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MR. GILES'S SPEECH.

In Senate of the U. States—Dec. 17, 1811.

The Bill for raising an Additional Military Force, being under consideration—on motion of Mr. Anderson to strike out the word "ten," for the purpose of inserting a smaller number of regiments, Mr. Giles rose, and submitted, in substance, the following observations:

Mr. GILES said, he found himself in a very unprepared state, called upon to object a very unexpected motion. The object of the mover had not been very precisely expressed; but he had mentioned the number of 12,000 infantry as preferable to 20,000, about the number provided for by the Bill. Mr. G. said it was also understood that a force of ten thousand men, of every description, would more correspond with the executive views, and fully answer the executive requisition. This, he believed was the fact, and should so consider it the course of the observations he proposed to make. Notwithstanding his circumstance, however, considering the late occurrences on our western frontiers, and the feelings of the western people so justly excited thereby, &c. he acknowledged that the motion had come from the most unexpected quarter of the Union and from a gentleman the most unexpected to him of all who represented the western portion of the United States—because from the long course of military services, honorably rendered by that gentleman during the Revolutionary War, he must have become well acquainted with the absolute necessity of a due degree of momentum in military affairs.

Mr. Giles said he did not propose to go into a full exposition of our foreign relations at this time; yet the motion furnished a most extensive scope for observation, because if it should unfortunately succeed, it would essentially derange, as he conceived, the whole views of the committee who reported the bill. He would therefore present to the Senate the most prominent and important considerations which he presumed had operated on the committee, and had certainly on himself, to induce the recommendation of twenty-five thousand men, as the smallest possible quantum of force demanded by the crisis; to demonstrate the advantages of a force at least to that extent, over that which seemed to be contemplated by the mover, and still more over that which is said to consist with the executive project.

In the consideration of this subject it is important to turn our attention to the objects for which a military force is demanded, to enable us the better to apportion the means to the objects intended to be effected. For this purpose he begged the most serious attention of the Senate to the President's message at the commencement of the session.

"I must now add (observes the President) that the period is arrived, which claims from the legislative guardians of the national rights, a system of more ample provisions for maintaining them. Notwithstanding the scrupulous justice, the protracted moderation, and the multiplied efforts on the part of the U. S. to substitute for the accumulating dangers to the peace of the two countries, all the mutual advantages of re-established friendship and confidence; we have seen that the British cabinet, perseveres not only in withholding a remedy for other wrongs so long and loudly calling for it; but in the execution brot home to the threshold of our territory, of measures which, under existing circumstances, have the character, as the effect, of war on our lawful commerce.

"With this evidence of hostile inflexibility in trampling on rights which no independent nation can relinquish, Congress will feel the duty of putting the U. States into an armor and an attitude demanded by the crisis, and corresponding with the national spirit and expectations.

"I recommend accordingly, that adequate provision be made for filling the ranks and prolonging the enlistment of the regular troops; for an auxiliary force to be engaged for a more limited term; for the acceptance of volunteer corps, whose patriotic ardor may court a participation in urgent services; for detachments, as they may be wanted, of other portions of the Militia, and for such a preparation of the great body as will proportion its usefulness to its intrinsic capacity."

Here we find, in the first place, the most solemn and imperious call on Con-

gress. In the character of "the Legislative Guardians of the National Rights, for a system of more ample provisions for maintaining them." The President then very properly and emphatically proceeds to tell us why he makes this solemn call upon the Legislative Guardians of the Nation at this time. He tells us, in substance, that notwithstanding "the scrupulous justice, the protracted moderation, and the multiplied efforts on the part of the U. States," to induce Great Britain to recede from her hostile aggressions upon their essential sovereign rights, so far from yielding to these polite and pathetic invitations, she had increased her aggressions, and had adopted "measures, which, under existing circumstances, have the character as well as the effect of War upon our lawful commerce;" and that these measures are in their execution "bro't home to the threshold of our territory." Could the President have chosen language more emphatic to shew the imperious character of the call made upon Congress to furnish him with adequate physical means to retrieve the honor and redress the wrongs of the nation? Least there might be some possible mistake on the part of Congress, he tells us explicitly, that the aggressions of Great Britain have the character as well the effect of War upon our lawful commerce, and that this War is brought home to the threshold of our territory.

