

Documents accompanying the President's Message to Congress.

LETTERS FROM MR. MONROE TO MR. RUSSELL, CHARGE DES AFFAIRES IN G. BRITAIN. Extract of a letter from Mr. Monroe to Mr. Russell, dated

JUNE 26th, 1812.

"This letter is committed to Mr. Foster, who has promised to deliver it to you in safety.

"On the 11th of this month a declaration of war against Great Britain passed congress. I send you a copy of the act, of the president's message, and of the report of the committee of foreign relations, which brought the subject under consideration.

"This measure has been produced by the continued aggressions of the British government on the rights of the United States, and the presumption arising from that and other facts, which it is unnecessary to recite; that no favorable change might be expected from it. It was impossible for the United States to surrender their rights, by relinquishing the ground which they had taken, and it was equally incompatible with their interests and character to rely longer on measures which had failed to accomplish their objects. War was the only remaining alternative, and that fact being clearly ascertained, you will find by the documents transmitted, that it was adopted with decision.

"As war has been resorted to from necessity, and of course with reluctance, this government looks forward to the restoration of peace with much interest, and a sincere desire to promote it on conditions, just, equal and honorable to both the parties. It is in the power of Great Britain to terminate the war on such conditions and it would be very satisfactory to the President to meet it in arrangements to that effect.

"Although there are many just and weighty causes of complaint against Great Britain, you will perceive, by the documents transmitted, that the orders in council, and other blockades, illegal, according to the principles lately acknowledged, and the impressment of our seamen, are considered to be of the highest importance. If the orders in council are repealed, and no illegal blockades are substituted to them, and orders are given to discontinue the impressment of seamen from our vessels, and to restore those already impressed, there is no reason why hostilities should not immediately cease. Securing these objects, you are authorized to stipulate an armistice, to commence from the signature of the instrument providing for it, or at the end of fifty or sixty days, or other the shortest term that the British government will assent to. Definitive arrangements will be made on these and every other difference by a treaty, to be concluded either here or at London, though it is much desired that the subject should be entered on in this city.

"As an inducement to the British government to discontinue the practice of impressment from our vessels, you may give assurance that a law will be passed (to be reciprocal) to prohibit the employment of British seamen in the public or commercial service of United States. There can be no doubt that such an arrangement would prove much more efficacious in securing to Great Britain her seamen, than the practice to which it is proposed to be a substitute, independent of all the other objections to it.

"Indemnity for injuries received under the orders in council, and other edicts violating our rights, seems to be incident to their repeal; but the President is willing that the consideration of that claim should not be pressed at this time, so as to interfere with the preliminary arrangement alluded to. It will be proper to bring it into view merely to shew that it is expected that provision will be made for it in the treaty which is to follow. Every other interest may also be provided for at the same time.

"It is hoped that the British government will find it consistent with its interest and honor, to terminate the war by an armistice in the manner and on the conditions proposed. In so doing, it will abandon no right, it will sacrifice no interest; it will abstain only from violating our rights, and, in return, it will restore peace with the power from whom, in a friendly commercial intercourse, so many advantages will be derived, not to mention the injuries which cannot fail to result from a prosecution of the war."

MR. MONROE TO MR. RUSSELL.

Department of State, July 27, 1812.

SIR—I wrote you on the 26th of June, by Mr. Foster, a letter which he promised to deliver to you in person or by a safe hand.

"In that letter you were informed, that the orders in council and other illegal blockades, and the impressment of our seamen by Great Britain, as you well knew before, were the principal causes of the war, and that if they were removed, you might stipulate an armistice, leaving them and all other grounds of difference for final and more precise adjustment by treaty. As an inducement to the British government to discontinue the practice of impressment from our vessels, by which alone our seamen can be made secure, you were authorized to stipulate a prohibition by law, to be reciprocal, of the employment of British seamen in the public or commercial service of the United States. As such an arrangement, which might be made completely effectual and satisfactory by suitable regulations and penalties, would operate almost exclusively in favor of Great Britain, for as few of our seamen ever enter voluntarily into the British service, the reciprocity would be no more than an equivalent for any she derives from impressment, which alone ought to induce her to abandon the practice, if she had no other motive for it. A stipulation to prohibit by law the employment of British seamen in the service of the U. States, is to be understood in the sense and spirit of our constitution. The passage of such a law must depend of course on Congress, who, it might reasonably be presumed, might give effect to it.

