



AND  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1812.

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Congress.

IN SENATE—DEC. 17.

In support of his motion to reduce the number of regiments proposed in the Bill to raise an additional Military Force, and in  
REPLY TO Mr. GILES,

Mr. ANDERSON said, he was not a little surprised to hear the gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Giles) say that he was unprepared to oppose a very unexpected motion, when he (Mr. A.) had two days before, whilst the bill was under consideration, suggested his intention, in his place, to make the motion he had now made; upon which the honorable member expressed a wish to postpone the consideration of the question, and immediately moved the postponement of the bill, which was not opposed, and of course prevailed. Mr. A. said, that the motion was not, therefore, made without due notice, and he would add, without due consideration. He had consulted with a number of the members of this honorable body, for whose judgment and opinions he had great respect, and with whose approbation, and he might add, at whose instance the motion had been made. He was, however, himself ready and willing to meet all the responsibility that might attach to it; notwithstanding the surprise of the honorable member as to the quarter from which it had come.

Mr. A. said, he should not pretend to reply to all the various observations the gentleman had thought proper to make—very many of which he considered altogether irrelevant to the question under consideration, but which might, perhaps answer some other purpose which the honorable member might have in view.

Mr. Anderson said, he was as strongly impressed with the necessity of a sufficient force, for the invasion of Canada, as the gentleman from Virginia could possibly be, and not a single expression had escaped him to induce a belief that he should be unwilling to vote a proper and ample force for that service; but he differed greatly with the gentleman as to the kind of force we ought immediately to employ. The honorable member appeared to place his sole dependence upon regular troops; and yet, if he understood his argument, he was decidedly in favor of making a descent upon Canada early in the spring. As to the time, Mr. A. agreed with him—but as to the means, he certainly differed from him very greatly. The number of regulars contemplated by the gentleman could not possibly be raised within the time; he was therefore of opinion that a less number ought to be inserted in the bill. It should be recollected that we had very recently authorized the regiments in the peace establishment to be filled; they would require at least 6000 men; add hereto 25,000 more, the number proposed by the gentleman; and he would ask him to answer candidly, whether he believed that so great a number of troops could be enlisted within the time required for the service to be performed. Mr. A. said, impressed, as he was, with a firm belief that not more than half the number proposed by the honorable member could be enlisted within the time they must take the field in order to act efficiently against Canada, he could not see the propriety of retaining the whole number contemplated by the bill. Mr. A. said, it must be well known to every gentleman, that the invasion of Canada must necessarily take place before the breaking up of the ice in the river St. Lawrence; otherwise, twice 25,000 men we required; because large reinforcements, as soon as an opportunity presented, would be thrown into that country. Mr. A. said, upon a fair view of the whole subject, as it presented itself to him, he was decidedly of opinion that the number of regular troops to be raised by that bill ought not to exceed 16,000, and he had no hesitation in saying, that in his opinion as efficient a force would be raised under such a provision, within the time limited for taking the field, as would be raised were the present number in the bill retained—and in the former case, we should prove to our enemies, that we were able to raise such number of regular troops as might be wanted upon a sudden emergency; but in the latter, we should not be able to make the same exhibit. What then would be the consequence? You would give a most mor-

