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## CONGRESS.

THE House having resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. Dent in the chair, to consider the following answer to the President's address:

The committee to whom it was referred to prepare an answer to the speech of the President of the United States, communicated to both houses of Congress, on Tuesday the 16th May, 1797, report the following:

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

SIR,

The interesting detail of those events, which have rendered the convention of Congress, at this time, indispensable, (communicated in your speech to both houses) has excited in us the strongest emotions—While we regret the occasion, we cannot omit to testify our approbation of the measure, and to pledge ourselves that no considerations of private inconvenience, shall prevent, on our part, a faithful discharge of the duties to which we are called.

We have constantly hoped, that the nations of Europe, whilst desolated by foreign wars, or convulsed by intestine divisions, would have left the United States to enjoy that peace and tranquility, to which the impartial conduct of our government has entitled us; and it is now with extreme regret, we find the measures of the French republic tending to endanger a situation so desirable and interesting to our country.

Upon this occasion, we feel it our duty to express, in the most explicit manner, the sensations which the present crisis has excited, and to assure you of our zealous co-operation in those measures which may appear necessary for our security or peace.

Although it is the first and most ardent wish of our hearts that peace may be maintained with the French republic and with all the world; yet we can never surrender those rights which belong to us as a nation—and whilst we view with satisfaction the wisdom, dignity, and moderation, which have marked the measures of the supreme executive of our country, in its attempts to remove, by candid explanations, the complaints and jealousies of France, we feel the full force of that indignity which has been offered our country in the rejection of its minister. No attempts to wound our rights as a sovereign state will escape the notice of our constituents: they will be felt with indignation, and repelled with that decision which shall convince the world that we are not a degraded people, that we can never submit to the demands of a foreign power, without examination, and without discussion.

Knowing as we do, the confidence reposed by the people of the United States in their government, we cannot hesitate in expressing our indignation at the sentiments disclosed by the President of the Executive Directory of France, in his speech to the minister of the United States. Such sentiments serve to discover the imperfect knowledge which France possesses of the real opinions of our constituents. An attempt to separate them from themselves; and although foreigners, who know not the genius of our country, may have conceived the project, and foreign emissaries may attempt its execution, yet the united efforts of our fellow citizens, will convince the world of its impracticability.

Happy would it have been if the transactions disclosed in your communication had never taken place, or that they could have been concealed. Sensibly, however, as we feel the wound which has been inflicted, we think with you, that neither the honour nor the interest of the United States forbid the repetition of advances for preserving peace; and we are happy to learn that such attempts at negotiation will be communicated: nor can we too strongly express our sincere desires that an accommodation may take place, on terms, compatible with the rights, interest, and honour of our nation. Fully, however, impressed with the uncertainty of the result, we shall prepare to meet with fortitude, any unfavourable events which may occur, and to extricate ourselves from the consequences with all the skill we possess, and all the efforts in our power. Believing with you, that the conduct of the government has been just and impartial to foreign nations, that the laws for the preservation of peace have been proper, and that they have been fairly executed, the representatives of the people do not hesitate to declare, that they will give their most cordial support to the execution of principles so deliberately and uprightly established.

The many interesting subjects which you have recommended to our consideration, which are so strongly enforced by this most important occasion, will receive every attention which their importance demands; and we trust, that by the decided and explicit conduct which will govern our deliberations, every insinuation will be repelled which is derogatory to the honour and independence of our country.

Permit us, in offering this address, to express our satisfaction at your promotion to the first office in the government, and our entire confidence that the pre-eminent talents and patriotism which have placed you in this distinguished situation, will enable you to discharge its various duties with satisfaction to yourself, and advantage to our common country.

A member suggested the idea of using a term less strong than the report contained—it was to substitute sensibility for indignation—which he judged would produce less irritation, a circumstance to be avoided as much as possible on the present occasion.

Mr. Nicholas apprehended from the effect of a rule of the house that he should be prevented from making an alteration in a paragraph of such amendments was agreed to, as it would affect the sense of order to move to strike out the whole paragraph so amended; he wished therefore to be indulged in a motion he had prepared and which if agreed to would supercede the necessity of the gentleman's alterations. He then moved to insert between the second and third paragraphs the following amendment:

After the first section insert,

Although we are actuated by the utmost solicitude for the maintenance of peace with the French Republic and with all the world, the rejection of our minister, and the manner of dismissing him from the territories of France, have excited our warmest sensibility; and, if followed by similar measures and a refusal of all negotiation on the subject of our mutual complaints will put an end to every friendly relation between the two countries; but we flatter ourselves that the government of France only intended to suspend the ordinary diplomatic intercourse and to bring into operation these extraordinary agencies which are in common use between nations and which are confined in their intention to the great causes of difference—We, therefore, receive with the utmost satisfaction your information, that a fresh attempt at negotiation will be instituted, and we expect with confidence that a mutual spirit of conciliation and a disposition on the part of the United States to place France on the footing of other countries, by removing the inequalities which may have arisen in the operation of our respective treaties with them will produce an accommodation compatible with the engagements, rights, duties, and honour of the U. States.