"By authorizing you to secure these objects as the grounds of an armistice, it was not intended to restrict you to any precise form in which it should be done. It is not particularly necessary that the several points should be specially provided for in the convention stipulating the armistice. A clear

and distinct understanding with the British government on the subject of impressment, comprising in it the discharge of men already impressed, and on future blockades, if the orders in council are revoked, is all that is indispensable. The orders in council being revoked, and the proposed understanding on the other points, that is, on blockades and impressment, being first obtained, in a manner, though informal, to admit of no mistake or disagreement hereafter, the instrument providing for the armistice may assume a general form, especially if more agreeable to the British government. It may for example be said in general terms, "that both powers being sincerely desirous to terminate the differences which unhappily subsist between them, and equally so, that full time should be given for the adjustment thereof, agreed, 1st, that an armistice shall take place for that purpose to commence on the day of

"2. That they will forthwith appoint on each side commissioners with full power to form a treaty, which shall provide, by reciprocal arrangements, for the security of their seamen from being taken or employed in the service of the other power, for the regulation of their commerce, and all other interesting questions now depending between them.

"3. The armistice shall not cease without a previous notice by one to the other party of days, and shall not be understood as having other effect than merely to suspend military operations by land and by sea."

"By this you will perceive that the President is desirous of removing every obstacle to an accommodation which consists merely of form, securing in a safe and satisfactory manner the rights and interests of the U. States in these two great and essential circumstances, as it is presumed may be accomplished by the proposed understanding; he is willing that it be done in a manner the most satisfactory and honorable to G. Britain, as well as to the U. States.

I have the honor to be, &c.
(Signed) JAS. MONROE.

MR. GRAHAM TO MR. RUSSELL, DATED Department of State, Aug. 9th, 1812.

SIR—The Secretary left this city about ten days ago on a short visit to Virginia. Since that period Mr. Baker has, in consequence of some despatches from his government addressed to Mr. Foster, made to me a communication respecting the intentions of his government as regards the orders in council. It was of a character, however, so entirely informal and confidential that Mr. Baker did not feel himself at liberty to make it in the form of a note verbal or pro memoria, or even to permit me to take a memorandum of it at the time he made it. As I authorize an expectation that something more precise and definite, in an official form, may soon be received by this government, it is the less necessary that I should go into an explanation of the views of the president in relation to it, more particularly as the secretary of state is daily expected and will be able to do it in a manner more satisfactory.

"I refer you to the enclosed papers for information as to the maritime and military movements incident to the war, and will add, that the president is anxious to know as soon as possible the result of the proposals you were authorized to make to the British government respecting an armistice. He considers them so fair and reasonable that he cannot but hope that they will be acceded to, and thus be the means of hastening an honorable and permanent peace.

I have the honor to be, &c.
(Signed) JOHN GRAHAM.
(To be continued.)

CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN SIR JOHN BORLASE WARREN AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Hullfax, N. S. Sept. 30.

SIR—The departure of Mr. Foster has devolved upon me the charge of making known to you, for the information of the government of the U. States, the sentiments entertained by his royal highness the prince regent, upon the existing relations of the two countries.

"You will observe, from the enclosed copy of an order in council, bearing date the 23rd of June, 1812, that the orders in council of the 7th of January, 1807, and the 26th of April, 1809, ceased to exist nearly at the same time that the government of the U. States, declared war against his majesty.

"Immediately on the receipt of this declaration in London, the order in council, of which a copy is herewith enclosed to you, was issued on the 31st day of July, for the embargo and detention of all American ships.

"Under these circumstances, I am commanded to propose to your government the immediate cessation of hostilities between the two countries, and I shall be most happy to be the instrument of bringing about a reconciliation, so interesting and beneficial to America and Great Britain.

"I therefore propose to you, that the government of the United States of America shall instantly recall their letters of marque and reprisal against British ships, together with all orders and instructions for any acts of hostility whatever against the territories of his majesty or the persons or property of his subjects; with the understanding that immediately on my receiving from you an official assurance to that effect, I shall instruct all the officers under my command to desist from corresponding measures of war, against the ships and property of the U. States, and, that I shall transmit without delay corresponding intelligence to the several parts of the world where hostilities may have commenced. The British commanders in which will be required to discontinue hostilities from the receipt of such notice.

"Should the American government accede to the above proposals for terminating hostilities, I am authorized to arrange with you as to the revocation of the laws which interdict the commerce and ships of war of Great Britain from the harbors and waters of the U. States; in default of which revocation, within such reasonable periods as may be agreed upon, you will observe by the order of the 23d June, the orders in council of January, 1807, and April, 1809, are to be revived.