tifying proof that your means were not commensurate to your ends; that your plan had been badly digested, and worse executed. And surely the gentleman can have no desire to present such a state of things, at the very moment when all the energies of the nation seem to be required. Mr. A. said, to avoid this extraordinary exhibit was also one of his objects; and this, in his opinion, could be done by taking the course he had contemplated; and he entirely approved it; and if the honorable member had attended to another part of the President's message, where it speaks of volunteers, he must himself have been convinced that the President did not mean to make the descent upon Canada with the 10,000 regulars only; which had been understood, as the gentleman had stated, to be the auxiliary force referred to in the message. The object of the President cannot be better explained than by referring to the message itself. He says—"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 time; for the acceptance of volunteers whose patriotic ardor may court a participation in urgent services." The manner in which the President speaks of volunteers, can leave no doubt upon the mind of any one as to the service in which they were to be employed: they are evidently intended to be united with the regular troops to perform "urgent services," according to the express language of the message. Mr. A. would ask the honorable member, what was the urgent service meant by the President? Most certainly a descent upon Canada, in which the regulars and the volunteers were equally to participate. Why, then, the honorable member had taken so much pains to prove that the 10,000 regulars were the only military force with which the President had intended to perform the urgent service referred to in his message, Mr. A. was at a loss to comprehend; for he understood the message and the object of it very differently; and he should have expected that the candor of the honorable member would have induced him to have given the message a fair interpretation. That he had not done so, must be supposed to proceed from his recent but very strange attachment to a regular military force. However anti-republican this doctrine had formerly been, it seemed now to be viewed thro' a different medium by the honorable member from Virginia. Mr. A. said, that having, as he thought, proved by a fair interpretation of the President's message, that he intended to unite the volunteers (that might be thought requisite) with the regular troops, to perform the urgent services of which he speaks, he would endeavor to present a fair and impartial view of the course recommended by the President, and compare it with the course which had been taken and so strenuously supported by the honorable member from Virginia. The President had recommended the raising of volunteers; & it was incidentally made known that the auxiliary force spoken of, was ten thousand regular troops. If, then, provision had been immediately made by law for raising ten thousand regular troops, and also for raising volunteers, those troops would now be in a state of preparation—a considerable number of the regular troops would ere now have been enlisted, and the chance of getting the whole number greatly increased. If time had been afforded, as it ought to have been, the laws passed within two or three weeks after Congress met, which might have been done, a sufficient regular force would in all probability have been in a state of readiness in the month of April; and the number of volunteers which might have been required to make up the necessary force, would no doubt long since have been in a state of preparation to take the field in time to have performed the arduous service contemplated by the President.

But instead of that course having been pursued, what has been done?—Your first military bill, reported only a few days ago, is now under consideration; the session now almost half expired, and at this late period, the honorable member, to whom, as chairman of the committee &c. the whole management of the military business was referred, insists upon raising 25,000 regular troops, whose duty it shall be to make a descent upon Canada, in all the month of May. Can the gentleman be serious? Does he believe it practicable? If he

does, Mr. A. said, he should be obliged to believe, that the honorable member was in earnest some days ago, when he assured the Senate, that he knew very little of military affairs. Mr. A. said, from the proofs we have repeatedly had, of the difficulty of obtaining men by enlistment for so long a time as five years, and the want in our country of those kinds of materials of which regular troops are made, he did not believe that one half the number proposed to be raised by the bill could be enlisted within the time required. Mr. A. said, altho' he was not as much in the habit of prophesying as the honorable member, he would, under all circumstances, adventure to predict, that the scheme of now raising 25,000 regular troops, to perform the arduous service contemplated in the President's message, would entirely fail, and that the course pointed out by the President must at last be adopted, that is, to unite volunteers with regular troops.

