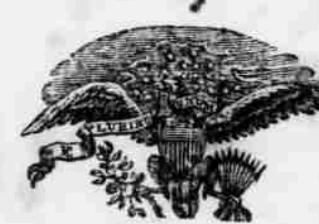


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CONGRESSIONAL.

H. OF REPRESENTATIVES.

EDWARDS'S MEMORIAL.

Tuesday, April 20.—Upon the reading of the journal of yesterday, it appeared that the following gentlemen had been appointed to compose the committee on the memorial of Ninian Edwards, late a Senator of the United States from the state of Illinois, yesterday presented to the House, viz: Messrs. Floyd, Livingston, Webster, Randolph, Taylor, McArthur and Owen.

Mr. Forsyth submitted the following for adoption by the House:

"Resolved, That the President be officially informed that this house has ordered an investigation of the memorial presented to this House on the 19th instant, by N. Edwards lately appointed Minister to Mexico—that the said N. Edwards may be instructed not to leave the United States before that investigation has taken place."

The question of consideration of this motion being called for, it was decided negatively.

Mr. Moore, of Alabama, then rose, and said, that connected with the subject, he would take occasion to say, that the gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Floyd) was absent from the House this morning, when that part of the Journal was read, which announces the names of the persons appointed on the committee to consider Mr. Edwards's memorial. As he believed that, from considerations of delicacy, the gentleman from Virginia would not wish to be a member of the committee, Mr. M. took this mode of apprising him of the fact, that he might have an opportunity of asking to be excused from serving upon it.

M. Floyd rose, and requested the gentleman from Alabama, if his allusion was to him, to repeat his statement. Mr. M. accordingly, in substance, repeated his statement.

Mr. Floyd then said that, in a case of delicacy concerning him, (Mr. F.) he had hoped that the gentleman from Alabama was the last man in this nation to undertake to make suggestions, and he did not think his doing so shewed any delicacy on his (Mr. M.'s) part. I am, said Mr. F. the sufficient judge of my conduct in such a case. Perhaps the gentleman from Alabama may be acquainted with some circumstances of the A. B. plot, so called in the discussion last winter, and subsequently. If I know any thing of myself, however, I am capable of doing justice to every individual in this nation, whose conduct may be presented to me in my official capacity for examination. When a specific charge is made against a public officer, after the friends of that officer,

and myself by name, have been called upon, through that paper which is the channel of every thing but truth, to propose an investigation, I thought it became peculiarly my duty to investigate the charge. What I think of the accuser in private life is for me to consider, and does not touch my public duty. Mr. F. here alluded to a friend of the gentleman from Alabama (as we understood him) who had for several successive sessions called upon this House for the impeachment of a Judge, whom it seemed, he had attempted previously to bribe, &c.; and here, he said, were charges, one, two, and three, asserting certain accusations against the Secretary, and calling for an investigation. This, surely was sufficient for an investigation being pressed by those thus called upon. The Devil himself might prefer charges here—it would not change our opinion of that personage—but it would surely be a particular reason for an investigation by those who are implicated. So far as the gentleman from Alabama is concerned, said Mr. F. perhaps there may be other reasons for consulting motives of delicacy. When I do want suggestions of that sort, I should think very differently of myself from what I have been accustomed to do, were I to be obliged to go to him for them.

The Speaker said there was no question before the House, and the suggestion of the gentleman from Alabama having been made and answered, the conversation must drop.

Mr. Moore then rose, and moved that the gentleman from Virginia should be excused from serving on the Committee.

The question of consideration being called on this motion, the mover withdrew it.

Mr. Moore then asked to make a remark in reply to Mr. Floyd; but the Speaker declared it to be out of order. Mr. Moore wished to know if it would be in order to ask leave of the House to speak in reply. The Speaker thought not.