But, sir, the President does not stop here: He tells us that notwithstanding our protracted moderation, &c. G. B. perseveres with hostile inflexibility in trampling on our essential sovereign rights; rights at least, "which no independent nation can relinquish." Here, then, it is evident that the President conceives, that our independence, as a nation, is brought into question and put at hazard. Can any subject present a more awful and imperious call upon Congress to exert and apply the whole energies of the nation, than a question of INDEPENDENCE? The plain English of all this communication, he understood to be, that all the inefficient measures which have been adopted in relation to the belligerents for three years past, had not answered the expectations of their projectors; but instead of the expected recession, had produced, on the part of Great Britain at least, inflexible hostility. This was a very natural result, and one which he had always anticipated. It was well known to this honorable body. But the Administration having learnt wisdom by these feeble experiments, had now determined to change its course; and for the purpose of rendering this hostility more flexible, had at length resolved, instead of commercial restrictions, to try the effect of physical force. An adequate force is therefore demanded by the executive; and the adequacy of that force is very properly referred to Congress, where the responsibility is placed by the constitution; where it ought to rest; for one, he was willing to take his full share of it. But the President goes on further. After designating the objects, he points out the standard for ascertaining the adequacy of the force demanded for their effectuation. In his official responsible message, he tells us that "Congress will feel the duty of putting the U. States into an armor and an attitude demanded by the crisis, and corresponding with the national spirit and expectations."—The standard here pointed out for calculating the quantum of force to be supplied, is "the crisis," which had been previously described in the most solemn and imposing terms, and "the national spirit and expectations." Whether the committee had reported too great a force for subduing the crisis, he was willing to submit to the verdict of the "national spirit and expectations."

But it is now said, or intimated in substance, that this official responsible standard is only ostensible, and that the true standard for estimating the quantum of force demanded, must be derived from the decrepid state of the treasury, and the financial fame of the gentleman at the head of that department. This subject will require a distinct consideration; but in the mean time it is sufficient to say, that the committee unanimously refused to be influenced by any considerations, but those resulting from the official responsible communication, and their own reflections upon the state of the nation as disclosed thereby. They unanimously rejected informal official communications.

It will be observed too, in the message, the President, in his more speci-

fic recommendations, after designating the kinds of force suited to the occasion, leaves the quantum of each to be judged of, and decided by Congress, where the responsibility did and ought to rest; and he was unwilling, by receding from his constitutional duty, to revert this responsibility upon the executive.

It thus appearing, said Mr. Giles, that the force demanded was for the purposes of war, if unfortunately we should be driven by Great Britain to that last resort; and that although the war would be undertaken upon principles strictly defensible; yet in its operation, it must necessarily become offensive on our part; and that Congress was to determine exclusively upon the adequacy of the means for conducting it; he would now proceed to enquire more particularly, 1st. whether the committee had recommended a force more than adequate to the purposes of the war; and 2d, whether it was within the capacity of the U. States to supply the force thus recommended?

Mr. G. said, that in estimating the quantum of force demanded by the existing crisis, it appeared to him gentlemen had not given sufficient consideration to the attitude assumed by the U. States in relation to the Floridas, to the extension of our southern and western frontiers, to the late hostile acts and threatenings in that quarter; nor to the importance of Orleans; its exposed position and defenceless situation. These circumstances, however, entered deeply into the consideration of the committee, & induced it to conclude that the whole military establishment now authorised by law, if completed, would not be more than sufficient, perhaps insufficient to answer the necessary objects of the government in the scenes just described; it was therefore intended that the whole of that force should be left free to act therein according to circumstances, and that the additional force now recommended should act exclusively in the northern and eastern portion of the Union. This force no gentleman will pretend to be too great for our objects in that quarter, in the event of war, unaided by the existing establishment. Hence it was matter of great surprise to him that the western gentlemen should wish to diminish the number of men now proposed to be raised; because he believed that every man deducted from the proposed force, would take one from the force intended by the committee to protect our southern and western frontiers. These gentlemen, he presumed, must be better judges than himself, how many of these men they can generously spare from their own protection; but for his part he thought there was not one to spare from these objects, and the committee were willing to give the whole of them that destination.

