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SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR. GILES,

Senate of the United States, On the 17th February, 1869, in support of the following Resolution, moved by him on the 2d of the same month.

Resolved, That the several laws laying an embargo on all ships and vessels in the ports and harbors of the United States, be repealed on the 4th day of March next, except as to Great Britain and France, and their dependencies; and that provision be made by law for prohibiting all commercial intercourse with these nations and their dependencies, and the importation of any article into the United States, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either of the said nations, or of the dominions of either of them.

(Continued.)

The next effort to display this energy makes its appearance in Sweden. A nation fighting for its independence against all Europe, and protected from their lawless power more from the inaccessibility of the country, its lakes, morasses, &c. than by its resources and arms. Under these circumstances, Sir J. Moore, a great military chief, is sent to offer to the king of Sweden the aid of British co-operation, probably the admission of the British fleet into Swedish ports. How was this flattering overture received by that monarch in the depth of his distress? Sir, he instantly saw the danger of British perfidy, and he ordered the messenger to be confined—to be incarcerated; but, fortunately for him, he escaped in disguise and disgrace. For this, and other acts, the king of Sweden has been called a madman: But, Sir, this act, in my judgment, serves to show that he is a statesman as well as a soldier.—The British perfidy towards Denmark, was the cause and the justification of his conduct. He had just seen the British, upon a false suggestion, seize upon the fleet of his neighbor, Denmark; and he justly concluded, that if he admitted a British fleet into his ports, his fleet would also be seized upon, and borne off, whenever the convenience or interest of Great Britain should require it.—Here, Sir, are seen some of the fruits of the perfidious energy practised upon Denmark. And in the month of July, 1808, Sir John Moore returned to London to give some mysterious and unintelligible account of the disgraceful issue of his perfidious embassy.

About the same time, those generous interposers in the affairs of other nations, sent a fleet and army to Portugal, their friend and ally, to aid the Portuguese in expelling or subduing a French army, then in the bosom of their country. These wretched and devoted people, deserted by a weak and impotent government, left almost without the smallest semblance of internal police, and struggling against a French army in their bosom, hailed with acclamations of joy the arrival of their generous deliverers. And what happens? In the month of September following, a convention for the evacuation of Portugal is made by the British and the French. The Portuguese, the principals in the war, and the allies of Great Britain, not even consulted; upon taking down the French standard of despotism, the Portuguese, with indignation and astonishment, behold, unfurled in its stead, the British standard of despotism.

I now find, Sir, from the London newspapers, by the last accounts from Portugal, that a formidable party was risen up against the regency; or in plain English, against British insolence and despotism: for, Sir, the cause of the regency is the cause of the British: and is not this the natural consequence of such conduct? Yes, Sir, that miserable and devoted people are probably divided in opinion: The one half thinks the despotism of their French oppressors the most intolerable; the other half that the despotism of their generous British deliverers still worse.

Spain is now also receiving the generous interposition of this energetic administration. The tragic scene in this devoted and confederated country is not yet closed, or, at least, not known here. But I should not be at all surprised to hear, by the very next intelligence which shall be waded from that bloody scene of action,

that the generous Britons have run away, and left the Spanish patriots in the lurch, and have forcibly borne away the Spanish fleet as a slight reward for the generous aid afforded the patriots. And if such should be the fact, Mr. President, do you not believe it would be justified in this country? Yes, Sir, some old rule, or some new rule, or some no rule, would instantly be hunted out for its justification. After so many atrocious acts of Great-Britain, affecting the dearest interests of our own country; have been justified, there is no act she could perform towards other nations, which would leave her without her advocates here.

I turn with disgust and mortification from this horrible picture of wrongs inflicted by Great Britain upon other nations, to a recollection and recapitulation of the injuries and insults heaped upon my own country, and particularly by the present energetic administration; and I feel degraded as an American, when I review and recollect our patient forbearance under them, and particularly, Sir, when I hear any one of my fellow-citizens say there are no causes of war; wait for a further accumulation of injuries and insults. I hope, Sir, I am mistaken in the views I have of the causes of war. A discovery of the mistake might relieve me from feelings which, as an American, I cannot but possess, but which I am unable to describe. But, Sir, to call the attention of gentlemen with more certainty and precision to the injuries and insults inflicted on us, I have reduced the disgusting catalogue to writing. Sir, I believe that nearly cotemporaneous with the determination of the British ministry to seize the Danish fleet, was its determination to plunder and destroy American commerce. The principle of that determination applied with equal force to both nations. It was exclusive dominion on the ocean; and as one false suggestion was made the pretext for seizing the Danish fleet, so another suggestion equally false, was made the pretext at once for the destruction of our commerce, and for sowing the seeds of division amongst our people. That false suggestion was, Sir, that the government of the United States was acting under French influence, and engaged in some secret negotiation with the French emperor for some ridiculous and visionary division of the United States. The success of this falsehood, and the extent of its circulation, &c. &c. are now pretty generally known in all parts of the United States. Without any further prefatory observations, therefore, let me read to you the catalogue of injuries and insults inflicted by Great Britain on the United States. I think it probable, Sir, I have omitted some, because it is a subject to which I turn my mind with disgust, and from it with pleasure.

