

# THE RALEIGH MINER VA.

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No. 739.

## CONGRESS.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

#### ON THE BILL FOR IMPOSING ADDITIONAL DUTIES, &c.

Monday, April 14, 1810.

motion to fill the blank with five being before the house—

Mr. Randolph said he had but a very few remarks to make on this subject; but it was impossible for him to make these few with any satisfaction to the committee or to himself. He was in doubt whether on this important question it would not be better to assent to the proposition for which an anxiety so restless was manifested to decide this question in the first instance afterwards to discuss it. If that was the wish of the committee chose the subject to be taken, it was not for him to interrupt them.

Speaker said that the gentleman from Virginia, there are circumstances under which perhaps not within the compass of human capacity certainly not within mine—to address a legislative assembly. (Order having been given in the committee, Mr. Randolph went

forward this proposition to bottom his tax on the basis of defraying the war loans which he had negotiated, and in this view of the case he cannot concur with my friend from North Carolina. I think the cart has not been put before the horse, but that it is expedient—and I wish it were so on all other occasions—to provide

means, before we incur a debt, of paying the interest of that debt. I understand that there were so many suppositions that I could not tell precisely the amount at which this tax was estimated—that it is not calculated beyond two and a half, certainly not three millions of dollars—and for the purpose of ascertaining this point I asked a private

opinion of the gentleman proposing to lay the tax. Now, sir, one of the plainest propositions submitted to a legislative assembly, is before the committee and the nation. It is, whether we are to incur an additional annual burden of from a half to three millions of dollars for the

defraying the expense of our military establishments at their present extent and those establishments? We are indeed in a most calamitous situation, if, with our three great national blessings, we are driven to the necessity of laying an annual amount of three millions to defray the interest of loans necessary to carry on our

establishment. If this be the condition to which our once proud and flourishing nation has been reduced, there is a deep and deadly sin to be atoned for somewhere and by somebody. The

argument which I shall offer is comprised in a simple piece of paper, the hands of every gentleman in the committee account of the gross annual amount of

expenditure in relation to our military and naval establishments from 1789 to 1809. The committee will recollect that a few days ago—it was not long since it was done so late, I could not get the bill submitted a resolution calling on the

Department for an account of the annual amount of the Treasury of the United States, nor have I been able to get it out from the documents in the clerk's hands. I have not been able to obtain any reports further back than about the year 1802. That statement would have

material value in determining the question before the committee. If we have it not, we must proceed along with this subject with such crippled hands as are left in our power. I find from the

View of the Finances, that the receipts of the first day of January, 1796, were forty millions and some odd thousands. There were to be accounted for the receipts of the

of General Washington's administration (from 1797) which taken at an average may be calculated at fourteen millions, perhaps more. This will bring the gross receipts of

General Washington's administration to fifty millions—a sum which I will venture to say he exceeded. I find by the statement which

is in my hand that the whole expenditure in the army and navy up to the end of the year 1797, are 11,237,000 dollars—and I beg to explain to the committee why I take up to the year 1797, and do not stop at the year 1802. Although his success in the year 1801, and the approach of the year that year were made under the last

