

Monroe Doctrine

Why did the United States issue the Monroe Doctrine? To discourage Europe from meddling in the affairs of the newly independent nations of Latin America.

Wars for Independence in Latin America

1810 – People in Spain’s American colonies are eager for independence

1819 – Bolivar becomes president of the Independent **Republic of Great Columbia**.

1821 – **Mexico receives independence from Spain**

1821 – The people of Central America declared independence from Spain.

1823 – The people of Central America formed the United Provinces of Central America

1825 – Spain has lost all of its colonies in Latin America except Puerto Rico and Cuba

The new government’s had a hard time setting up stable governments. Powerful leaders took advantage of the turmoil to seize control. The new nations were often unable to achieve democratic rule.

The United States Gains Florida

For more than 100 years, Spain had given runaway slaves refuge in Florida. The United States demanded that Spain demolish forts set up by the former slaves, to which Spain refused.

In 1818, Andrew Jackson headed to Florida with more than 3,000 soldiers. Since they were busy fighting in Latin America, Spain did not have the resources to fight the Americans. They agreed to peace talks, and in 1821 agreed to give Florida to the United States in exchange for \$5 million (the **Adams-Onis Treaty**).

The Monroe Doctrine

Americans were happy for the new independence in Latin America. However, they were concerned that European nations would begin to take advantage of this. Britain wanted the U.S. to join them in a statement guaranteeing the freedom of the new nations. However, Monroe chose to act alone. In 1823, Monroe made a bold foreign policy statement known as the **Monroe Doctrine**.

- The United States would not interfere in the affairs of European nations or existing colonies of European nations
- Warned European nations not to attempt to regain control of the newly independent nations in Latin America
- The U.S. would oppose any attempt to build new colonies in the America’s

Monroe’s message showed that the U.S. was determined to keep Europe out of the Western Hemisphere. Britain supported the statement. As the U.S. became stronger, the Monroe Doctrine increased in importance.