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CONVENTION OF NEW JERSEY. (Concluded.)

We cease, fellow citizens, to reflect on these direful but certain consequences of a protracted WAR. Your own cool reflections will go far beyond the reach of these remarks to open to you its certain miseries—its doubtful issue, and multiplied horrors. Those of us, and of you, who have witnessed its scenes of distress, in the revolution which is past, can want no dissuatives. We address ourselves more especially to those who may be strangers as yet to the calamities of war. In the sincerity of our hearts, and what but motives of love to our country can influence us, we intreat our fellow citizens, if any of them could lend their ear to this war, to pause, before they give it their approbation, or, by stimulating it forward, make too wide the breach to be healed.

Those of our rulers who imprudently have pledged themselves, step by step, to war—those who consult their passions, or profit from commissions, army employments and public offices—men in the southern and western states who will suffer little; all, indeed, who will thrive and grow great upon its length and devastations—nay, even many sincere friends of their country, may unthinkingly, or rashly advise you to war. But in a matter of this importance, let each Citizen calmly judge for himself. Let the prudent, the impartial and disinterested—the *Great Body of FARMERS, MECHANICS, LABOURERS, MERCHANTS*, and every class and description of industrious and good citizens, ask themselves, whether they expect that a long and deadly warfare, for such causes as have been mentioned, will be better than continued Peace, Commerce, Agriculture, Security, and Union, among ourselves?

Is it not evidently better to regain Peace, and all its certain advantages, than to proceed in the dangerous path of war? Surely we may anticipate that a People so enlightened and thoughtful of consequences, will not decide to carry on this war, so declared, longer than the time necessary to procure its constitutional REPEAL. We trust that most of our citizens will see the policy and the benefits of Neutrality, and of going back to the ground of Negotiation.

Do our Fellow-Citizens enquire then, how they are to prevent the calamities of War, and how they shall regain the blessings of Peace? We answer—that with yourselves rests the choice of either. The act declaring war is but a law—with no force or permanence beyond any other law carried through by a majority in Congress. It differs only in its importance and in the dreadful consequences to society. If rashly declared by rulers and blindly continued by the people. Being a law, however, it is our bounden duty to obey it—to yield our personal service under it when not legally exempted, or pay the requisitions made on property, when rightfully demanded; and all this while it continues in force. But as on every other act of the public servants, it is the right of those who appoint them to determine on its fitness to promote their good, the people are not bound to approve this or any other law; nor is it their duty to enrage the public passions—exciting them to violence and denunciations; inveighing, with thoughtless bitterness against those citizens who sincerely and constitutionally exercise the rights of freemen in endeavours to restore speedy Peace to the country.

We have heard and examined all the reasons and pretexts, for this War. Our judgements—all the ties by which we feel bound to the hand of our nativity, constrain us to decide for peace, and to invite all our fellow-citizens to join with us in its speedy attainment. Do you ask us again how you are now to obtain Peace and its blessing since war is begun. We answer by FREEDOM OF SPEECH—FREE-DOM OF THE PRESS and by our Rights of SUFFRAGE.

It is the high prerogative of the People—it is the distinguishing excellence of their happy constitutions, when, from error, or sinister councils, grievous and ill-

judged laws are passed by persons in office under them, contrary to their interest and wishes; it is, we say, the right and *Great Good of the People*, to obtain a REPEAL of such obnoxious laws through the agency of other representatives. How many of such laws passed by even large majorities, has the *Voice of the People* condemned and their new representatives abolished. Errors, grievous errors, are fallen into by governments, as well as individuals.

Our path then, fellow-citizens, is a familiar one; it is plain, lawful and honorable. We must obtain a *Repeal* of this law, by choosing Public Representatives, both in the *Federal and State Legislatures*, who, instead of exciting war will comply with the wishes and fulfill the duties they owe to the People, by an immediate *repeal* of the act declaring war.

Our petitions for peace have been rejected—nay, contemptuously treated by many of the administrators of government. A majority of our state representatives in Congress, to their great honor, but in vain, have recorded their solemn vote against the war bill. They knew upon whom the weight of it was to fall!—Not upon the chief instigators of it, but upon their own and the eastern states! It is not to be expected that the men who have made the war will repeal the law, and thus restore peace. Nay, we are told, it shall continue until England yields to conditions which we may well believe she never will yield to, especially when attempted to be extorted from her by force of arms.

