



"Ours are the plans of fair, delightful Peace,
"Unwar'd by party rage, to live like Brothers."

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MR. MACON'S SPEECH

Concluded.

I will now notice a newspaper which was known to be edited by a foreigner and one who declared he never would become a citizen. The editor made a great noise in the country by the number of papers which he circulated, and by his having been fined in a state court 3000 dollars for a libel, which he tried to make the people believe was wrong. I mean Peter Porcupine; suppose that he had been a Frenchman, avowed openly his determination to remain a subject of France, and that in his paper he had constantly abused the Federal party & called them the English faction. That the second man the nation ever produced was dead before the paper was established, the venerable Franklin; that he abused him in his grave and endeavored to bring his name into contempt by ridicule, may be called him nothing but *Old Lightning-rod*. That he had advised the democrats to put on the black cockade, (which they did) and all that would not put it on, ought to be considered inimical to the country. That he constantly declared the government of Napoleon to be the best in the world, and that this paper, which it is believed never had its equal for scandalous publications, was supported by the party then in power, the democrats. Would there not have been as good ground to talk about French influence as any which has been stated? Again; suppose about this time, it had been said by an influential democrat, that the constitution was good for nothing, that parchment constitutions would not do, that one ought to be made at the point of the bayonet, that no government would last which was not sealed with blood; and about the same time a publication appeared in a democratic newspaper in favor of fixing a dynasty to govern the nation from their own party, and in another, one favoring a division of the states. Could not those who now think they see French influence in every thing which is done, have easily suspected that all this was connected with French intrigue?—That the constitution had been considered almost unlimited in their hands, under a clause which was not intended to give any power, and that under it a sedition law was passed to operate only on the federal party, by which the editors of the ablest federal newspapers and others were punished for publications defending their opinions, and that every federalist, no matter what his revolutionary services may have been or his qualifications and respectability, was turned out of office, because they were federal, and that was their only fault. Would not these doings have furnished some ground to suspect that it was tinged with French democracy?

It is worth while to examine what causes are most likely to give one nation influence with another, and how far they may support the opinion of the great influence which France is suspected to have in this country.—Language may be considered the first—people who speak the same, cannot easily believe that those with whom they talk in their own tongue can be foreigners; they intermix in company without any difficulty, and without knowing or thinking that they live in different countries: the French having been the language of most of the courts of Europe, has undoubtedly been a mean in aiding them to get the secrets of other governments, and of over-running so many countries, I have long regretted that so many of our people were anxious to learn French. I hope it will never be naturalized in the U. S. We have difficulties enough to encounter by speaking the same language with her rival: the inconvenience of both speaking the same was felt during the revolutionary war, and gave rise, as I have heard, to a conversation between a Mr. Ellery of Rhode Island, and a friend of his—the friend tho't

it would be advisable for us to learn Greek, and make it a national language.—Mr. E. replied, that as we had declared independence, he could not consent to give up any part of it, not even the language, but that he was willing to compel the English to speak Greek. The sameness of language must give the British an influence in this country, which no other nation can possess. Marriages identify the people of different countries—in the United States more British subjects marry than the subjects of any other power. Commerce between countries—where people of both join the same company; and more of such companies are formed between the Americans and English than the Americans and any other people. Secret service money—England and France both have the character of knowing how to use it to advantage.—it would seem that it was necessary for people to be able to talk together to carry on the nefarious bargains and doings which grow out of this fund—the sameness of language affords England opportunities for intrigue in this country, which no nation ever had or will have—they, France and England, are both willing enough to have such men as Henry amongst us, and if France had sent him we should have heard ten times as much about him in this debate as we have; his communication would then have been a good bargain at twice the sum which is stated to have been given for it; what sum was actually given I do not know, but if it was \$50,000 as stated, I am content. Places of amusement—the plays and players of our theatres are generally English, and almost every thing connected with them tends to give us a good opinion of an Englishman, and a bad opinion of a Frenchman—every thing there makes the Englishman the delight of the company, and the Frenchman the contempt of it. And do you not recollect, sir, [Mr. Nelson was in the chair] if you do not, your venerable and respectable father would, was he living, that when we were boys, the old men took great delight in telling us that one Englishman could beat three Frenchmen at sea, and two on land; nay, we were taught to consider the French the meanest people in the world, and to confirm it, were told they eat frogs—and the English the greatest, and were told they lived on roast beef and pudding. Our early prejudices were all enlisted against France—and every body knows they are not readily got clear off.

It must appear strange to the people, that in this debate the justice of the war should have been questioned, after so many useless attempts on our part to settle every dispute we had with England by negotiation, not one of which originated in any wrong we had done. We had acted honestly and fairly to all nations—our forbearance had been so great, that the gentleman from Massachusetts said, some time past, that the then majority could not be kicked into war; and how often has it been declared in this House, by men of both parties, that we had just cause of war against G. Britain and France both, and that war ought to be preferred to any restrictive system—and now that we are at war, it seems that any thing would be better than war. The restrictive system would have produced the desired effect, had it been continued and enforced—and our long forbearance and anxiety to live in peace had no other effect than to produce new insults and new wrongs.

