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(By Authority.)

LAW OF THE UNITED STATES.

An Act authorizing the President of the United States to accept and organize certain Volunteer Military Corps.

BE it enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That the President of the United States be and he is hereby authorized to accept of any company or companies of volunteers, either of artillery, cavalry, or infantry who may associate and offer themselves for the service, not exceeding fifty thousand men, who shall be clothed, and in case of cavalry, furnished with horses, at their own expense, and armed and equipped at the expense of the U. States, after they shall be called into service, and whose commissioned officers shall be appointed in the manner prescribed by law in the several states and territories to which such companies shall respectively belong: Provided, That where any company, battalion, regiment, brigade or division of militia, already organized, shall tender their voluntary service to the United States, such company, battalion, regiment, brigade or division, shall continue to be commanded by the officers holding commissions in the same at the time of such tender; and any vacancy thereafter occurring, shall be filled in the mode pointed out by law in the state or territory wherein the said company, battalion, regiment, brigade or division shall have been originally raised.

Sec. 2 And be it further enacted, That any company, battalion, regiment, brigade or division, thus offering itself for the service, shall be liable to be called upon to do military duty, at any time the President of the United States shall judge proper, within two years after he shall have accepted the same, and shall be bound to continue in service for the term of twelve months after they shall have arrived at the place of rendezvous, unless sooner discharged; and when so called into service, and whilst remaining therein, shall be under the same rules and regulations, and be entitled to the same pay, rations, forage and emoluments of every kind, bounty and clothing excepted, with the regular troops of the States: Provided, That in lieu of clothing, every non-commissioned officer and private, in any company who may thus offer themselves, shall be entitled, when called into service, to receive in money a sum equal to the cost of the clothing of a non-commissioned officer or private (as the case may be) in the regular troops of the United States.

Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, That the President of the United States be, and he is hereby authorized to organize the companies so tendering their services as aforesaid, into battalions, squadrons, regiments, brigades and divisions, as soon as the number of volunteers shall render such organization in his judgment expedient; but, until called into actual service, such companies are not to be considered as exempt from the performance of militia duty, as is required by law, in like manner as before the passage of this act.

Sec. 4. And be it further enacted, That in case any volunteer aforesaid, while in actual service, shall sustain any damage, by injury done to his horse or such other equipment as shall have been furnished at his own expense, or by loss of the same, without any fault or negligence on his part, a reasonable sum, to be ascertained in such manner as the President of the United States may direct, shall be allowed and paid to such volunteer, for each and every such loss or damage.

Sec. 5. And be it further enacted, That if any officer, non-commissioned officer, musician or private shall be disabled by wounds or otherwise, while in the line of his duty in public service, he shall be placed on the list of invalid pensioners of the United States, at such rate of pension and under such regulations as are or may be directed by law: Provided, always, That the compensation to be allowed for such wounds or disabilities, to a commissioned officer, shall not exceed for the highest rate of disability, half the monthly pay of such officer, at the time of his being wounded or disabled, and that no officer shall receive more than the half-pay of a lieutenant-colonel. And that the rate of pension to non-commissioned officers, musicians and privates shall not exceed five dollars per month: And provided also, That all inferior disabilities shall entitle the person so disabled to receive an allowance proportionate to the highest disability.

Sec. 6 And be it further enacted, That the heirs and representatives of any non-commissioned officer or soldier, whomay be killed in action, or die in the actual service of the U. States, shall be entitled to receive one hundred and sixty acres of land; to be designated, surveyed and laid off, at the public expense, in such manner and upon such terms and conditions as may be provided by law.

Sec. 7. And be it further enacted, That upon the discharge of any non-commissioned officer or soldier, who shall have been accepted under the provisions of this act, and shall have been in actual service for a period not less than one month, and shall have obtained from the commanding officer of his company, battalion or regiment, a certificate that he had faithfully performed his duty while in service, such non-commissioned officer or soldier, if attached to the artillery or infantry, shall be presented with a musket, bayonet and other personal equipments, or if attached to the cavalry, with the sabre and pistols furnished him by the United States, as a public testimonial of the promptitude and zeal with which he shall have volunteered in support of the rights and honor of the country.

Sec. 8. And be it further enacted, That the sum of one million of dollars be appropriated to defray the expenses which may be incurred under the provisions of this act, to be paid out of any money in the treasury, not otherwise appropriated.

HENRY CLAY, Speaker of the House of Representatives. GEO. CLINTON, Vice-President of the U. States and President of the Senate. February 6, 1812. APPROVED. JAMES MADISON.

WAR!

Office of the National Intelligencer, 4 o'clock, P. M. June 13.

The injunction of secrecy was about an hour ago removed from the following Message, Report or Manifesto and Act.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States

I communicate to Congress certain documents, being a continuation of those heretofore laid before them, on the subject of our affairs with Great Britain.