- Catalogue of British injuries and insults.
1. Impressment of American seamen.
2. Seizing and confiscating our vessels upon various unauthorised pretexts.
3. Blockading our ports, seizing vessels entering therein, and sending them to some neighboring port for condemnation.
4. Firing at, and detaining coasting vessels within our acknowledged jurisdiction; murdering a citizen in these acts of wantonness.
5. Violating our neutrality by destroying a French ship of war within our jurisdiction, and thus entitled to protection.
6. Attacking a public armed ship of the United States.
7. Rifling some, and murdering others for her crew. Refusing atonement for these outrages.
8. Regulating and restraining our commerce.
9. Colonizing and taxing us by orders of council reduced to the form of law by an act of parliament.
10. Interfering in our political concerns by inviting our citizens to violate our laws, and by publishing a letter from the British secretary of state, by way of appeal to the people against their own government.
11. Forcing a contraband trade with armed ships, &c.
12. Mr. President, am I mistaken in these facts, or are they true? If

true, Sir, is there a gentleman here present prepared to tell the American people that all these injuries and insults have been inflicted upon them by Great-Britain, and all atonement for them refused, and that there is no cause of war? That their honor and interest do not demand war, that they are not yet sufficiently degraded, but must wait for a further accumulation of injuries and insults!! But, Sir, permit me to press this inquiry still further. Its importance demands it. It is of the last importance to the people to understand it correctly; that not a doubt should be suspended over the facts. Sir, I have said twice before this session, and I now say a third time, and I beg gentlemen to answer me explicitly, yea or nay. I have twice said, and now say a third time, that Great-Britain by her orders in council, now reduced to the form of law, has abridged the rights of national sovereignty, that she has colonized and taxed the people of the U. States. Here let me stop, Sir; let me single out these acts alone, and ask gentlemen if they are true? Gentlemen have not denied them. Gentlemen cannot deny them. Well, Sir, are gentlemen prepared to tell the people of the United States that Great-Britain has abridged their rights of national sovereignty, that she has colonized and taxed them, and perseveres in doing, and in the same breath, and at the same time, to tell them there are no causes of war, that they must wait for further injuries and insults? I have so much confidence in the intelligence and patriotism of the people in every section of the union, that I do not believe such language would be justified or even tolerated in any part of the United States. No, Sir, the people of Boston, enveloped as they are with prejudices, would repel the degrading expostulation if it were fairly presented to their view and consideration. But, Sir, I promise to press the examination of this subject still further. I propose to select two or three of the most formidable and intolerable acts of outrage from the disgusting catalogue, and to bestow on them a more critical attention. These will be acts of the present energetic administration. I suppose the other gentlemen cannot understand the orders of council as I do: if they did, it would be impossible for an American to offer an apology for, or even a palliation of them. They shall, therefore, receive my first attention: First, as they affect our rights of national sovereignty. Secondly, as they affect the different occupations of commerce, agriculture and fishing. Thirdly, the pretexts upon which they are attempted to be justified.

The orders of council now reduced to the form of law, abridge our national sovereignty, in undertaking coercively to regulate our commerce, in defiance of our own laws and of the laws of nations; and in subjecting it to heavy taxes or tribute.—The power to regulate the commerce of the United States with foreign nations is given by the people to Congress. These orders of council undertake to regulate it by force, and in defiance of the laws of Congress. Indeed, the orders extend their regulations of it, farther than Congress is authorised to do by the people; for they have charged our exports with heavy duties, which Congress is prohibited from doing by the Constitution. Great-Britain may, by municipal regulations, lay any tax she pleases upon the exports of our productions from Great-Britain, but she has no right to force our commerce into her ports, for the purpose of collecting a tax from it, nor subjecting it to capture and condemnation, for any departure from the rules which she prescribes for conducting it upon the ocean. Submission to these regulations, would be the surrender of some of the essential attributes of national sovereignty, and would justly exclude us from the family of nations, because we should thereby consent to be excluded from the exercise of some of the essential rights of sovereignty, which are indispensable to the equality of nations. This result is so plain, that I suppose there can be but one opinion respecting it.