Those who have commenced the war say they aim at peace also, and expect to arrive at it through a long and precarious struggle, by forcing England to submission. The means we propose for peace, is to end this impolitic and hazardous undertaking at once, by a change of rulers. A very few friends of peace added to those numerous, able and patriotic opposers of war, now in our councils, will effect a repeal of the war bill.

This will place us, by a mere ordinary act of legislation, on the ground we were—it will then be for us to stand on the defensive, and treat with Great Britain in the true spirit of peace and mutual concession. We need not fear that our new councils will dishonor and abandon their country—we believe new councils can make a speedy and honorable adjustment, but not while the war bill is in the way. It is the interest of England to be on good terms with America; this we repeat, will be easily effected, when the administration is changed, and persons not committed to this course of things, are chosen; and when this now insuperable bar of war is removed, by repealing the law which declared it.

In the mean time, and until this salutary change can be effected by our VOTES, we must indeed suffer much from hostility, and many losses be sustained; nothing however compared with those a continuance of war will produce. Our elections are near—they ought and can assure to us an end of these scenes, and of all the calamities which protracted hostilities, growing more dreadful as they lengthen, will inevitably produce. We intreat you, fellow-citizens, then, to decide on PEACE, not through war, but by the constitutional and speedy effect of your Elections. Choose men to represent you who you know are for peace, and an honourable, speedy and practicable adjustment of differences with Great Britain.—Our happy constitution, foreseeing and providing against the fatal errors into which even majorities in the public councils often fall, puts it in the power of the people to get back to the ground of safety, by procuring a correction of the proceeding, through new representatives. We are soon to be called to the choice of *Electors of President and Vice President*—members of Congress, and our own state officers. Never could a call be made upon us more solemnly to UNITE; not to APPROVE, carry on, and inflame this impolitic and rashly declared War; but to unite in adding to our public councils faithful advocates of Peace, Commerce and Agriculture; men who are not pledged by their previous conduct, passions and interests of office, to persevere in an injurious and uncertain war are—Men who will join with those now in office and friendly to peace in its restoration. Happy for our country, if a majority is attained in the public departments, who may be disposed to repeal the war act, in the next Congress, our disputes with Great Britain, which are nothing in the scale against peace, may

be quickly and honorably adjusted, not by the SWORD, as is now preferred, but thro' the agency of mutual interests and friendly negotiation.

It is amazing, that a few men, capable of turning the majority either way, should in such a state of unpreparedness, with divided councils, and a divided country, and against the declared and solemn remonstrances of the people, have cast their votes on the side of involving these States in the horrors, uncertainty, and burthens of War.

In conducting our measures to obtain a change of councils, this CONVENTION feel it their duty to declare, they ought to be temperate, well weighed and firm;—it is not a time for the true friends of their country to shrink from their duty. This is no question of a small concern. It must and should call to its aid, the sober thought, the reflecting judgment, and the steady purposes of the good and independent Electors and Citizens of New-Jersey, no matter of what party. It is their privilege, and great security, when grievances occur, to redress them by a change of men and measures.

This is the remedy at hand to us, on this trying occasion—and like men and brethren let us lay hold of it.

That a war party is organized, who will stimulate the passions of the people, by appeals to their power and prowess, and by exciting prejudice against those who perceive the necessity of changing our public councils, is already but too evident.

This convention is aware of the frequency and effect of thus operating on the public mind; but their confidence rests on the final good sense and judgment of a wise and discerning people. They will look to the men and the principles—to the reasons which have most weight; above all, their own solid reflections on the nature, evils and uncertainties of War, will, we trust, lead to a right conclusion, even though some of them may entertain resentments justly towards England.

Even those who are for War, and who shall take such means to succeed in continuing it, are yet entitled to the rights of free opinions and free suffrage. On the other hand, this Convention feel it due to the great body of their fellow-citizens, whom they represent, and who are opposed to this war—of all parties—to assert and maintain, in their behalf, the great rights of a free Press—free speech and opinions—and of free Suffrage:—These are the bulwarks of liberty: Bad laws, and misguided councils, measures most fatal to the best interests of society, would proceed and be executed with high handed oppression—they could never be changed—if force—terror—and menaces, could lawfully be employed to silence complaint, and hide the people's interests and dangers from their view; Every man in society has a right—it is a duty to himself and country, publicly to examine the policy and tendencies of any law; to obey it while in force;—but if he deems it pernicious to state every objection to it, which exists, and every evil consequence which may flow from its continuance, in order to obtain its repeal, by electing men who will repeal it. Especially is it the duty of every man, who is convinced that a law declaring war, is most impolitic and will if continued ruin, or go far to ruin the country, to lift his voice on the side of peace and of repeal. Should, therefore any man or set of men, be so lost to decency, and so inimical to the liberties of speech, of the press, and of suffrages, as to attempt to overawe the people—by menaces, by terror, under the pretext so often used to trifle truth, that they are traitors, Tories, and enemies—because they advocate a change of rulers and a repeal of a law, which they deem the greatest grievance ever brought on them; of such men, promoting such arbitrary doctrines by such unworthy means, let us all beware. They cannot fellow-citizens, be the friends of freedom or their country:—Such conduct will receive, as it ought, the condemnation of every independent freeman be for War or Peace.

