

lions demanded, that a law would be passed by subjects, more than all others essential to her safety in time of war, and at all times to the general prosperity of that nation. This practice being induced and defended for the reasons above stated, will not be relinquished till something is done, some plan adopted which will remedy the evil complained of, for which impressment is now resorted to. We will have to give something in exchange as the price of such a relinquishment, and nothing can be cheaper than the plan I have proposed.

Will it be contended that this is granting too much? Will it be contended that a neutral flag shall protect every thing that sails under it? Surely to confide: give them ample powers to form a gentlemen will except articles deemed contraband of war, and armed enemies of a belligerent. They must go further: they must abandon the protection of native subjects of a foreign power, when obtain a peace and secure your just rights more they trust themselves beyond our territorial jurisdiction, without regard to party, would be willing to confide: give them ample powers to form a gentlemen will except articles deemed contraband of war, and armed enemies of a belligerent. They

the pivot on which this war depends—do all this; let him immediately appoint one or more honest, able, independent commissioners; men who nei-

ther have nor expect an office; men, in whom the sole question which is now of war, and armed enemies of a belligerent. They

should then be united in any war for essential assertion of such a right we are entering the list

against the law and practice of perhaps every nation in the world which pretends to regard civilization or law. For, although I admit that all ci-

others are injured by our neglect, with what propriety can we complain if that injury should happen to be made to recoil upon ourselves? unless, indeed, effectual means are taken to prevent its recurrence.

If this position is true, let it be applied to the question now in dispute. I conceive it must irresistibly follow that our hands are not

entirely clear, and that it is our duty to make them so before they are further steeped in blood. Before

I enter into the examination of the question of impressment—the only avowed existing object of

the war—permit me to declare, as the firm conviction of my understanding, that if this question, as

it at present stands, under the peculiar circumstances of the two nations could be fully and fairly understood by the people of this country, they

would not sustain the war in which we are involved for one single hour.

No sir, a war never can, it never ought to be sustained for the protection of British subjects, or foreigners of any descrip-

tion who may come among us, unless they remain within the territorial jurisdiction of the U. States.

On the contrary, if Great Britain will not be satisfied to arrange this subject fairly, so as to exempt us from the abuse of the practice of impressing

from our vessels, when such security as is in our

power to give, and such as she ought to ask, is given her, that none of her seafaring subjects shall be employed in our public or merchant vessels,

then we shall have a cause of war (and be united in it) more worthy of the energies of this nation.

How far we have the right, or how expedient it may be for the legislature to restrict the claims of

one, the very inconsiderable, class of seamen, viz.

those British seamen who have previously to the existing war been regularly naturalized agreeably

her—she makes it a crime in her seamen to serve to the laws of the United States. How far I say,

it would be constitutional and just to interfere with or friends—she punishes as pirates all masters of

vessels, whether naturalized or settled in other countries, who take commissions or use any other

peculiar description of persons. I am not at this moment prepared to say—I believe, however, the flag than that of France—if her seamen are found

number is so inconsiderable that it would not pro-

duce any ruinous obstacle to an arrangement which

would be otherwise desirable to the two nations.

The whole number of seamen of this description are some of the regulations which exist, and had

during the whole period from 1796 to 1811, agreeably to a report of the secretary of state, amount only to 1332, and from the opinion of gentlemen well informed on this subject, it is highly probable at the period of the declaration of war, and perhaps at this moment, there are not one hundred regularly naturalized British seamen in our service. It is probable, therefore, that in a negotiation commenced and prosecuted with friendly dispositions, the abstract question of right might not arise; and if it did, both parties regarding and French court that they were born in an allied or looking to the future more than the past would not permit so inconsiderable a practical and postural flag in the ports of France were ordered to evil to become a serious object of contestation.

As to those foreigners who may be hereafter naturalized, we have complete control over the subject—they ought not to have a claim on protection, if they are not content with the blessings of our laws and our land without placing themselves in the power of their native sovereign. Sir, it would seem, if indeed any reliance is to be had on a very extraordinary document furnished by the executive during the present session of congress, purporting to be the detail of an interesting conversation between Mr. Russell and Lord Castlereagh on the 6th of September last, that Mr. Russell, tho' not authorised by his government so to do, did propose that the laws to be passed by us, and to take effect on the discontinuance of the practice of impressment, should prohibit the employment of the native subjects or citizens of the one state, excepting such only as had already been naturalized, on board the private or public ships of the other. This proposition, although not authorised, and not considered as binding on the executive, is certainly entitled to due consideration by us, from the time and manner of its being made, and the *sancion* most unquestionably implied from the silence of the executive, in relation to this proposition. Thus the subject is induced by the showing of our own cabinet, not so much to the violation of a right as the occasional abuse of the exercise of a right.

How then does the question really and fairly stand, for which it is alleged this war is and ought to be prosecuted, at the hazard of every thing dear to a prosperous and happy people. The claim of the British government is to take from the merchant vessels of other countries British subjects.