"The officer who conveys this letter to the American coast, has received my orders to put to sea immediately upon the delivering of this despatch

to the competent authority; and I earnestly recommend that no time may be lost in communicating to me the decision of your government, persuaded as I feel that it cannot but be of a nature to lead to a speedy termination of the present differences.

"The flag of truce which you may charge with your reply, will find one of my cruisers at Sandy Hook, ten days after the landing of this despatch, which I have directed to call there with a flag of truce for that purpose.

I have the honor to be, with the highest consideration,

Sir,
Your most obedient and most faithful
Humble servant,
JOHN BORLASE WARREN,
Admiral of the Blue and Commander in Chief, &c. &c. &c.

MR. MONROE TO SIR J. B. WARREN.

Department of State, October 17, 1812.

SIR—I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 30th ult. and to submit it to the consideration of the president.

"It appears that you are authorized to propose a cessation of hostilities between the U. States and G. Britain, on the ground of the repeal of the orders in council, and, in case the proposition is acceded to, to take measures, in concert with this government, to carry it into complete effect on both sides.

"You state, also that you have, it in charge, in that event, to enter into an arrangement with the government of the United States for the repeal of the laws which interdict the ships of war and the commerce of G. Britain from the harbors and waters of the U. States. And you intimate, that if the proposition is not acceded to, the orders in council (repealed conditionally by that of the 23d of June last) will be revived against the commerce of the U. States.

"I am instructed to inform you, that it will be very satisfactory to the President to meet the British government in such arrangements as may terminate without delay the hostilities which now exist between the U. States and G. Britain, on conditions honorable to both nations.

"At the moment of the declaration of war, the President gave a signal proof of the attachment of the United States to peace. Instructions were given at that early period to the late charge des affaires of the U. States at London, to propose to the British government an armistice on conditions which it was presumed would have been satisfactory. It has been seen with regret that the propositions made by Mr. Monroe, particularly in regard to the important interest of impressment, was rejected, and that none was offered, through that channel, as a basis on which hostilities might cease.

"As your government has authorized you to propose a cessation of hostilities, and is doubtless aware of the important and salutary effect which a satisfactory adjustment of this difference cannot fail to have on the future relations between the two countries, I indulge the hope that it has, ere this, given you full power for the purpose. Experience has sufficiently evidenced that no peace can be durable unless this object is provided for. It is presumed, therefore, that it is equally the interest of both countries to adjust it at this time.

"Without further discussing questions of right, the President is desirous to provide a remedy for the evils complained of on both sides. The claim of the British government is to take from the merchant vessels of other countries British subjects. In the practice, the commanders of British ships of war often taken from the merchant vessels of the United States American citizens. If the United States prohibit the employment of British subjects in their service, and enforce the prohibition by suitable regulations and penalties, the motive for the practice is taken away. It is in this mode that the President is willing to accommodate this important controversy with the British government, and it cannot be conceived on what ground the arrangement can be refused.

"A suspension of the practice of impressment, pending the armistice, seems to be a necessary consequence. It cannot be presumed, while the parties are engaged in a negotiation to adjust amicably this important difference, that the U. States would admit the right or acquiesce in the practice of the opposite party; or that Great Britain would be unwilling to restrain her cruisers from a practice which would have the strongest tendency to defeat the negotiation. It is presumable that both parties would enter into the negotiation with a sincere desire to give it effect. For this purpose it is necessary that a clear and distinct understanding be first obtained between them, of the accommodation which each is prepared to make. If the British government is willing to suspend the practice of impressment from American vessels, on consideration that the United States will exclude British seamen from their service, the regulations by which this compromise should be carried into effect would be solely the object of negotiation. The armistice would be of short duration. If the parties agreed, peace would be the result. If the negotiation failed, each would be restored to its former state, and to all its pretensions, by recurring to war.

"Lord Castlereagh, in his note to Mr. Russell, seems to have supposed, that had the British government accepted the proposition made to it, G. Britain would have suspended immediately the exercise of a right, on the mere assurance of this government that a law would be afterwards passed to prohibit the employment of British seamen in the service of the United States, and that G. Britain would have no agency in the regulation to give effect to that proposition. Such an idea was not in the contemplation of this government, nor is to be reasonably inferred from Mr. Russell's note; lest, however, by possibility such an inference might be drawn from the instructions to Mr. R. and anxious that there should be no misunderstanding in the case, subsequent instructions were given to Mr. R. with a view to obviate every objection of the kind alluded to. As they bear date on the 27th of July, and were forwarded by the British packet Althea, it is more than probable that they may have been received and acted on.

