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OUR ARE THE PLANS OF FAIR AND LIGHTFUL PEACE, UNWARY'D BY PARTY RAGE, TO LIVE LIKE BROTHERS.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE REGISTER

Mr. GALES.

BEING myself a farmer, I have very sensibly felt the injury to my annual income from the measure lately adopted—the Embargo; and which from representations which I have heard, I might have believed to be unnecessary, and a war on trial of our firmness. Nay, sir, I know that some of my neighbors went so far as to write to our Representative in Congress (who, I have heard it said, voted against this measure only because he conceived it premature) approving his opposition to that and other measures. I could not join in this conduct; for, willing at all times to submit to inconvenience when the good of my country requires it, I was led to enquire minutely into the causes which have produced the embargo. In the course of my enquiry, I have discovered that no embargo existed for these six months past, we should not only have been in precisely the same situation in which we now find ourselves; but, in addition to this, our mercantile brethren would have been impoverished by spoliations which they could not retaliate, and the sovereignty of our country outraged by maritime aggressions which we could not have repelled—I have found that the British orders of council, together with the French decrees, have completely interdicted the whole commerce of the United States.—I have found that the French decree issued in the latter end of November, 1806, was never carried into execution against American vessels until October, 1807, when a single case occurred, which could not have been known at the Court of London when the British orders were issued, under pretence of retaliation on France for her decrees; although in fact they do not materially affect France, whilst they operate a total desolation of neutral commerce. I have discovered that the conduct of Great-Britain has manifested a systematic determination to render this country subservient to her interest. Why, sir, she has taxed us now in a manner to which we would not submit when we were her colonies, dependant upon and ruled by her. By her orders of council, she prevents us sailing but where she pleases, and imposes a tax on all American produce re-exported from England; this in fact saying, you shall trade no where except you pay us taxes on the amount of your exportation; you shall not trade except your trade contributes to support the glory of his Britannic Majesty. Would Americans submit to this? Could I be so destitute of common attachment to my country, and the blessings which we have enjoyed, as to REFINE at measures which her independence, which is every existing case commercial nation have demanded? Sir, I am full of this subject; I could write volumes on it; but there has, by the kindness of a friend, a paper lately fallen into my hands, in which the subject is explained in so luminous a manner, that it would be worse than arrogance in me to attempt to illustrate it. I request you will find room, amongst the mass of interesting matter which at this time weekly crowds your columns, for the enclosed. I enclose a circular letter from a respectable and worthy Representative from the State of Virginia to his constituents, and will prove to all considerate men that our present stagnation of business is not imputable to the embargo alone, but to the flagrant injustice (to give it no harsher epithet) of foreign nations. It is unanswerable; and has afforded conviction to my mind of the wisdom of the measures of our government. It will be found to contain fact, not misrepresentation; argument, not assertion.

A Citizen of Orange County.

Washington, April 23d, 1808

SIR,

AT the close of the last session of Congress I gave you a view of our situation, in the highest degree flattering to every American. It was strictly true, and if I am compelled now to change the aspect of affairs, I am bound in truth to attribute it to the progress of events which

could neither be foreseen or prevented, to the injustice of foreign governments, and not to the indiscretion of our own. When satisfied of this fact, you will naturally direct your indignation against the disturbers of our repose, and exert all your energies to support the cause of your country. It has been the favorite object of the present administration, and the unequivocal wish of the people of the United States to preserve a neutral character, and avoid participation in the present European war. Considerations not less wise than humane have dictated this policy; considerations dear to every man who prefers tranquility to confusion; prosperity to national ruin. In no instance have we departed from the most pious impartiality towards all nations; & if we have been compelled at any time to adopt precautionary measures, they have been indisputably pacific, intended to prevent injuries unprovoked, often repeated, and never redressed. It is to be regretted this department has not been reciprocated; but on the contrary has excited feelings, inspired pretensions, and produced designs hostile to the peace, if not the liberty of America. I however trust, we have still wisdom to perceive, and firmness to pursue a course which will ultimately extricate us from the fate of those nations who have fallen victims to the seductive influence of foreign intrigues, or their own inordinate ambition.

The commerce of the U. States has been occasionally harassed from 1793, by vexatious and restrictions, inconvenient, but not absolutely ruinous to it. Those restrictions have upon proper representation been abandoned; their recent renewal by the British and French governments to a ruinous extent, little short of actual war, and other aggressions equally insupportable, have reduced the U. States to the alternative of sacrificing temporarily their external trade, or engaging in hostilities for its protection. The conduct of Great-Britain has at all times furnished materials for complaint, since the peace of 1783; but particularly during the war which originated with the French Revolution; the various orders of council, violating the laws of nations; the practice of impressing American citizens on board British ships, and the insolent conduct of her naval officers in our harbors and near our coasts, have justly irritated the people of this country. On one occasion, the peace of the two countries has been prolonged only by the moderation of our government. It must still be fresh in your recollection what occurred in '94, how much the commerce of the United States suffered from British cruizers, and the treaty to which we submitted, conceding every thing on our part. This instrument, though faithfully executed by us, has not satisfied England; she has continued to indulge herself in new innovations upon our rights, to which she adheres with obstinacy. Aware of the consequences which would result from those practices, the present administration endeavored to form a treaty, which would adjust the existing differences, and define the respective rights of the two nations. This effort, conducted with zeal and ability by the American ministers at London, has failed.