Mr. A. said he trusted that the honorable member himself had in view the same object, but differed as to the means of carrying it into effect; the means proposed by the honorable member were regular troops only. If then the bill should pass to raise 25,000, entire dependence would, in all probability, be placed upon the regular troops, ordered to be raised; the consequence, as he had before said, would be, that the whole object must fail. He was therefore for taking the regular troops that could be raised in time, and supplying the additional number of men, which might be wanted, by volunteers—15 or 20,000 of whom could, he had no doubt, be brought into the field, before ten thousand of the regular troops, contemplated by the bill, could be enlisted. By this mode (notwithstanding so much time had been lost) an efficient army might be yet provided in time to carry into effect the objects of the government, which, Mr. A. said, he did not believe could or would be done, if dependence were placed upon the regular troops. Notwithstanding the little confidence which the honorable member seems disposed to place in the volunteers, Mr. A. said, he had no hesitation in giving it, as his most decided opinion, that at least as much dependence might be placed upon the volunteers, as upon the newly raised regular troops. The volunteers would have the same chance of discipline that the new regulars would have. A sufficient number of those who offered their services, might be called into the field, as early as the season would admit, & placed under strict discipline; to which for their own honor they would readily submit—may, require, if left to their own choice; for the first object they would have in view would be to acquire military skill, and they would not only be very soon prepared to perform field duty but might entirely be depended upon for any other service. Witness the prowess of the volunteers at the battle of the Wabash, and these had not been disciplined at all. Mr. A. said, he expected the honorable member would admit, that the materials of which the volunteers would be composed, would be at least equal to those of which the regular troops would be formed; and the officers of the volunteer corps being appointed by the President, would, he had no doubt, faithfully perform their duty. Those, said Mr. A. are completely in our power; and he considered it our best policy, as well as our duty, to bring them into action. Mr. A. said in addition to the efficiency of the means which he proposed to bring into the field, it would have one very considerable advantage over the regular army of the honorable member. It would be more conformable to the true principles of the constitution, and would consequently be more acceptable to the nation. The confidence with which he had spoken of volunteers, was not founded upon visionary theory, but practical experience; he had often in the revolution had opportunity to witness their military ardor and persevering firmness; on two occasions in particular, the one at Connecticut Farms, the other at Springfield, in the spring of 1780. The enemy had advanced, in force about two thousand, to a place called Connecticut Farms, about four miles from Elizabeth-town, in New Jersey. The only troops that were within striking distance to oppose this force, was the brigade of Jersey Regulars, containing then about a thousand men; many volunteers however flocked to their standard—the enemy were met by this force

—a battle ensued—the American army had the advantage of the ground; but the right wing of the enemy extended so far, that if not suddenly checked, it would have enabled them to have flanked our left. It was necessary to prevent it—services of this kind must be promptly rendered; four hundred regulars and two hundred volunteers were ordered to execute it; no more could be spared from the line. A good position alone could have justified the attempt, with the disparity of numbers.—It was first made by manoeuvre, but it was soon found, it could only be done with the bayonet. A determined charge was made, and it was successful; the enemy were repulsed; the volunteers were upon the left; not a man broke his ranks. Some brave fellows fell, but their places were immediately filled; all behaved with the firmness of veterans. The next day those troops had the thanks of General Washington in general orders. The volunteers had only joined the regulars a few days before the action. In about two weeks after, the enemy advanced in greater force—about five thousand—the troops who had been in the former action had kept their position where the battle had been fought; it was advantageous for an inferior force; it was a defile, covered for some distance on the right by a morass; on the left it was not well protected. Against this position, the enemy again advanced; and by their increased numbers, they were enabled to turn our left. We were obliged to retreat; but not without having kept the enemy a considerable time in check. You know, Mr. President, there is no situation so trying to the bravery and firmness of troops, as a retreat (for even you, sir, I believe, had to retreat sometimes.) The volunteers upon this occasion, behaved like themselves; a sudden, indignant step, marked their movements; and from the mouths of their guns they spoke to the enemy the language of defiance; the enemy did not advance one mile, before a fortunate position, supported by determined bravery, enabled the united force of the regulars and volunteers to arrest their progress for the remainder of the day. This day's action began with the dawn of the morning, and continued until the setting of the sun, when the enemy fell back to take a secure position against the expected attacks of the night. During the whole of this day's action, the volunteers kept the stations assigned them, which they sustained with as much firmness as the regular troops.—Many of them were killed and wounded. Among the number, were said to be seven of one family connection, brothers, brothers-in-law, and cousins; several of whom he had himself seen after the action. Scenes like this, Mr. President (said Mr. A.) of which he had been an eye-witness, and in which he claimed some participation, had given him that confidence in volunteers, which he had evinced to the Senate in the course of his observations, and which, he said, should never cease but with his existence. They are, sir, the best military materials in your country—they are the flower of your forests; they ought not to be thrown into the back ground, the better to enable the honorable member from Virginia to present his regulars in front.