We will consider the several subjects which you have recommended to our consideration with the attention which their importance demand, and will zealously co-operate in those measures which shall appear necessary for our own security or peace.

Whatever difference of opinion may have existed amongst the people of the United States upon national subjects, we cannot believe that any serious expectation can be entertained of withdrawing the support of the people from their constitutional agents, and we should hope that the recollection of the miseries which she herself has suffered from a like interference, would prevent any such attempt by the Republic of France; but we explicitly declare for ourselves and our constituents, that such an attempt would meet our highest indignation, and we will repel every unjust demand on the United States by foreign countries, that we will ever consider the humiliation of the government as the greatest personal disgrace.

May 25.

Yesterday at 12 o'clock, the Senate in a body, waited on the President of the United States, at his own house, and presented the following address, in answer to his speech to both houses of Congress, at the opening of the session.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

SIR,

The senate of the United States request you to accept their acknowledgments for the comprehensive and interesting detail you have given in your speech to both houses of Congress, on the existing state of the union.

While we regret the necessity of the present meeting of the legislature, we wish to express our entire approbation of your conduct in convening it, on this momentous occasion.

The superintendance of our national faith, honour

and dignity, being in a great measure constitutionally deposited with the executive, we observe, with singular satisfaction, the vigilance, firmness, and promptitude, exhibited by you, in this critical state of our public affairs, and from hence derive an evidence and pledge of the rectitude and integrity of your administration. And we are sensible, it is an object of primary importance, that each branch of the government should adopt a language and system of conduct, which shall be cool, just, and dispassionate, but firm, explicit and decided.

We are equally desirous, with you to observe peace and friendship with all nations, and are happy to be informed, that neither the honour nor interests of the United States, forbid advances for securing these desirable objects, by amicable negotiation with the French republic. This method of adjusting national differences, is not only the most mild, but the most rational and humane, and with governments disposed to be just, can seldom fail of success, when fairly, candidly and sincerely used. If we have committed errors, and can be made sensible of them, we agree with you, in opinion, that we ought to correct them, and compensate the injuries which may have been consequent thereon; and we trust the French republic will be actuated by the same just and benevolent principles of national policy.

We do therefore most sincerely approve of your determination to promote and accelerate an accommodation of our existing differences with that republic by negotiation, on terms compatible with the rights, duties, interests and honour of our nation—And you may rest assured, of our most cordial co-operation, so far as it may become necessary, in this pursuit.

Peace and harmony with all nations is our sincere wish, but such being the lot of humanity that nations will not always reciprocate peaceful dispositions; it is our firm belief that effectual measures of defence will tend to inspire that national self-respect and confidence at home, which is the unfailing source of respectability abroad, to check aggression and prevent war.

While we are endeavouring to adjust our differences with the French republic by amicable negotiation, the progress of the war in Europe, the depredations on our commerce, the personal injuries to our citizens, and the general complexion of affairs, prove to us your vigilant care, in recommending to our attention effectual measures of defence.

Those which you recommend whether they relate to external defence, by permitting citizens to arm for the purpose of repelling aggressions on their commercial rights, and by providing sea convoys, or to internal defence, by increasing the establishment of artillery and cavalry, by forming a provisional army, by revising the militia laws, and fortifying, more completely, our ports and harbours; will meet our consideration under the influence of the same just regard for the security, interest, and honour of our country—which dictated your recommendation.

Practice so unnatural and iniquitous as those you state, of our own citizens, converting their property and personal exertions into the means of annoying our trade, and injuring their fellow-citizens, deserve legal severity commensurate with their turpitude.

Although the senate believe, that the prosperity and happiness of our country does not depend on general and extensive political connexions with European nations, yet we can never lose sight of the propriety as well as necessity of enabling the executive, by sufficient and liberal supplies, to maintain, and even to extend our foreign intercourse, as exigencies may require, reposing full confidence in the executive, in whom the constitution has placed the powers of negotiation.

We learn with sincere concern, that attempts are in operation to alienate the affections of our fellow-citizens from their government. Attempts so wicked, wherever they exist, cannot fail to excite our utmost abhorrence. A government chosen by the people for their own safety and happiness, and calculated to secure both, cannot lose their affections, so long as its administration pursues the principles upon which it was erected.—And your resolution to observe a conduct just and impartial to all nations, a sacred regard to our national engagements, and not to impair the right of our government, contains principles which cannot fail to secure to your administration the support of the national Legislature, to render abortive every attempt to excite dangerous jealousies among us, and to convince the world that our government and your administration of it cannot be separated from the affectionate support of every good citi-