With respect to the protection of Orleans, he knew it was the expectation of the late administration, that in the event of war Great Britain would possess herself of that city; and it was not their intention to incur the expence of being constantly prepared to repel the incursions of the enemy: he did not know the intention of the present administration in that respect, but presumed it was acting on the same policy. In case the British should take possession of Orleans, the western people must necessarily be called on to drive them out, and he doubted very much whether it would be either a very acceptable occupation, or a very easy task. He had always disapproved of this policy, and in the event of war, he thought it wise, not only to be prepared for defence at all points, but to give the first blow. He believed, in the end, it would be found, not only the wisest, but the most economical policy, both in blood and treasure.

Having presented to the Senate the objects to which the existing military establishment ought to be assigned, according to the views of the committee, he would proceed to enquire, whether the additional force recommended, would be more than competent to the objects to which it must necessarily be assigned, and which ought, unquestionably, to be effected by it. In case of war, an event he deprecated as much as any gentleman present, the new army would have to man your fortifications on the seaboard from Norfolk to the extremities of our territory North and East, and to occupy Canada. These are the contemplated and indispensable objects of this army, in the estimation of the executive, and the honorable mover, as well as of the committee. The question will therefore turn upon the accuracy and correct-

ness of their respective calculations as to the quantum of force necessary to effect these objects.

Mr. Giles said he had a conversation with the Secretary for the Department of War, in his character of chairman of the committee of foreign relations, in which the Secretary did endeavor to demonstrate to him, that a smaller number of men than 25,000, would answer these objects; but so far from producing this conviction, it satisfied him that the number was too small. He thought that every inference drawn by the honorable Secretary, ought to have been inverted. For instance, he was asked, how many men were indispensably necessary to man the fortifications at New-York?—The honorable Secretary replied 2,000; but he intended to make 1,000 answer—and would rely for the rest of the complement on the local militia. Now, said Mr. Giles, he inferred if 2,000 men were necessary for that most exposed and important position, that 1,000 would not answer with the precarious and accidental aid of the local militia; that 2,000 ought to be calculated on for that service; and if with the aid of the local militia, they could protect New-York against the force Great Britain might detach against that city, they would perform their full share of the toils and perils of the war. Two thousand men, completely furnished with all the means of annoyance, possessed of all the skill that military science could afford, and impelled by all the subordination and management that military discipline could impose, with the aid of the local militia also, would deserve well of their country, if they should preserve New-York from the grasp of Great Britain in case she should think proper to direct the force she might have at command against that city. Then why send 1,000 on a service, when we know that 2,000 are necessary, and perhaps incompetent? Is it because the United States have not the capacity to send 2,000?—That question shall be examined presently. The same observations will apply to the protection of Rhode Island, where 2,000 more will be necessary; and 1,000 will be as few as can possibly be detached for the other fortifications. Admitting then 5,000 men to be necessary to man the various fortifications on the sea board, and supposing every man to be raised, as proposed in the bill, there will be a disposable force of only 20,000 men for the occupation of Canada. But upon the executive project, there would be left for that service only 5,000 men; unless indeed the western and southern frontiers should be left unprotected, or the fortifications on the sea-board should be only half manned, and of course left to the sport of the enemy. Mr. Giles said, he apprehended that in the first onset of the war, G. Britain would direct her force to the occupation of New-York and Orleans; and if she should possess herself of those two points, he would venture to predict that the administration which commenced the War, would not finish it; especially under a system of policy, which would only furnish one half of the means deemed necessary for their protection—yes, SIR, known to be inadequate at the time of applying it. What apology could be made to an injured nation under such circumstances? We knew 2,000 men to be necessary for the defence of New-York—but we sagely determined to apply 1,000 only to that object for fear of incurring the expence of the requisite number. This would be self condemnation. The people would lose all confidence in such calculators, and would certainly make the experiment of a change. Under such circumstances, Mr. G. said, he would be the first to cry out for a change of the administration; for it would not be possible to lose by it.—Defend New-York with all the judgment and skill you can command; fill the fortifications with the full complement of troops, amply provided; call in the local militia, &c. and he should not be surprised if the British should get possession of that city. But then there would be no blame on the administration—all its duties will have been performed, and the result would rest upon the fortune of war; but a single act of neglect or misconduct would certainly deprive the administration of the public confidence.