thousand, and of the last four years sixteen millions four hundred and forty three thousand dollars, making a total of twenty five millions expended under his administration for the army and navy. Now, with regard to the receipts—from a treasury statement made in 1805 or 1806, I discover that from the first of April, 1801 (three days after the induction of Mr. Jefferson into office) up to the 30th of March, 1805, comprising the first term of his administration, he received fifty millions six hundred and sixty seven thousand dollars; some of the items of these fifty millions I will beg leave to state. Exclusive of the great article of customs, common to all administrations, the amount of receipts from which quarter was 43,174,000 dollars, during the same period there was received from public lands 1,038,000 dollars, from the post office 133,000 dollars, from internal taxes 1,700,000 dollars, from the direct tax—Yes, sir, from the direct tax) 673,000 dollars, from the sale of bank shares 1,287,000 dollars, and from the sale of public ships, a part of this very navy which has since cost so much, 380,000 dollars—and yet, sir, wonderful to relate, it would seem that the cost of the navy had been in the inverse ratio to the force and public service of that navy. In proportion as it had been useless, in proportion as it had been reduced—and that may perhaps (though I hope it will not) weigh with some members against a farther reduction of it, 'tist it should prove still more expensive—in proportion as it has been inefficient, so has it been costly. But, not to detain the committee or get out of the track in which I wish to keep—the receipts of the first four years of Mr. Jefferson's administration were 50,657,000 dollars, and the expenses of the army and navy only 8,600,000 dollars. The receipts of the ensuing four years, as nearly as I can ascertain them, were sixty three millions of dollars, and the expenditure for the army and navy sixteen millions. If any man will take the trouble, in dividing this estimate of expenditures, not only to distinguish the administration of Mr. Adams from that of General Washington on the one hand and that of Mr. Jefferson on the other, but also to contradicting the first four years of Mr. Jefferson's government from the succeeding four years, he will discover that the contrast between the first four years of Mr. Jefferson and the four of Mr. Adams is not greater than the contrast between the last four years of Mr. Jefferson's administration and the first four. Try it by whatever test you please, this will be the result; and this, now that the transactions are over, now that the doings and workings of that day are gone by and their effects presented in broad and legible characters, this difference may account, with men who think sometimes, for that division, for that schism, (as it is termed) among the republican party of this country, which relates to the first and second part of the administration of the late President of the United States. This argument is in figures and figures which cannot be disputed. In other arguments there may be some defect in the soundness of the premises, or in the deduction drawn from them; but in an argument like that which I hold in my hand, there can be no difference of opinion—it speaks not only to the judgment but to the senses.

There is another view of this subject. The first four years of Mr. Jefferson's administration were not more distinguished by the flourishing state of the revenue on the one hand than by the economical administration of it on the other. We had then to boast of a vast amount of public debt reduced, and of millions in our Treasury; but when we come to the last year there is a dreadful falling off indeed. In proportion as the public expenditure has been lavish, so have the public receipts been scanty and insufficient. The two things run as it were in a perfect parallel. It has been well observed by a great master of human nature, speaking of the dilapidation of a great estate in a few years, that it is inconceivable how debts and expenditures go on increasing when persons become careless or desperate as their circumstances become embarrassed. The same rule holds good as to political estates, and the observation is verified in the history of our political life. I find that in the first year of the last administration the revenue was twelve millions and the expenditure on the army and navy two millions. I find that Mr. Jefferson went out of office and left a revenue of 6,900,000 dollars, and the expenses of the army and navy, excluding the Indian department, amounted to 5,773,000 dollars—that when he came into office he found a revenue six times as great as the expenses of the army and navy, and that when he went out he left the expenses of the army and navy almost equal to the revenue!—not merely because the expense of the army and navy was more, but because the revenue was less; and not merely because the revenue was less, but because the expenditure of the army and navy was more. As the one fell, so did the other rise—and instead of a revenue of twelve millions, with a military and naval expenditure of two, he left us with a revenue of six millions, and a military and naval expenditure of five. And, sir, for whose benefit? It will be seen too, by a recurrence to these documents, that the revenue of the year 1807 was 16,700,000 dollars, and that it was greater than any year's revenue except that of the year 1806—the difference between them was very little—and consequently, for all our revenue was at that time drawn from commerce, at the very time when we entered upon the system which has reduced our revenue to ten and then to six millions and a half annually, commerce must have been in a state more productive and flourishing than had been known from the commencement of the