Mr. Moore then renewed his motion, in the following words, with a view in this way to have an opportunity of addressing the House:

"Resolved, That John Floyd, a member of this House, be excused from serving on a committee appointed yesterday, on the subject of the memorial of Ninian Edwards."

The question being taken on considering this motion, was decided in the negative, almost unanimously; and so this matter ended.

Wednesday, April 21.—Mr. McDuffie offered the following:

"Resolved, That the Clerk of this House be directed to furnish the President of the United States with a copy of the memorial of Ninian Edwards, recently presented to this House, containing certain charges against the Secretary of the Treasury."

Mr. McDuffie said, that he regretted that the subject had been presented to the House at all; but, since it had, he thought the fact should be submitted to the President of the United States, that he might take such course as he might deem proper in this matter, it being a dispute between his own officers.

Mr. Saunders accorded in the propriety of the resolution,

and suggested an amendment, that the President be informed of the organization of a committee, by this House, to investigate the case. This course, he said, would not surprize the President. If the President should choose to recal Mr. Edwards, he would have it in his power to do so. He might be permitted to say, that the course of Mr. Edwards was not the same as that pursued towards Mr. Hamilton, then Secretary of the Treasury, in 1794. Mr. Giles called for information, and boldly offered and supported his motion, and did not throw charges into the House, and leave them to pursue them if they could. The same course ought to have been pursued by Mr. Edwards in this case, instead of which he has departed hence on his way to a foreign station, and thrown his charges back upon those he has left behind.

Mr. Webster said, he hoped he might be excused for making a single remark, without going farther. It was obvious that the committee, which had been appointed, had no time to make any progress in investigating the charges of Mr. Edwards, at this session. He hoped the House had confidence enough in the committee to agree to the motion he should now make, which was, to defer acting upon this motion until to-morrow morning. With this view, Mr. W. moved that this motion lie on the table.

This course was agreed to, without a division.

Thursday, April 22.—Mr. Floyd, from the committee to whom was referred the memorial of N. Edwards, vindicating himself and accusing Mr. Secretary Crawford, pursuant to the instructions of the committee, communicated the following minutes of its proceedings, viz:

"The committee to whom was referred communication from Ninian Edwards, report the following minutes of their proceedings to the House of Representatives:

Present, all the members of the committee:

Voted, That the committee ought to proceed to make inquiry into the matters contained in the memorial, and connected therewith.

Voted, That, for the purpose of such inquiry, the attendance of the said Ninian Edwards upon the committee, to be by them examined, is requisite; and that this attendance be accordingly ordered.

Voted, That the Chairman do inform the House that information of said communication, of the votes of the House thereon, and of the foregoing resolutions of the committee, and inasmuch as it is suggested that the said Ninian Edwards is about to leave the United States on foreign diplomatic service,

Voted, That the Chairman do move the House that information of said communication, of the votes of the House thereon, and of the foregoing resolutions of the committee, be communicated to the President of the U. S."

The latter proposition having

been put in the form of a motion by Mr. Taylor, of New-

York, and the question being

upon agreeing thereto—

Mr. McLane moved to re-

commit the report of the select

committee.

Mr. Randolph said, he hoped the motion for re-commitment would not prevail; and he rose for the purpose of calling the attention of the House to a fact, that the select committee have

acted, by the authority and in the name of this body, and that Mr. Edwards ought to be bro't before the committee or not, the writ is now on its way; that it will be served upon him; and that he will be brought here, whether we vote in one way or another, on this question. In case this enquiry is to be prosecuted, said Mr. R. I cannot consent to act, on that committee, except by the imperious mandate of this House, without the presence of the informer. The committee having first resolved that this inquiry should be prosecuted; that the informer should be brought before the Grand Jury, have reported the fact—for what? That the House, being one of the co-ordinate branches of this government of ours, should communicate to the other co-ordinate branch, that which, in courtesy, the other branch ought to be put in possession of. What do we ask of the President? To aid us to bring this minister before us? No: we need no authority from him. We will, in despite of any man in this land, have him before us. If, indeed, he shall have made his escape from the country, we cannot follow him to Mexico; but, any where short of the Belize, the warrant of this House is as high authority as any known in this land, and, as such, I trust it will be supported. If I had thought that, in the act of that committee, the privileges of this House—the privileges of the American people in their Representatives, had been compromised, no consideration that man can name, would have induced me to give it my sanction.