While I think of it, I will state a fact to the committee, which is this, that as far as I am acquainted with naturalized citizens in N. Carolina, they almost all agree in politics with my colleague (Mr. Pearson), though some of them are among the number of my friends. He appears not to be friendly to naturalization, and I am willing to continue the law as it is.—This fact proves the sincerity of us both.

I must return to Porcupine's paper, which, as well as I now recollect, never contained a sentence in favor of the revolution, or much in praise of the constitution, if it was praised at all; no outrage was committed which it did not approbate; a few of the outrages of that time shall be stated—the rogue's march was played under the window of the man who drew the Declaration of Independence. The man who first took up arms after the fall of Charles-ton, and whose body had been almost riddled in defence of his country, was a member of Congress, and was insulted at the Circus.—Another member, of no common cast of mind, was insulted at the Theatre; a man who will do his duty in whatever situation he may be placed.—Another returning home with his family was insulted and almost mobbed; he is now one of the cabinet, mentioned by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Quincy.) If I was not almost exhausted, I would give some of the details of these then fashionable transactions. I will only add, it was nothing in those days for a few men to whip a printer whose publications they did not like. All these outrages and violations of law, it is believed, were not only approved by the editor of the before named paper, but other federal papers also. This same editor claimed to have more subscribers for his paper than any other editor in the union. And after he returned to Europe, he wrote and published about some of his former supporters. Had this have been a French editor, and acted toward the Federal party as he did toward the Republican, and the subscribers to his paper Republicans, could not those who look at every thing now done to find French influence, have had as good a field to hunt in as any they have yet found. At the very time these events took place, the majority talked as much about French influence as the minority now does; they had clues, tub plots, ocean massacres, and a hundred other equally ridiculous and unfounded tales, which circulated for a day. I have mentioned these things not with an intent to wound the feelings of any man living, but with a view of trying to persuade those who talk so much about French influence, to look at both sides of the question about foreign influence; and if they will I hope we shall never hear of it again in this House.

Mr. Genet, when he was minister of France, began to intrigue, for which he was dismissed. Mr. Liston, when he was minister of England, began the same work, for which he was not dismissed. If the Republicans had then been in power, and Liston a French minister, could not a strict examination of the documents have placed it as easily as many other acts have been to French influence?

While all these things were doing, and many others quite as strange, the gentlemen call themselves the followers of General Washington. If they be truly his followers, they ought to adhere to his principles and attend to his best advice. Every act of his went to perpetuate the Union and to attach the states to each other. I fear the sentiments contained in his farewell address to the nation, are getting out of fashion with those who claim to be his exclusive followers; or why do we hear within these walls, the foundation of which he laid for union, union, union; disunion spoken of, *peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must*—and why listen to idle and unfounded tales about foreign influence, which can never injure us as long as we stick to the old maxim, United we stand, divided we fall? Straws shew which way the wind blows! What has become of the newspaper called the Washington Federalist? The name was, I have understood, changed to the Independent American—out of that I believe was raised the Federal Republican—all good names, but why lose the name of Washington to a paper supported by his exclusive followers? And this is the first time to my recollection that they have adopted Republican in their calendar.

I have heard that federalism is not now the same that it was when Mr. Adams was President: we shall know more about this if ever they get into power again: be this as it may, every man has a right to change his opinion; it is a right which no government can take from him, and when convinced that he is wrong, it is his duty to change.—But I had thought when Mr. Adams

was President, we were told, that he followed the plan of Gen. Washington, and that he was then a favorite with the party who elected him, but a great change has taken place, in regard to him. I always thought him an honest man, and think so still. After Mr. Adams got out of fashion, Col. Barr became so great a favorite with the Federal gentlemen who were then in Congress, that they voted 35 times for him to be President, when they must have known that not one elector who voted for him, intended him for President.—Afterwards Mr. Madison was a favorite, but after the refusal of the British government to ratify the arrangements made with Mr. Erskine, they examined the matter, and discovered he had not done right, and he got out of fashion. Then the late worthy and venerable Vice President and Col. Monroe became favorites, Col. Monroe got out of fashion about the time he was appointed Secretary of State; and lastly Mr. De Witt Clinton became a favorite. I hope he will not be injured by it, but he seems to be losing ground, as we have been told, it was not his merit that induced the federalists to support him for President, but the demerit of Mr. Madison. This does not appear to be a good reason, because they might have selected a man from their own party, who they thought had merit. But all these things may be the doings of those who a former member of this House called the ultra federalists, and it will be recollected, that all these men be come favorites on the old doctrine of divide and conquer; and it ought not to be forgotten that when Messrs. Esworth and Davie returned from France, their political friends were a little shy of them; indeed I should not be surprised if Messrs. Jay, King, Wolcott and Dexter, should not much longer be favorites. If we may judge from the public prints, commodore Rodgers is no longer one, though he, like the others, is understood to be a federalist; but these men will never say, "peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must." I would really thank any gentleman to tell me, what is now meant by the party name, Federalist.