But, sir, I am the more disposed to examine the operation of these orders upon the different occupations of commerce, agriculture and fishing, because I have lately heard it said and repeated, that they merely affect the occupation of commerce, and, as a consequence resulting from this interpretation of them, it is said the merchants may go out and take care of themselves. This, sir, is an extremely fallacious suggestion, and gentlemen, particularly agriculturists, ought to be very cautious in adopting it. This mistake has probably arisen from the want of a due consideration of the subject. It has arisen from the want of a discrimination between the right of commerce, or rather the right of regulating commerce, of prescribing the rules of conducting it, and the occupation of the merchant. The right of commerce is a national right. It belongs to the nation collectively. The occupation or the exercise of the right only belongs to the merchant. The right to carry on commerce does not belong to the merchant exclusively; any other citizen may, if he chooses, exercise the right; but these orders of council affect both the right of commerce and the occupation of commerce; they also affect the rights of agriculture, and of fishing still more. They affect the occupation of commerce by limiting its extent and objects; but the principle of the orders once admitted, it will regulate the occupation of agriculture, and probably destroy the occupation of fishing.—If submitted to, it would probably lessen the value of every farm in the United States, as well the farms upon the water, as the farms upon the land. Apply the orders to the articles of either flour, cotton, tobacco or fish. I will select two articles only for the purpose of illustration; but the operation of the orders will apply equally to all. Take tobacco for example. According to the orders, every hogshead of tobacco, exported from the United States, is to be carried first into a British port, and then to pay an export duty of three dollars on every hundred weight, before it can be permitted to find its way to the continent of Europe, where it is mostly consumed. The value of the article to the grower, is upon an average of six dollars per hundred weight. The merchant in purchasing the tobacco of the grower, will sell him, your tobacco is worth six dollars, but I can give you three only, because I am compelled to call at Great-Britain, and there pay the other three to make up the price to the British treasury, and besides to incur all the charges of the ports and circuits of the voyage, &c. &c. The same observations will apply with equal force to every other article of agriculture. And thus, the principle of the orders of council once submitted to, will enable Great Britain as effectually to regulate the various occupations of agriculture, as if she were permitted to say at once, the colonists may raise grain, &c. but they shall not raise tobacco, &c. If you permit her to impose taxes at pleasure, on any of your productions, on their way across the ocean to their market or consumption, she can, in that way, as effectually prohibit its cultivation, as if she were authorised to prohibit it, in the first instance, by a positive prohibitory regulation. The effect of the principle in each case is the same, the only difference consists in the mode, or the medium thro' which the principle is effectuated. It is not likely Great-Britain would discourage the cultivation of grain, because she generally requires the importation of a certain quantity for her own consumption.—But if the orders in council were to be submitted to, living in a part of the country where I have an election to cultivate grain or tobacco, I should certainly abandon the cultivation of tobacco altogether, because, charged with the present export tax, I am persuaded it would afford nothing to the grower.

Now, sir, let me see how these orders are likely to operate on the American fisheries and American fish. I believe no American fish is allowed to be consumed in Great-Britain; yet all American fish carried to foreign ports for consumption, must first call at a British port, and there pay a duty, I do not recollect the precise amount. General Smith, of Maryland, said ninety cents per quintal. I do not know the proportion that this tax bears to the whole value of the quintal, but it is not material to my illustration. Admit the principle, and the proportion of the tax to the value of the article can be varied at the pleasure of the British government. When you come to recollect, sir, the extreme jealousy entertained at all times by the British government of the American fisheries, the importance they attach to their own fisheries, as the nursery of their seamen, and as almost indispensable to the prosperity of the navy, would you not conclude, sir, that the farms upon the ocean were in as much danger from the operation of the orders in council, as the farms upon the land; and I beg gentlemen, more particularly interested upon this subject, to give these observations a fair and impartial consideration.

But, Mr. President, this suggestion of withholding the protection of the government from commerce, I can conceive wholly inadmissible.—For exclusively of many other considerations, it must have been the result of some very cursory reflections, or superficial observations, upon the attitude the government has assumed in relation to revenue, or an entire misconception of it. Sir, the occupation of commerce is as much entitled to the protection of the government, as any other occupation, and an abandonment of it as injurious to the interests, and as derogatory to the character of the government, as the abandonment of any other. Once allow that principle, once have it understood by foreign nations, that your commerce is abandoned to its fate, and its prosperity is impossible, its destruction is inevitable; its very prosperity would produce its destruction, by inviting the cupidity and violence of foreign nations. But, sir, the attitude the government has taken upon the subject of revenue, forbids the abandonment of commerce. Almost your whole revenue is derived from commerce; you have dispensed with your internal taxes, and your only internal resource is derived from the sale of your public lands. Whatever may be the productiveness of that land hereafter, it is not now more than equal to one twentieth of the demands of the government; hence, sir, the government must either afford protection to commerce, or renew the internal taxes. Can you doubt, sir, which of these two alternatives the government would choose? We are told, sir, there are prejudices to a navy. I know there are, sir, and I believe I have partaken of them as much as any gentleman in the United States. And stand as much committed to the nation upon that point. But the circumstances of the country at the time of discussing the question of creating a navy, formerly and at the present time, are extremely different. Our commerce then was comparatively small to what it now is, the proposed expenditure upon the navy, would have been nearly equal to the whole annual products of the revenue derived from commerce. The revenue now derived from commerce is nearly quadrupled, and besides, our commerce was at that time, almost exempt from foreign aggressions; its present prosperity and unprotected state has invited aggressions from abroad and unless it is protected, it will be destroyed.—Whatever my prejudices or opinions may have been upon this subject, I am not so weak and obstinate, as to suppose that those prejudices or opinions can control the practical progression of human affairs, nor that there is any consistency in applying the same opinions to a different state of circumstances and events. These must control prejudices and opinions.—Mr. President, notwithstanding all the existing prejudices against a navy, I now confidently express an opinion, that if you continue to draw your revenue through the medium of commerce—if that commerce should continue to prosper and increase, and if foreign cupidity and violence should continue to exist, you will have a navy to protect your commerce. I consider the