Without going back beyond the renewal in 1803 of the war in which G. B. is engaged, and omitting unrepented wrongs of inferior magnitude, the conduct of her government presents a series of acts hostile to the U. States as an independent and neutral nation.

British cruisers have been in the continued practice of violating the American flag on the great highway of nations, and of seizing and carrying off persons sailing under it; not in the exercise of a belligerent right founded on the law of nations against an enemy, but of a municipal prerogative over British subjects. British jurisdiction is thus extended to neutral vessels in a situation where no laws can operate but the law of nations and the laws of the country to which the vessels belong; and a self-redress is assumed which, if British subjects were wrongfully detained and alone concerned, is that substitution of force, for a resort to the responsible sovereign, which falls within the definition of war. Could the seizure of British subjects in such cases be regarded as within the exercise of a belligerent right, the acknowledged laws of war, which forbid an article of captured property to be adjudged without a regular investigation before a competent tribunal, would imperiously demand the fairest trial where the sacred rights of persons were at issue. In place of such a trial, these rights are subjected to the will of every petty commander.

The practice, hence, is so far from affecting British subjects alone, that, under the pretext of searching for these, thousands of American citizens, under the safeguard of public law, and of their national flag, have been torn from their country and from every thing dear to them; have been dragged on board ships of war of a foreign nation, and exposed, under the severities of their discipline,

to be exiled to the most distant and deadly climes, to risk their lives in the battles of their oppressors, and to be the melancholy instruments of taking away those of their own brethren.

Against this crying enormity, which G. Britain would be so prompt to avenge if committed against herself, the U. States have in vain exhausted remonstrances and expostulations. And that no proof might be wanting of their conciliatory dispositions, and no pretext left for a continuance of the practice, the British Government was formerly assured of the readiness of the U. S. to enter into arrangements, such as could not be rejected, if the recovery of British subjects were the real and the sole object. The communication passed without effect.

British cruisers have been in the practice also of violating the rights and the peace of our coasts. They hover over & harass our entering and departing commerce. To the most insulting pretensions they have added the most lawless proceedings in our very harbors; and have wantonly spilt American blood within the sanctuary of our territorial jurisdiction. The principles and rules enforced by that nation, when a neutral nation, against armed vessels of belligerents hovering near her coasts, and disturbing her commerce, are well known. When called on, nevertheless, by the U. States to punish the greater offences committed by her own vessels, her government has bestowed on their commanders additional marks of honor and confidence.

Under pretended blockades, without the presence of an adequate force, and sometimes without the practicality of applying one, our commerce has been plundered in every sea; the great staples of our country have been cut off from their legitimate markets, and a destructive blow aimed at our agricultural and maritime interests. In aggravation of these predatory measures, they have been considered as in force from the dates of their notification; a retrospective effect being thus added, as has been done in other important cases, to the unlawfulness of the course pursued. And to render the outrage the more signal, these mock blockades have been reiterated and enforced in the face of official communications from the British government, declaring, as the true definition of a legal blockade, "that particular ports must be actually invested, and previous warning given to vessels bound to them, not to enter."

Not content with these occasional expedients for laying waste our neutral trade, the policy of G. Britain resorted, at length, to the sweeping system of blockades, under the name of Orders in Council, which has been moulded and managed, as might best suit its political views, its commercial jealousies, or the avidity of British cruisers.

To our remonstrances against the complicated and transcendent injustice of this innovation, the first reply was, that the orders were reluctantly adopted by G. Britain as a necessary retaliation on decrees of her enemy proclaiming a general blockade of the British Isles, at a time when the naval force of that enemy dared not to issue from his own ports. She was reminded, without effect, that her own prior blockades, unsupported by an adequate naval force actually applied and continued, were a bar to this plea; that executed edicts against millions of our property could not be retaliation on edicts, confessedly impossible to be executed; that retaliation, to be just, should fall on the party setting the guilty example, not on an innocent party, which was not even chargeable with an acquiescence in it.

When deprived of this flimsy veil for a prohibition of our trade with her enemy, by the repeal of his prohibition of our trade with G. Britain, her cabinet, instead of a corresponding repeal or a practical discontinuance of its orders, formally avowed a determination to persist in them against

the U. States, until the markets of her enemy should be laid open to British products; thus asserting an obligation on a neutral power to require one belligerent to encourage, by its internal regulations, the trade of another belligerent; contradicting her own practice towards all nations in peace as well as in war; and betraying the insincerity of those professions which inculcated a belief that, having resorted to her orders with regret, she was anxious to find an occasion for putting an end to them.