The President on the 23d of March laid before Congress the project of a treaty signed on the 31st of December, 1806, by the American ministers, which was sent back with instructions, to renew the negotiation, and obtain the insertion of some provision against the impressment of American seamen, and the modification of certain articles relative to the East and West-Indies, and colonial trade, and principles of blockade. I cannot pronounce with certainty upon the merits of the whole treaty, the documents are voluminous, and have not yet all been printed. There are, however, certain objections, which if not utterly insurmountable, justify the refusal to ratify it, unless changed. The first arises from a declaration of the British commissioners previous to signing the treaty that the British government reserved to itself the right of countervailing the measures of France against neutral commerce; and requiring the

United States to resist the French decree of 1806. This was certainly inadmissible. The United States could never consent to a treaty, by which they will absolutely be bound, and the other contracting party at liberty to violate it, whenever his convenience required it; of which he alone judged.

The treaty contained no provision for American seamen. It is well known how long the English have claimed the right of taking their own seamen wherever found, and how unjustly under that pretext they have impressed citizens of the U. States on board their ships of war, detained them in rigorous confinement during the continuance of the war, and compelled them to hazard their lives, not in defence of their country, but against those in amity with us. This practice has always formed a subject of serious complaint, and perhaps none has produced stronger feelings among the American people. The silence of the treaty, with regard to seamen, inasmuch as their protection and security formed the principle in inducement and object of negotiation, rendered it highly unacceptable to the government. It was attempted to supply the defect by an informal note, which pledged the British government to issue the most rigorous injunctions to the naval commanders to discriminate carefully, and in no instance molest citizens of the U. States. Such an arrangement could only be considered an indication of the dispositions of the existing ministry, and not a compact by which the nation was bound; a security insufficient, because it was temporary and dependent on the continuance in office of men who felt friendly dispositions. This construction was evidently given it by the British cabinet. From Mr. Canning's answer to Mr. Monroe, when reminded by him of his stipulation in favor of seamen, he declared he could only look into the body of the treaty for its contents, and not to an incidental paper. The other objections relate to the East and West-India, and colonial trade. The first is placed upon a footing less favorable than in the treaty of 1794; the second left as at present; and the third less favorable than it is established by the British orders of council, and the decisions of their admiralty courts.

The subsequent conduct of Great-Britain has lessened our regret very much for the failure of the negotiation, and diminished its importance; she has advanced principles against which the treaty in a much more perfect form would not present a barrier; and indeed seems to demonstrate the inefficiency of any treaty to secure our rights. On the 7th of January, 1807, only seven days after the treaty had been concluded, an order of council was issued, prohibiting Americans from trading between the different ports belonging to France and her allies, and compelling them to sell their cargoes at the first port they entered, whether in demand or not; plainly in violation of the 11th article, which expressly gives the right of "carrying freely to every part of Europe not blockaded," even colonial produce from the U. States. I shall not dwell on the injury done to our commerce by this regulation; but mention it to shew the little respect paid to the most solemn compact by that government, when in conflict with her power or interests. The orders of council of the 11th of November last, issued to counter-vail the French decree of 22d Nov. 1806, (extended in its construction to American vessels in August last) have given the finishing blow to the commerce of this country. They prohibit us from trading to any place but England and her dependencies, and impose a tax upon all articles shipped from thence elsewhere.—The actual amount of the tax fixed by Parliament is not yet known; but it is said to exceed one third of the value of some of our most important articles, in which are included cotton and tobacco. Upon the injustice of this order, it is impossible to comment in terms too harsh. It is a direct attack upon the sovereignty and independence of the United States, against which it was levelled; and is an odious attempt to tax them, without their own consent; commercial