We complain that in the practice commanders of British ships of war often take from merchant ves-

sels of the United States American citizens. If, then, the right of search is not denied; if the invariable principle of national allegiance and protection is admitted, so far as gives to the sovereign a right to their services of the native citizens or subjects in time of war, or when the exigencies of the state may require them, it follows that this practice of impressment from our vessels, springs from our employment of her seamen in our merchant service regardless of the injury inflicted by depriving her of the services of that class of her

subjects, more than all others essential to her safety in time of war, and at all times to the general prosperity of that nation. This practice being induced and defended for the reasons above stated, will not be relinquished till something is done, some plan adopted which will remedy the evil complained of, for which impressment is now resorted to. We will have to give something in exchange as the price of such a relinquishment, and nothing can be cheaper than the plan I have proposed.

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much? Will it be contended that a neutral flag

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of war, and armed enemies of a belligerent. They

must go further: they must abandon the protec-

tion of native subjects of a foreign power, when

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they trust themselves beyond our territorial juris-

speedily, more effectually, and more satisfactorily,

dictio, and thus fall into the hands of their origi-

to the people of this country, than by all the mi-

litary operations in the compass of your power. If

be interminable, at eas whil Great Britain has

then, after doing every thing, which, as a just and

a flag on the ocean. Should we be successful in

honorable people, we ought to do, not only to se

the contest, the principle will not be sanctioned by

any nation regardful of its maritime power, and

injury to the rights of others, we should unfortu-

nately fail in obtaining peace and justice, we pos-

sess superior naval prowess. Moreover, in the

assertion of such a right we are entering the list

against the law and practice of perhaps every na-

tion in the world which pretends to regard civili-

zation or law. For, although I admit that all ci-

vilized nations recognize, in some form or other,

the rights and privileges of naturalization, yet they

equally agree in the doctrine of perpetual allegi-

ance, and deny that naturalization by a foreign

power gives to the person naturalized any new

claims to protection against his own sovereign.

Much less, therefore, are persons to be protected

who are bound by no tie to any country, except

the tie resulting from allegiance and protection,

which is only due to and from the native state.

This, sir, is the doctrine of approved writers on

national law. It is the uniform doctrine of Great

Britain, and is recognized not only by the prac-

tice of France, but by a variety of statutes and

edicts of that country, both before and since the

revolution—she not only denies the right of pro

tection to the naturalized person against his own

sovereign, but denies to neutrals the right to na-

turalize her enemies so as to protect them against

her arms; and authorizes the seizure of her own

seamen on board neutral vessels at sea. Yes, sir,

these practices and these pretensions have been

enforced upon us by the officers of the French

government in a variety of instances, and so far

from those officers considering it an offence, they

have reproached our government for seducing

their seamen into our service—not have I heard a

whisper of complaint on this subject against the

French government. Who is there that has paid

any attention to the proceedings of France on his

subject, that is ignorant of the rigid vigilance

with which she has endeavored to secure to her-

self the services of her own seamen both in peace

and war, and the little ceremony with which neu-

tral or naturalized seamen have been treated by

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moment prepared to say—I believe, however, the

flag than that of France—if her seamen are found

number is so inconsiderable that it would not pro-

duce any ruinous obstacle to an arrangement which

would be otherwise desirable to the two nations.

These, sir, are some of the doctrines and prac-

ties of France; their cruelty and injustice in ma-

ny respects must be admitted by all; they tran-

scend any British pretensions which have ever

come to my knowledge; they are adduced, not to

palliate the conduct of the British government,

but to shew the conduct of different nations on the

subject for which the war is now continued, and

not to shew, that whilst we assert the prin-

ciple that our flag shall be the shield of protection

to every foreigner who may take refuge under it,

this war will be eternal, if not universal.

One word more, sir, on this part of the subject

—it is this: independent of the existence of the

war and the intrinsic delicacy and perplexity of

the question of which I have been treating, and

setting aside all considerations of injury and ab-

stract right both in relation to ourselves and others,

there is something of superior encouragement and pa-

tronage due from us to our native sons. National

honor and national safety require that your navies,

and your armies too, should be composed of the

natives of our soil. It ill befits us to share the

toils and honors of defending our country with

those who have no interest in it. Already has the

glory of the late brilliant naval achievement, the

capture of the Guerriere by the Constitution, un-

der command of Capt. Hull, been somewhat tar-

nished by the fact, or at least the belief, that great

part of our crew were Britons. Call not foreign

ers to your aid, let American battles be fought by

America's sons; to them impart the honor or the

shame.

As to the bill under consideration, I consider it

a perfect nullity in point of practical efficiency. It

will add to expenses already too great for the peo-

ple to bear or this legislature fairly to provide:

for, sir, so tottering are the props of this war, they

will fall the instant you touch the pockets of the

people in any way which you will see, feel and

understand. I know your reliance is on loans, to</p