Let those who advocate the continuance of the men in power and of this law, be heard;—let them freely prove the necessity, benefits and blessings to the country, if they can of the war.—On the other hand, those who consider that our councils should be changed, and the war law be repealed, as productive of many and irreparable grievances and consequences;—it is their right and duty to set forth their reasons, and by every lawful and public means promote

the wished for change. If this were not so an infatuated or misguided administration have only to declare War, and it becomes perpetual—no voice must be heard to procure its repeal.

Already have many states—a great portion of the people—most of our own immediate representatives, and distinguished men in our councils—protested against the measure of war as big with danger to our Interests, Liberty and Union: They are now, since its passage—by addresses—by the press—by freedom of speech and opinions, exposing its mischiefs and dangers—and preparing the minds of their fellow-citizens to obtain its repeal, by changing the public officers: Are all these States, distinguished men and citizens enemies and traitors to the country?—Those who shall inculcate such sentiments and principles as these, may for a short time succeed in heating the passions of an unthinking few—but its influence cannot reach, to intimidate or control the free-electors of these, states, from setting forth the grievances of laws, or other measures, or changing the councils which made them—and thus in the only constitutional way they have, producing their repeal.

Fellow-citizens, we close this address, with repeating our hope and belief—that the only great question with us all, in our ensuing elections—will be—whether we shall change our councils and repeal the war bill; treating further with England on the points of difference, in amicable negotiation, before the war has become fixed too deep to be removed.—Or whether we prefer its continuance, with all its certain evils and uncertain prospects of obtaining the least good.

This is a fair, and lawful, and constitutional question; it is the most solemn one ever bro't before the people, and their VOTES, after hearing and reflecting on all the reasons for and against, must and ought to decide it.—For ourselves, we have carefully avoid every subject and circumstance of the administration. This law declaring war, stands by itself.—We think sincerely and unanimously, that the best, and most important interests of the country, demand its speedy repeal and that to effect this, a new administration should be chosen. Our reasons are before you and the world—we have presented them to no particular set of men, or party; but to ALL. We have laid aside every feeling, but what arises out of this momentous question—involving so many dear and permanent interests. Our language is plain and unreserved, as our rights and duty demanded in so great a cause. Our proceedings are wrapt in no secrecy—nor are we unknown to our fellow-citizens. What we have said and advised—is the result of calm reflection & undoubted conviction. If we have erred we trust no man can charge us with being enemies to our country—bound to it as we are, by so many ties of interest, affection and duty. We are the open, sincere advocates, and shall be, in all our relations and situations, of a change in our public councils, and a speedy repeal, by Congress, of the act declaring War.

In this change of councils exists the common safety.—It will prudently arrest the dangerous career into which an ill-timed and unnecessary war is hastening the Country—and preserve from further destruction, more substantial blessings yet in our possession than any other People now in the world enjoy.

Signed by order of the Convention,
JONATHAN ELMER, Chairman.
JOHN GUTWATER, Secretary.
Trenton, 4th July, 1812.

FROM THE UNITED STATES GAZETTE.

That the peaceable and orderly people of Baltimore, the most democratic city in the union, who are so unfortunate as not to believe in every article of the political faith of Jefferson and his disciples, should be proscribed persecuted, and even murdered is not greatly to be wondered at. The consummation of democracy, in all countries has been despotism of the most intolerant species, and it would be unwise in us to flatter ourselves with a hope of being exempted from the operation of a principle so universal. Whenever a people is once wrought up to such a pitch of credulity, by the arts of demagogues, as implicitly to believe that every atrocity perpetrated by their idols is calculated to promote their interests and the general good, then is the fruit of democracy fast ripening, and the season may always be known by the apathy with which the most alarming outrages