federal government. These are facts. The duties on imports and tonnage could not continue to grow without the growth of that commerce on which they were levied. At the very moment then that the revenue from our commerce had grown from twelve millions to seventeen, that was the moment in which it was deemed advisable to destroy that commerce and the revenue that depended upon it—to go into a wide waste of military and naval expense—and with nations as with individuals, in consequence of our extravagance, we have come to shame—to want—to going to jail almost, if the nation could be sent there. It is a curious circumstance, as the house will perceive, but fortunately for us at that time we were not quite so wise as we are now—that the year 1802 produced a defalcation in our revenue of nearly two millions, while in the year 1807 our receipts immediately increased to eleven millions, and in the year 1804 had increased nearly three millions of dollars. The cause is stated in the treasury report from which I extract this statement. It is that the defalcation from twelve to ten millions was to be ascribed to the only year of peace which Europe had known for many years; and the subsequent increase to eleven and a half and thirteen and a half in the two succeeding years was to be ascribed to two facts, the commencement of the war in Europe and the preservation on our part of our neutral attitude. Well, sir—what then was estimate, opinion, conjecture, was mere prophecy, is now history—and nothing remains for us but to resume and preserve that neutral attitude which, the very year we took measures for guarding against such an influx of money into our treasury, produced a revenue of 16,700,000 to this country.

There is, sir, a sort of comparative political anatomy, the study of which will not be found unprofitable. You find, on the accession of Mr. Adams to office, that the military and naval expenditure sprung up from 1,300,000 to 3,500,000 dollars; you find that it went on in progressive increase to near 6,000,000 annually—but, sir, when it was found that this prodigality would be endured no longer by the people, any more than the taxes & loans which were resorted to to support it, then that old gentleman attempted something like a retreat—then he began a system of retrenchment; but unfortunately for him he began too late. He lost his seat at the helm; and those who succeeded him on the ground of opposition to the taxes which he laid, received, as will be perceived from the statement which I have copied from the treasury report, out of those resources, taking into calculation the bank shares sold, nearly five millions of dollars. We find too, by recurring to this statement, that the most expensive year of Mr. Adams's administration, as it related to the army and navy, cost us 5,900,000 dollars; that the most expensive year of the late administration cost us 5,700,000 dollars—I allude now to the year 1809—and if any gentleman object to taking that year, inasmuch as the present president of the United States came into office on the 4th of March, 1809, the answer is ready, that all the expenses of that year were incurred and voted by his predecessor—and in corroboration of this statement the house will find that the retrenchment in the expenses of the army and navy made in 1801 appear in the expenditures of the succeeding year 1802, because it was impossible that the effect of the measure could be felt sooner than the year after it was adopted. So we find that the naval establishment which in the first year of Mr. Adams's administration cost two millions, in the first of Mr. Jefferson's did not cost one. Let us suppose that all your administrations had been equally economical with the first; let us suppose that the military entrusted to the charge of Gen. Washington had not a long cruel bloody Indian war to carry on; that the army of the late President had nothing more to contend with than the mosquitoes of the Mississippi—let us suppose that the navy of Mr. Adams, reduced by our sales (I say one—for I claim a part in the transactions of the first four years of Mr. Jefferson's administration) had not to scour out seas of privateers and pirates; that our ships had not an enemy to cope with; that instead of being all in commission they were laid up in ordinary, that instead of having the Inauguration and Bazaar to encounter, they had only to repose in the mud of the Eastern branch—let us suppose all this, and that the army and navy, subsequently to the year 1801, were as actively engaged as prior to the year 1801—I will ask any member of the committee to tell me, if he can, what benefit we have derived from either, or what good the nation have received from them? What have we got to show for our money, for twenty five millions which have been spent under the last administration on these objects? It is true that under the administration of General Washington, our country sustained one of the most singular and bloody defeats that the same body or any body of men ever met with from a numerous, well organized, and most desperate foe—and yet, sir, it would be difficult to establish the fact, whatever might then have been the public sentiment of gloom and despondency, that the loss of that army on that occasion, or of any other army whatsoever, surpassed the loss which ours has lately sustained in times of profound peace? The victory of Canaan itself was not so bloody in proportion to numbers—and if the Alligators of the Mississippi have not been able to fill themselves with golden rings from the slain, it is only because we have not the same number of Golden Knights. Twenty five millions of dollars! Well might my friend from North Carolina say that if these establish-

ments are not put down they will put down those who support them—and why shall we not do it? I should like to have some reason assigned why we should not get back to the good old republican ground. Why should we persevere, with this statement staring us in the face, in plunging deeper and deeper into loans and taxes? Does any man believe that this annual expenditure cannot be reduced, not only so as to meet the sum, which this tax is estimated to yield, of two and a half millions, but even more? I want to know what duty the army of the United States have now to perform that could not have been performed by the army of the United States in any one of the first four years of Mr. Jefferson's administration, when the annual cost was not a million, & in fact the last of those four years it was only 700,000—and yet we do not derive as much substantial benefit from it when it cost not more than 700,000 dollars as now when it costs three millions?

