the event of joining it, especially that the man From the early stages of his life, he carried ideas about the right of his country to annex Texas and some other areas that were once part of Mexico. He added to this that Sam Houston, after assuming the presidency in Texas, worked to re-evaluate his desire for the annexation process in light of subjective and other factors. In general, after assuming power, the vision became more complex than the previous stage.

The internal reality of Texas and the obstacles faced by the young republic contributed to a reassessment of Houston's position on the annexation issue, so he felt the difficulty of continuing the republic in light of the international and Mexican position and the fear of the republic's collapse.

The internal political tension in the United States of America between supporters and opponents of the annexation process also contributed to creating a state of hesitation for Sam Houston at some point.

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3. Anson Jones, Memoranda and Official Correspondence Relating to the Republic of Texas, Its History and Annexation, New York, 1859, p. 167-168.
4. Born on March 29, 1790, of a family of law-taught ancestry, Tyler erroneously obtained a license to practice at the age of nineteen, Tyler was elected at the age of twenty-one to represent Charles City County in the House of Representatives, and retained his seat in the House of Representatives. Council for five consecutive terms Tyler became president of the United States of America after Harrison's death in April 1841, and more see: Odo Zauter, Presidents of the United States of America from 1789 until today, House of Wisdom - London, 2006, pp. 83-87.
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6. Daniel Webster: An American politician, born on January 18, 1782, in Salisbury, New Hampshire. He studied law to become one of the most famous lawyers in Boston. In 1822, he became a representative of Massachusetts in the US Congress and then a member of the Senate for the period between (1827 - 1841) and had important opinions in council meetings, especially with regard to the issue of tariffs, and then became Secretary of State in the states of President Harrison and President Tyler, and for the period between (1845-1850) he returned again as a member of the Senate, and from 1850 to 1852 he was appointed Minister For State, died October 24, 1852 in Massachusetts, more see: Paula Kay Byers and Suzan Michele, Encyclopedia Of world Biog- raphy, Vol.5, Detroit, 1989, p.40
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19. John Caldwell Calhoun: American politician, born in 1782, served as Secretary of War under President James Monroe for the period (1817-1825), then Deputy for the period (1825-1832) to President John Quincy Adams, and served as Secretary of State for the period between (1844 - 1845) Under President John Tyler, then became a US Senator from South Carolina, Calhoun was known later in his life as "Cast Iron" for his strict defense of Southern beliefs and customs. Calhoun was one of the "Great Trio" or "The Immortal Trio." Among the leaders of Congress, along with fellow congressmen Daniel Webster and Henry Clay. In 1957, a Senate committee chaired by Senator John F. Kennedy named Calhoun one of the greatest U.S. Senators ever. He died March 31, 1850, more reviews:
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