Mr. A. said, I have stated Mr. President, perhaps with some warmth, the ground upon which my confidence in volunteers has been founded; and he remembered, said Mr. A. that they were militia volunteers. He said, he ought to have stated, that the enemy they had encountered, was composed of regulars and Hessians—the whole under the command of the Hessian General Knyphausen. Mr. A. said, the volunteers he now proposed raising, he would have engaged for nine or twelve months, from the time of their reaching the place of general rendezvous. They should be engaged by officers to be appointed by the President, under such regulations (of course) as might be provided by law—but which could not now be well detailed.

Mr. A. said, he should now offer some observations upon the number of troops that ought to be employed. He said, that the invasion of Canada was not now contemplated for the first time—it had often been a subject of conversation, whenever there had been any prospect of a war with England. It has been considered as the most convenient mean upon which we could make reprisals, and thereby obtain some small re-

paration for the many losses and injuries, which have been sustained from the depredations committed upon the honor and interests of the nation. Mr. A. said, that upon different occasions, he had always given it as his opinion, that a descent upon Canada ought never to be attempted with a force of less than twenty-five thousand men; that such a force would make an awful impression—and would in all probability save many valuable lives; as no opposing force, in the usual state of the country, would be able to meet it in the field. Mr. A. said, he repeated, that no expression had escaped him, either in public debate, or in private conversation, to justify the insinuations made by the gentleman, that he was unwilling to vote a sufficient force for the invasion of Canada. On the contrary, he believed that no man who had seen active military service, and who had any knowledge of the situation and state of that country, would say that it would be prudent or safe, to make a descent upon Canada, with a force of less than twenty-five thousand men; peculiar circumstances might, however, render it necessary, to attempt it with a smaller number, and depend upon immediate supplies being furnished, to sustain the ground that might be acquired. Mr. A. said, the honorable member had intimated that he had not taken into consideration the peculiar situation of the U. States in relation to the Floridas, and the other parts of the southern and western frontier. He said he was much indebted to the honorable member, for evincing so much interest for those sections of the union—but, Mr. A. said, he considered those already provided for, by the provision made to fill up the regiments on the establishment, which, when complete, would amount to ten thousand men—this number will be quite competent to all the objects suggested by the honorable member, and it had not been contemplated, that he had heard, to remove any of these troops from the south or west—consequently the situation of those parts of the union can have no relation to the number of men to be raised by the bill under consideration. These troops are understood to be exclusively for the northern section—and with that express view they are to be raised. Mr. A. said, before he quitted the subject of the southern and western frontier, he felt himself constrained to take notice of some very extraordinary language, used by the honorable member in relation to the intentions of the late and present Presidents, respecting the city of Orleans, in the event of a war with England. It was extremely painful to doubt the correctness of any gentleman's statement; but this was of so very extraordinary a character, that in duty to the section of the country he represented, and from the respect due to those distinguished characters, Mr. A. said he considered himself bound to take notice, in a particular manner, of the assertions made by the honorable member from Virginia. Mr. A. said, the words had very much surprised him, when he heard them uttered; and he had immediately written them down. The honorable member has said, that he did know, that in the event of a war it was the intention of the late President, to let the English take Orleans without opposition, and leave it to the western people to retake it themselves; and he did believe that it was the intention of the present administration to act in the same way. [Mr. Giles attempted to explain; but Mr. A. insisted that the words, as he had taken them down, were correct, for which he appealed to the House. Mr. G. desisted from making any further attempt at explanation, and Mr. A. proceeded.] If, sir, said Mr. A. I could believe the late President of the United States capable of such an act; capable of so deliberate an infringement of the letter and spirit of the constitution, and all the moral and political obligations by which he was bound to his country and to his duty, I should not hesitate to say, that all his well-earned fame ought to be forever merged in such an atrocious contemplated act. But, said Mr. A. knowing, as I do, the motives and views by which the late President had been uniformly actuated with respect to the whole western country, I have very solid reason to believe he never contemplated, nor was he capable of committing so daring an outrage on the rights and interests of the whole Western sections of the Union. What, Mr. Pres-

[Concluded in our fourth page.]