I therefore, sir, considering the proposition to fill the blank as involving the continuation of the present military and naval establishments, shall be compelled to vote against it, because I conceive a mode of supplying the present deficiency more easy, more acceptable to the people, can be found to supply its place—in a word a substitute, the great desideratum of the present day. I shall say nothing of the probable receipts of these additional taxes. Let it be granted that instead of encouraging smuggling they will yield revenue—why increase the public burthens when we are enabled to avoid it consistent with the public interest.

I have trespassed far on the patience of the committee, much farther than I had intended, and much further than I should have had any occasion to do, had I been indulged with a decision on the motion to reduce the army and navy.

From the (Baltimore) Whig.

TO JAMES MADISON.

I send you a valedictory note—having resolved to retire from a fruitless political contest, until better opportunities shall inspire me with the hope of being useful. Should this hasty address meet your eye before you should have been enveloped in the smoke, or dazzled in the blaze, or turned giddy with the flattery and complimentary nonsense of to-night's parade, it may answer the purpose of the attendant, who in the Roman triumphs reminded kings and generals, that they were but men—mere men.

Several members of the present ignoble congress will crowd your levee to night, bow to you with becoming grace and submission, and bid you an affectionate, at least a ceremonious adieu. When they decline the head and bend the knee before you, what reflections must pass through your brain? "They bow to me—but they had previously made genuflexions to the enemies of our country—they had submitted to England and France—they have left me without power—and the country destitute of honour."

"O my country! weak and overpowered  
By thine own sons,—henry d—devour'd  
By vipers, which in thine own entrails bred,  
Free on my life, and with thy blood are red,  
With unavailing grief thy wrongs I see,  
And, for myself, not feeling, feel for thee."

Thoughts such as these alone become you—If you resolve to represent the grief and humiliation of your country, you will wear sackcloth, and bestrew your head with ashes. For, you must bear your share of accountability: you were elected to perform the active and provident duties of a father and guardian of the United States,—not to remain in the criminal, imbecile and ignominious neutrality of king Log. Before the American people I put these questions;

Have you performed your duty, during the late session of congress?

When you saw submission preparing to cover our country with disgrace, did you interpose your arm or your advice, to prevent the sad catastrophe?

Did you fulfil your constitutional trust of recommending proper measures to congress?

Did you feel a noble glow of indignation, and tell that body in the hearing of the people, that national extinction was even preferable to national degradation; because in one case we should preserve our honour,—but should lose it in the other?

Unfortunately for you, sir, you must answer all these interrogatories in the negative—You behaved like a spectator, not as an actor—you have disregarded the vital concerns of the nation—you attended to the trifles of the drawing room—you have beheld dangerous schisms in your cabinet (as 'tis nicknamed,) but you did not endeavor to compose them. You saw one of your secretaries plucking the reins from your feeble hands, and driving the state chariot down the steep;—but you never felt disquiet, nor expressed concern. Now we are sticking fast in the slough, and all the nations of the earth may pelt us with impunity. Still, sir, I believe you are too good a Christian to be tempted in this dilemma to pray either to Hercules, or Jupiter to extricate our wheels from the mire. There we must stick; and Gallatin may smile at his success in sinking the nation, he was disapp-

† The drawing room parties, or levees, who pay their "homage due" to Mrs. Madison and her August spouse, each Wednesday night, are here alluded to.

‡ He (the President) shall from time to time, give to the congress information of the state of the Union; and receive from them on their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient. U. S. Const. sec. 3, art. 11.