Abandoning still more all respect for the neutral rights of the U. States, and for its own consistency, the British government now demands, as prerequisites to a repeal of its orders, as they relate to the U. States, that a formality should be observed in the repeal of the French decrees nowise necessary to their termination, nor exemplified by British usage; and that the French repeal, besides including that portion of the decrees which operates within a territorial jurisdiction, as well as that which operates on the high seas against the commerce of the U. States, should not be a single special repeal in relation to the U. States, but should be extended to whatever other neutral nations unconnected with them may be affected by those decrees. And as an additional insult, they are called on for a formal disavowal of conditions and pretensions advanced by the French government, for which the U. States are so far from having made themselves responsible, that, in official explanations, which have been published to the world, and in a correspondence of the American Minister at London with the British Minister for Foreign Affairs, such a responsibility was explicitly and emphatically disclaimed.

It has become indeed sufficiently certain that the commerce of the U. States is to be sacrificed, not as interfering with the belligerent rights of Great Britain, not as supplying the wants of her enemies, which she herself supplies; but as interfering with the monopoly which she covets for her own commerce and navigation.—She carries on a war against the lawful commerce of a friend, that she may the better carry on a commerce with an enemy, a commerce polluted by the forgeries and perjuries which are for the most part the only passports by which it can succeed.

Anxious to make every experiment short of the last resort of injured nations, the United States have withheld from Great Britain, under successive modifications, the benefits of a free intercourse with their market, the loss of which could not but outweigh the profits accruing from her restrictions of our commerce with other nations. And to entitle these experiments to the more favorable consideration, they were so framed as to enable her to place her adversary under the exclusive operation of them. To these appeals her government has been equally inflexible, as if willing to make sacrifices of every sort, rather than yield to the claims of justice or renounce the errors of a false pride. Nay, so far were the attempts carried, to overcome the attachment of the British Cabinet to its unjust edicts, that it received every encouragement, within the competency of the Executive branch of our government, to expect that a repeal of them would be followed by a war between the U. States and France, unless the French edicts should also be repealed. Even this communication, although silencing for ever the plea of a disposition in the United States to acquiesce in those edicts, originally the sole plea for them, received no attention.

If no other proof existed of a pre-determination of the British government against the repeal of its orders, it might be found in the correspondence of the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at London, and the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs in 1810, on the question whether the blockade of May 1806 was considered as in force or as not in force.—It had been ascertained that the

French government, which urged this blockade as the ground of its Berlin decree, was willing, in the event of its removal, to repeal that decree; which being followed by alternate repeals of the other offensive edicts, might abolish the whole system on both sides. This inviting opportunity for accomplishing an object so important to the United States, and professed so often to be the desire of both the belligerents, was made known to the British government. As that government admits that an actual application of an adequate force is necessary to the existence of a legal blockade, and it was notorious, that if such a force had ever been applied, its long discontinuance had annulled the blockade in question, there could be no sufficient objection on the part of Great Britain to a formal revocation of it; and no imaginable objection to a declaration of the fact that the blockade did not exist. The declaration would have been consistent with her avowed principles of blockade, and would have enabled the United States to demand from France the pledged repeal of her decrees; either with success, in which case the way would have been opened for a general repeal of the belligerent edicts; or without success, in which case the U. States would have been justified in turning their measures exclusively against France. The British government would, however, neither rescind the blockade nor declare its non-existence; nor permit its non-existence to be inferred and affirmed by the American Plenipotentiary. On the contrary, by representing the blockade to be comprehended in the orders in council, the United States were compelled so to regard it in their subsequent proceedings.

There was a period when a favorable change in the policy of the British cabinet, was justly considered as established. The minister plenipotentiary of his Britannic majesty here proposed an adjustment of the differences more immediately endangering the harmony of the two countries. The proposition was accepted with a promptitude & cordiality corresponding with the invariable professions of this government. A foundation appeared to be laid for a sincere & lasting reconciliation. The prospect however, quickly vanished. The whole proceeding was disavowed by the British government without any explanations which could at that time repress the belief, that the disavowal proceeded from a spirit of hostility to the commercial rights and prosperity of the U. S. And it has since come into proof, that at the very moment when the public minister was holding the language of friendship and inspiring confidence in the sincerity of the negotiation with which he was charged, a secret agent of his government was employed in intrigues, having for their object the subversion of our government and a dismemberment of our happy union.

In reviewing the conduct of Great Britain towards the U. States, our attention is necessarily drawn to the warfare just renewed by the savages on one of our extensive frontiers—a warfare which is known to spare neither age nor sex, and to be distinguished by features peculiarly shocking to humanity. It is difficult to account for the activity and combinations which have for some time been developing themselves among tribes in the constant intercourse with British traders and garrisons, without connecting their hostility with the influence; and without recollecting the authenticated examples of such interpositions heretofore furnished by the officers and agents of that government.

Such is the spectacle of injuries & indignities which have been heaped on our country; and such the crisis, which its unexampled forbearance and conciliatory efforts have not been able to avert. It might at least have been expected, that an enlightened nation, if less urged by moral obligations, or invited by friendly disposi-