It is a fact on record, that General Washington did not approve of self-created societies, and I have understood that some of the people who claim to be his exclusive followers, have their self created Washington Benevolent Societies wherever they can establish them, and that they were intended to oppose some other society; perhaps the Tammany. This could not justify the proceeding. As to myself, I do not care if there was one in every three miles square in the nation, so that I am left free not to be a member.

We naturalize, without hearing a complaint from any quarter, emigrants from G. Britain of every trade and profession, merchants, lawyers, doctors and even divines; to which may be added tradesmen and mechanics; they all go where they please, live among us, and take part in the politics of the day. If foreign influence could be introduced into the country by naturalizing, we should have more British than of French; but naturalizing seems well enough for every body but a sailor, but do not permit him to become a citizen; he will be in the way of native sailors, who want encouragement; besides we know that G. Britain will impress him, and we know as well, when her officers want men, they care not whether they are American or English. The native American has never complained that the naturalizing of foreigners of his trade or profession injured him; nor has a complaint been heard from a native seaman against naturalizing foreign sailors; and we have had experience enough to know that our merchants could complain and complain almost against their own complaints. Let their property be captured, or expected to be captured under a new order in France or England, and more complaints will be made about it, than the impressing of a dozen citizens.—The situation of a merchant when plundered is bad enough, but his property is not taken away, without a trial of some sort, before a judge learned in the law, whose duty it ought to be to decide according to law; he also employs lawyers to have justice done him.—Not so with the sailor—when impressed, there is no learned judge to decide his case, or lawyer to have justice done; force is law to him and his oppressor judge; he is put on board ships and compelled

to fight battles, in which neither he or his country have any concern; deprived of the right to complain or petition; he is poor and friendless. Great God! can it be possible, that we shall yield the point of impressment, for the sake of carrying on a little trifling trade by hook or by crook.

All agree, that we ought to fight for the rights of native seamen; and all agree that some of them have been impressed; why not all then join heart in hand to maintain their rights? Is it because the British officers impress from our vessels others besides natives? This cannot lessen their just claim to the protection of their country. We have, however, been told, that only 93 persons were impressed in one year from American vessels—if only three of them had been the sons of the gentleman (Mr. Erskine) who gave the information, I ask, would he have been contented with the long investigation of documents, to ascertain if any of the diplomatic meanders turned towards French influence? No sir, he would not; he would have demanded of the National Government to have his children restored to his arms; he could demand this in a way to be heard.—Far different is the case with those unfortunate parents, who have had their sons impressed; they are too poor & friendless to be heard—the rights of the nation may be abandoned by little and little, till none be left; exactly as you may take a cent at a time from \$1000, till none be left. All must determine to protect American seamen on board American vessels; or not hereafter pretend to claim any jurisdiction over the vessels when they are out of the limits of the United States. If a single citizen should be impressed on American land, the whole nation would be in a flame; the right to protection is the same; whether on American land or on an American vessel.

It is remarkable, that while we hear not a word said to justify England for impressing and plundering the people of the United States, that so much should have been said to prove that we ought not to have gone to war with her, and that we were wrong in doing so.—This is the best way that could have been devised to keep her aggressions out of view; not to say a word about them, and talk a great deal about the hardships of war and the taxes which must be imposed to carry it on, winding up all their lamentations for the state of the country, with, if it were not for the war, a little trade could be carried on.—Impressment then is a mere trifle compared with this trade, and it may be that Great Britain understands it so, & is willing to gratify us with this trade for kin sake, as long as we are contented to be impressed for kin sake. The citizens who are impressed, would tell her, if telling would release them, that nations are no kin.

This surely has been the most unfortunate government from its establishment to the present time that ever existed; almost every thing that has been done is wrong—it was wrong to fix the seat of government here; it was wrong to place this house and the houses for the offices so far from each other; it was wrong to give paper protections to American seamen; it was wrong to have a little mercy in the revenue laws; it was wrong to repeal the internal taxes; I believe that was called oppression—though I am no prophet, I venture to predict, that to lay them to carry the war on will be wrong also; to take Canada would be wrong; indeed it would be difficult to find any thing which has been done right, according to the modern federal creed. How are we to get things right? Give up the chair you are in to one, the white house to another, and they will soon give you a sedition law which will put all right.—The great discovery which these gentlemen have made, that so much has been wrong under every administration would surprise the people, were they but this moment astonished at the discovery of perpetual motion by Hethcote—two such great discoveries must add vastly to the character of the nation.

The attempt to take Canada is so wicked that some of the gentlemen are quite alarmed at it. We hear of the unoffending Canadians, but not of the unoffending sailor; at one time they are the most unoffending and loyal people in the world, at another they are French, and not fit to be united to our government. We have heard much of