ingenuity could not devise a more effectual plan to destroy our trade, and fetter the growth of our country. One of two things inevitably results; the whole commerce of the United States is limited to G. Britain, or that part of it struggling to find markets elsewhere, is exposed to certain ruin from the depredation of British cruizers. If shipments are restricted to England in conformity to the orders of council, they can never reach the continent of Europe, but will be confined absolutely to that market, because importations into the continental ports are rigorously interdicted through that channel, and because the duties imposed on exportations are so exorbitant as to check their consumption, if suffered to be imported. It is needless to recapitulate the regulations enforced in the ports of France and her allies, to prevent the entrance of produce which has touched at England; regulations too guarded to evade, and too penal to encounter.—From whence does England derive the right to forbid our trade except with herself? Can it be believed the people will submit to a demand which will virtually re-establish colonial dependence and burthen their produce with her system of taxation? The object is evidently to tax this country to support the war in which she is engaged, and not to prevent the supply of her enemies: since permission to carry them American and foreign produce, is granted, after a tax has been paid in England.—The avowed motive is therefore a mere pretext, equally shallow and unjust; intended more to injure our commerce than to distress France. I cannot for a moment believe the people of this country will surrender their independence and submit to the degradation of colonies, without a struggle. The immunities of colonies are not extended to us under the orders of council, whose prosperity is in some degree guaranteed by the supposed interest of the parent country in their growth and importance. If to us that feeble tie is denied, we may expect the commercial restrictions of England will be dictated by jealousy, not affection, rivalship and not coincidence of interest. Our trade is placed upon a basis less favorable than previous to the revolution; besides the oppressive tax the English wish to levy, they prohibit the trade in articles then free, and close channels of commerce then open. Thus we find our commerce exposed to all the restrictions of actual colonies and the dangers of war, without a formal declaration of it. To these injuries I must add another, though of a different character, not less offensive and intolerable. The attack on the frigate Chesapeake in June last. It is needless to call your attention to the particulars of that transaction, they have not yet been forgotten, and are fresh in your memory. Reparation has not been made; on the contrary we have been considered the aggressors; & the mockery of making reparation to the honor and feelings of the American nation, has closed with a demand which a just government would never propose, and a free one will never condescend to grant.

The decrees of the French government have exposed the commerce of the United States to the most unjustifiable seizures, contrary to the stipulations of the convention of 1800. The decree of the 22d November, 1806, and that issued at Milan 17th of December, 1807, subject to capture and condemnation all vessels bound to or returning from a British port, whatever may be the cargo. It is impossible to conceive measures more hostile, more subversive of justice and good faith, but as there is no man who will justify, there can be no necessity to examine more minutely the avowal of a principle so inconsistent with the treaty, repugnant to the law of nations, and destructive to the interests of the United States. Independent of the solemn obligations imposed by the treaty, to respect the commercial rights of this country, France ought to be more bound than any other nation, because she professes to contend against England for the establishment and support of the very principles she tramples under foot,

Though the terms of these decrees are general, it was believed the United States were excepted from the operation of the first, until a case occurred in August last, in which it was enforced against an American vessel stranded on the coast of France, & afterwards declared by the French government to extend to all neutral vessels. It is proper to remark that the American minister at Paris applied to the minister of marine, and was informed the treaty of 1800 would be the basis by which the courts of admiralty would be governed in their decisions upon our vessels. This explanation quieted the apprehensions, and the practice of the courts confirmed the confidence of our government in its correctness, until the case abovementioned occurred. It remains with the French government to reconcile to the respect due its own character, and the duty it owes to a neutral and friendly nation, the silence so long observed relative to the explanation of the minister of marine, and its subsequent disavowal. It was upon the reception of this intelligence, and the well founded anticipation of the British orders of council of the 11th of November, 1807, that the embargo was laid upon all American vessels and produce. By the joint operation of the decrees and orders of France and England, every American ship and cargo would be liable to capture and confiscation by the cruizers of one or the other. Vessels trading to England and her dependencies, by French ships of war, and those bound to ports from which the British flag is excluded, by English ships of war. It would be scarcely possible to escape the vigilance of their cruizers, whose exertions would be stimulated by the hopes of plunder, and the abundance of the spoil. Notwithstanding the timely precaution of this measure by which so many of our vessels have been restrained from the ocean, the captures have been numerous, and the losses sustained by our merchants heavy. If our vessels had been permitted to sail without restraint, they would have been infinitely greater. The injuries received from these nations have furnished ample cause for war; to a people less devoted to peace; but it was hoped by waiting until amicable explanations would take place, that either one or both, from a sense of justice or interest, would change the system adopted towards us.—With this view it seemed probable, the people would soon be relieved from the present pressure. The latest accounts from Europe indicate a continuance of the hostile temper of France and England; and we now have no alternative left but to withdraw from the present from the ocean, submit unconditionally to one of our opposers, or make war, in vindication of our honor and national rights.

After so long enjoying an extensive and lucrative trade, without interruption, finding a ready market for all our produce, and full employment for all our funds, the suspension of external trade will produce the most serious effects upon all classes of people in the community, as well upon the farmers as those who have been engaged in commerce. The sacrifices made by the embargo are however more apparent than real; they are produced by the restrictions of France and England upon our trade by shutting up the markets suited to the productions of our country, and confining them to those in which the consumption is too limited. Let it be supposed that the trade of America is regulated agreeably to the British orders of council, and that all our articles of domestic and foreign growth pass through British ports, and are consequently confined to them for sale. The quantity would so far exceed the demand as to reduce their value, to a price which would inevitably ruin the planter. The exports from the United States amounted during the last year to one hundred and eight millions of dollars, of which thirty one millions were sent to Great Britain and her dependencies. The remaining seventy-seven millions to other parts of the world, furnishing more ready sale and better prices.—This circumstance shews they were not wanted in England, and a great