It was at my motion that the order was passed to bring the accuser before us. I hope the House will proceed as proposed. The committee have maintained the authority of this House, which I never will surrender, and have, in their report, acted to the Executive with that comity and urbanity which, when it shall cease to prevail between the co-ordinate branches of any government like ours, must throw every thing into confusion.

Mr. Cook, of Illinois, said, it had been, and should be, his course, pending this subject, to abstain from saying any thing in relation to the merits of it, and to abstain from exhibiting any thing like feeling in relation to it. In his opinion, the course which the committee had pursued, on this occasion, was a proper one. The Executive had probably given its orders to this individual, and his actual position might not be so well known to any one as to the Executive. Mr. C. thought it was probable that, before any process could reach him, he would have left Illinois, and might have reached New-Orleans, and the information communicated to the Executive might be effectuated to answer the end of the process of this House reaching him.

Mr. Forsyth asked, if he had understood the gentleman from Illinois rightly, when he informed the House that this person was now on his way to New-Orleans, and about to pass thence from the United States?

Mr. Cook said, that he had so stated, presuming it to be the fact.

Mr. Forsyth said, it was only what he suspected. The Parthian throws behind him his poisoned arrows as he retreats, and then flies beyond the reach of pursuit. But, Mr. F. said, he could not fortunately leave the United States before the process of the United States could reach him. The vessel which was to have the honor to bear him out, had not yet left the Navy Yard at this place, and, as he would scarcely venture to sail without the protection of the guns of the nation, he could yet be overtaken.

Mr. Cook said that, when up before, he had intended to suggest, that the vessel which was destined to carry Mr. Edwards to Mexico, was yet at this place; that by this vessel, information could be given to him of his presence being desired here; and that the only, at least most probable way, in which the process of this House could reach him, and he could be recalled for the purposes of this House, would be by means of this vessel.

Mr. Floyd said, that the committee had thought it necessary that this individual should be present during the examination of his charges. They were perfectly aware that the authority with which they were invested by the House, was sufficient for all the purposes of bringing him here, and, in the course which they had pursued, had no object but to give the President of the United States, in a respectful manner, information of the course which it had been thought proper, by the committee, to pursue; and he hoped the opposition to it would be withdrawn.

Mr. McLane said he was not anxious to embarrass the proceedings. He was anxious for this investigation to go on. To save trouble to the House, however he would withdraw his motion for re-commitment.

Mr. Floyd then moved that the Clerk of this House be directed to adopt measures to expedite the printing of the Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, upon which the said communication is founded, and that the said communication, with its accompanying documents, be printed; which was agreed to.

Friday, April 23.—The following Message from the President of the United States, by Mr. Everett, his private Secretary, was received, read, and ordered to lie on the table:

To the House of Representatives:

In conformity with a resolution of the House of Representatives of yesterday, I have received a copy of the proceedings of the committee to whom was referred a communication from Ninian Edwards, lately appointed Minister plenipotentiary to Mexico, in which it is decided that his attendance in this city, for the purpose of being examined, by the committee, on matters contained in the said communication, was requisite. As soon as I was apprized that such a communication had been made to the House, anticipating that the attendance of Mr. Edwards might be desired, for the purpose stated, I thought it proper that he should be informed thereof, and instructed not to proceed in his mission, but to await such call as might be made on him, either by the House, or its committee, and in consequence a letter was addressed to him to that effect, by the Secretary of State.

JAMES MONROE.

April 23, 1824.