If, sir, Great-Britain should get possession of New-York and Orleans, and you should get possession of Canada, you would be very glad to make the exchange upon the termination of the war. Therefore, take care of these two points. Mr. Giles said, he also requested the

hon. Secretary to consult with the President, and inform him, as the President's secretary, whether the President wished to have the number of men reduced? or whether he had a preference for any other number? The reply, after the consultation, very properly, was, that the President had no opinion to offer on that point. He considered it a subject of legislative discretion, &c. Of course any informal executive views ought not to be substituted for our own discretion and responsibility. Mr. Giles said, he knew it had been suggested, and perhaps from very high authority, that nothing was necessary to induce G. Britain to recede from her aggressions, but to convince her, that instead of opposing to them inefficient commercial restrictions, they would be resisted with physical force; and that raising ten thousand men, would produce this conviction, without incurring further expence. This suggestion furnished some of his strongest objections to limiting the force to be raised, to ten thousand men. So far from producing that conviction on the British cabinet, he was convinced it would produce precisely the opposite effect. The British cabinet would look at the means provided for effecting the object, as the best evidence of the object itself. And as these means would be viewed so utterly inadequate to the purposes of war, the cabinet would necessarily conclude, that we were not in earnest; that we were joking, even upon the most serious subject; that war was not intended, and would not be resorted to under any circumstances. This impression, the necessary result of our former measures, has become so general, both at home and abroad, that we have much to do to retrieve our lost reputation; we do not stand upon original ground. Our measures must be of a very different character from what they have been, to produce the desired conviction, either at home or abroad. Having changed our principle of action from commercial restrictions, to physical force, limiting that force to ten thousand men would be in his judgment, as much trifling with the energies of the nation, as inefficient commercial restrictions had heretofore been trifling with the character and interests of the nation, and he feared was dictated by the same unfortunate imbecile spirit and policy. Mr. G. said that whilst upon this part of the subject, he begged to be excused for reading a few paragraphs from a newspaper, which he accidentally picked up last evening, containing the announcement of the President's message at Quebec; the very point to which the proposed force might probably be directed. It fully demonstrates the impressions existing there, and which have been produced by our former measures.

Quebec, Nov. 13.  
"President's Message—Happily, the expectation of Mr. Madison's speech, steps in opportunely, as something of an antidote to the effect of the European death. From that speech we shall learn, that the terrible being, John Bull, does not suffer his thousand armed vessels, manned and equipped to an enormous expence, to lie wholly idle, but that they are guilty of the audacious tyranny of being, in some degree, a check on the violent inclinations of Dame Columbia to extend her arms to cherish, aid and assist her admired hero, Napoleon, in effecting John's annihilation.—Much will the speech complain that the sovereignty of the ocean is not powerful to no purpose, and does not descend to, and put himself on a level with the imbecility of the U. States, with their dozen ships. Unpardonable is the grievance that the Leviathan is not as powerless as the God; that the Jackall, whom nature meant for the Lion's provider is not permitted to divert its provender to the support of the Tiger, with a view to the destruction of the Lion.

"The speech may not say these things in direct terms; but such will, unquestionably, be its meaning:

"With syllogisms 'twill make a clatter,  
With abstract rights, three-deckers batter;  
An empty purse at millions shake,  
No trade 'gains a free trade stake;  
Of rotting produce count the gain,  
A seaboard host shut from the main;  
To seamen recommend the loom,  
And on each mast to fix the broom;  
Merchants for lack of foreign wares,  
To retail apples, plums and pears."

Limit all our mighty efforts to 10,000 men, and it will afford a better subject for another pasquinade, than the President's message had done for the one just read. He should not have ventured to read these paragraphs to the Senate, however, if these impressions were merely local. But he believed similar impressions pervaded Europe and America, and had unfortunately found their way into the French and British cabinets. Nor should he have thought these sarcasms worth regard were it not for