"I am happy to explain to you thus fully the views of my government on this important subject. The

President desires that the war which exists between our countries should be terminated on such conditions as may secure a solid and durable peace. To accomplish this great object it is necessary that the interest of impressment be satisfactorily arranged. He is willing that G. Britain should be secured against the evils of which she complains. He seeks on the other hand that the citizens of the United States should be protected against a practice which, while it degrades the nation, deprives them of their rights as freemen, takes them from their families and their country into a foreign service, to fight the battles of a foreign power, perhaps against their own kindred and country.

"I abstain from entering, in this communication, into other grounds of difference. The orders in council having been repealed, with a reservation not impairing a corresponding right on the part of the United States, and no illegal blockades revived or instituted in their stead, and an understanding being obtained on the subject of impressment, in the mode herein proposed, the President is willing to agree to a cessation of hostilities, with a view to arrange by treaty, in a more distinct and satisfactory manner, and to the satisfaction of both parties, every other subject of controversy.

"I will only add that if there be an objection to an accommodation of the difference relating to the suspension of the British claim to impressment during the armistice, there can be none to proposing, without the armistice, to an immediate cessation and arrangement of an article on that subject. This great question being satisfactorily adjusted, the way will be open either for an armistice or other course leading most conveniently and expeditiously to a general pacification.

I have the honor &c.
JAMES MONROE.

Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

NOVEMBER 2.

This being the day fixed by law for the meeting of Congress, at 12 o'clock the Speaker took the chair, and on calling the roll, it appeared that there were 81 members present.

"A message was then sent to the Senate, to inform them that the House had formed a quorum and were ready to proceed to business.

"On motion of Mr. Findley, the clerk was directed to furnish the members with the usual number of newspapers.

"On motion of Mr. Mason, a committee was appointed to inform the senate, that the house was formed and ready to proceed to business.

"On motion of Mr. Dawson, a committee was appointed, jointly with such committee as should be appointed by the senate, to wait on the President of the United States, and inform him that they were formed and ready to receive any communication he might have to make.

"No communication having been received from the senate, for the want of a quorum, The house adjourned.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3.

Mr. Dawson, from the joint committee appointed to wait on the President of the United States, reported that they had performed that duty, and received for answer that he should make a communication to congress to-morrow at 12 o'clock.

No other business was transacted.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4.

The whole of this day was occupied in reading the president's message and accompanying documents. They were ordered to be referred to a committee of the whole on the state of the union.

NOVEMBER 5.

"On motion of Mr. Mitchell, the usual standing committees (ways and means, &c.) were ordered to be appointed.

"Mr. Dawson, after some introductory remarks submitted the following resolution:

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, that the president of the United States be and hereby is requested to present to the name of Congress, to Capt. Isaac Hull a gold medal, with suitable emblems and devices; and that the sum of — thousand dollars be and the same is hereby appropriated to be distributed as prize money amongst the officers and crew of the U. S. frigate CONSTITUTION of 44 guns, according to the provisions of the act for the better government of the navy of the United States, in testimony of the high sense entertained by congress of the gallant, good conduct and services of captain Hull, the officers and crew of said frigate CONSTITUTION, in attacking, vanquishing and capturing the British frigate Guerriere, mounting 54 cannon guns, thereby exhibiting an example highly honorable to the American character and instructive to the rising navy.

"Mr. Seybert moved to amend the resolution by adding that silver impressions (of the gold medal) be presented to each officer and seaman composing the Constitution's crew.

"Mr. Wright thought it would be better to refer the resolution to a select committee.

"Mr. Cheves moved that the resolution be on the table until the president's message should be reported in the usual way, (by referring different parts of it to select committees.) This motion was agreed to.

"On motion of Mr. Widgery, 2000 copies of the president's message and documents accompanying it were ordered to be printed, yeas 44 nays 33.

"On motion of Mr. Goodwyn, a resolution was adopted for the appointment of two chaplains usual. (The Senate have adopted a similar resolution.)

"A message was received from the Senate, notifying that they had appointed a joint committee to superintend the Congressional Library.

"On motion of Mr. Johnson, the House then adjourned, (12 o'clock.)

FRIDAY, November 6.

Two messages in writing were received from the President of the United States, by Mr. Coffey, his secretary.

The first message read, related to the naturalization law, passed at the last session, which the President did not think proper to sign, for reasons