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CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7.

Debate on the passage of the bill for raising an additional military force.

(CONCLUDED.)

MR. STANFORD said, he felt it a duty which he owed to himself to make some reply to some of those gentlemen who had honored him with their notice. He had no reason to believe any of them had done him intentional injustice. He was well persuaded otherwise—but they had certainly misconceived his meaning. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Clopton) who had just sat down, considered himself as rather improperly attacked on the score of inconsistency. He would assure the gentleman as a friend, for so he had always esteemed him, that he had not intended to make any personal charge upon him, nor to say any thing which could be construed as disrespectful or personal in the slightest degree. All he had meant to say was of a general nature, and the only use he had intended to make of that gentleman's instructions from the militia of Henrico in '98, was to shew that we then felt the influence of the principles they contained. He considered that remonstrance as happily illustrating the doctrine of the then minority, and if his view of past times was correct, stood in direct opposition to the measure before us. But he hoped the general contrast he had attempted to draw between that crisis in our affairs and the present one, would not be construed by his friend from Virginia, or any other gentleman of the House, as meant to convey an individual charge of inconsistency. Most assuredly it was not so intended. If gentlemen viewed the existing state of things, such as to warrant the raising of additional standing force, their votes would be as they should be, in favor of the bill. As for himself he could not take the same view nor give the same vote. As to the allusion, said Mr. S. that gentleman has made to my inconsistency, he may be assured the remark is not felt. Although I had not the pleasure of voting upon one occasion, important too, as it respected principle, with the then representation of Henrico, I had the pleasure of voting with his celebrated colleague, who at that time so well represented the counties of Stafford and Culpepper—and with also the representative of Green county, Pennsylvania, than whom no other stood higher in those times, for what might be called *standard political correctness*; supported by opinions like these, and by those of a large majority of my other friends, I may be well satisfied with the vote I then gave, since it was given with the sole view of avoiding a much larger army.

It seems to have been considered, sir, that on my part great research had been made in the journals to hunt up the votes of gentlemen to shew their inconsistency. Mr. S. said, he hoped the House would believe him when he declared that he had not done so in one single instance. He had spoken from memory and not from research of that kind, and the journal which had appeared before him, was laid before him by a friend, and although alluded to by him, was not opened. He had, indeed, opened two journals to read a paragraph or two from different messages of the President, to shew the good old militia doctrine—but not to shew votes.

One of the gentlemen from Connecticut, (Mr. Mosely) although he seemed generally disposed to do my observations justice, could not withhold his supplications for my forgiveness for the bad vote which I had so frankly confessed once to have given. If the intercessary ejaculations of that gentleman have the virtue to avail a friend, I must hope, said Mr. S. he will direct them to the affair of the caucus, and not to the vote. He had expressed his regret at the circumstance under which the vote was given, and not the vote itself; that he presumed could be still defended; he had to choose between evils, and had taken the lesser.

Another gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Tallmadge) has not been less liberal towards me, to be sure; but expresses the hope he may never see the chair of this House converted into the chair of St. Peter, for purposes of confession. Such indeed we may all hope without much fear of realizing it. On subjects like the present, that gentleman possesses an experience and judgment, it must be acknowledged, which justly entitle him to more than common respect in this House. We know there are few on this floor, or perhaps in the nation at this time, whose opportunity and experience on the subject of armies, have been equal to his. He seen the want, he tells us, of a regular and well disciplined force in this country, and believes the present additional force now proposed to be raised proper, under the present prospect of our affairs, as a precautionary measure. Now all the difference between the gentleman and myself is, that we think differently of the times. War once admitted as certain, and his arguments must be admitted as sound, but that we should apprehend a war of invasion, and give into the gentleman's doctrine of expediency in the present instance, is what, Mr. S. said, he for one was not prepared to do. He viewed, indeed, that gentleman's doctrine about the utility of a well disciplined force in the event of absolute war, as sound as the gospel truths of St. Peter, and whenever he should trespass upon it, hostilities once commenced, he should then perhaps stand in need of a confession chair—but no war existing, he wanted no precautionary army. The militia he thought would do to begin with.

Mr. S. said, a third gentleman, from the same state, (Mr. Dana) had spoken upon this question, and he felt it a duty to say that he had not only done his motives and observations justice, but the subject itself. He could at least say that the view that gentleman had taken of the present situation of our affairs had been more interesting to him than that of any other who had gone before him.

The gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Campbell) had said he could not comprehend the logic of some of those gentlemen opposed to the bill. Supposing the allusion, Mr. S. said intended for him, he could return the compliment. [Mr. C. asked leave to explain, and said he had not meant to say any thing about the gentleman's logic]—Then Mr. S. said the allusion must have been to some other—but he might nevertheless say, that the gentleman had used arguments which he could not comprehend in any way. The argument was that the proposed troops were not an additional standing army, and that all arguments against it as such must therefore cease. Now we know that the gentleman from Connecticut who as well understands subjects of this kind as any other in the House, probably better, admits it to be a standing force and as such means to give it his vote. If not a standing army, what is it? That it is not a militia army all must admit. That gentleman also has told us that our arguments are urged against these troops as inconsistent with republicanism—that such was the scope of my observations, cannot be denied. They were certainly so intended but it was as certain Mr. S. said that he had dealt in none of these *isms*, or the subdivision of *isms*. He had done all he could, he would confess, to inculcate the good old doctrine of *militiaism*, but he had not even used that term when he was before up.

A gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Eppes) had in a manner as handsome as correct, accumulated and exhibited to our view the aggravated insults we have suffered from both the belligerents, and to what conclusion does he bring us? Not to war as a kind of inevitable result—but to this bill—this additional standing force as necessary for our *defence*. Now if defence is all, I cannot see the least use in this army. We are safer without it, if war is not intended to employ it when raised. That war seems not to be the intention I perceive, said Mr. S. with pleasure, though we have ample cause for war if we chose so to consider it.

I alluded to gen. Sumpter, the venerable defender of the militia, as having voted for the bill under the momentary pressure of the times, the negociation having just broken off; but that he was not at this particular juncture willing to see the bill pass. Something of a calm having ensued, the prospect from Europe not being unpromising as to a change in their policy with respect to the U. S. I think it would be time enough to pass it in some one of the last days of the session.

A motion to adjourn was then made and negatived. Ayes 34.

Mr. D. R. WILLIAMS said it was extremely unpleasant to him to have to address the House at this time; but he had been so much misunderstood that he must make a few observations, and he wished he could get the House into a disposition to hear him; though he was much obliged to a gentleman before him who had just observed that he should hear him with pleasure.

I have also a motive for rising now, said he, different from that of defending myself; it is to join against a denunciation of doctrines on this floor which I have considered as the acme of political correctness. I have seen a message of the President of the United States containing the true doctrines of democracy; and it is a matter of supprize to me that gentlemen should hear such doctrines so often slurred at, and remain silent. I rise to enter my vote that I have not, as one of the majority, renounced them. So much for the observa- of the gentlemen from Connecticut and Massachusetts.

I have been misunderstood in my observations as to the general policy of this measure. My objection to the bill is, that you can maintain neither system, if you maintain both together. Can you maintain armies and embargoes at the same time? It appears evident that the House is disposed for peace; I applaud the disposition in consequence of the change of circumstances. I am for pursuing this course of neutrality; but if gentlemen will have armies let us have armies of some service, not 5000 troops who cannot defend one single vulnerable point if seriously attacked. If this be your policy away with the embargo; you cannot support it. I think a great deal due to unanimity in this case, and perhaps I might go over to gentleman, if they will only let us know what these men are to do? Are they for war or peace? None of your half way measures. Gentlemen are pleased to use witticisms; which is always the forlorn hope when they are hard run for argument. I am opposed to half way measures; I am no "quid." Whatever system I pursue I wish to go up to the hub with it. If it be peace, let us have it; if war, let us go directly to the object.

A gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. W. Alston) was so kind as to go out of his way to shew that my sentiments and my vote are at variance. I am thankful to my colleague before me (Mr. Taylor) for his reply to him; on the other hand I will thank the gentleman to take the letter of Champagny home with him, and consult it at his leisure. The gentleman was kind enough to take care of the state of which I am a Representative, and to tell me that Charleston is in danger in time of peace. She wants none of these creatures, sir; they will be of no service to her. They have been the conductors of foul dishonor to our government. Have you forgot the Driver sloop of war? There was no navy concerned in that business; it arose from your peace establishment. We want no troops at Charleston in times of *peace*: if you are going to drive us to *war*, do not tell us of your 6000 men. The same gentleman told me if I had attended to the arguments, of the gentleman from Kentucky I should have perceived the occasion for these troops. I did attend to that gentleman, and his arguments went to prove that the gentleman himself varied from the gentleman from N. Carolina; for one wanted the troops for the western country, and the other for the sea coasts. If both gentlemen are right, it proves my position that we want more than 6000 men; for if we want 6000 for each we want twice 6000 for both. If one of the gentlemen be correct, the other is. If neither is correct, we want no troops at all.

A gentleman (Mr. Macon) from whom I differ with more pain than from any other, a steady, uniform and undeviating patriot, has made some observations which prove the same as those of his colleague, that for rallying points he should certainly vote for more. Look at those scites which we have appropriated a million to fortify, to say nothing of the western country; when you distribute these 6000 men among them and other points, good Lord deliver us from such a protection as they will afford. The gentleman from North-Carolina said I was wrong in not laying my *projet* on the table. He was wrong in part. The course which I wish to pursue is on the table. I would class the militia, arm them, and keep on the embargo. I would do more; I would pass laws on the principles on which the British marine has flourished. With the embargo law and the latter I would treat, and then your ministers would not act the part of beggars; and with the other I would fight. That is my system.

I heard a gentleman in conclave with seriousness say, that the times were critical and perilous; that the whole world was in arms against us. Is this made public, and then do you talk of a national defence by 6000 men? Can it be believed that there is any thing serious in this? I do not, cannot believe it. The bill is very properly framed. It is a peace establishment bill; there is no national defence about it—it is a standing army.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Randolph) does not like this embargo quite as well as I do. But, as able as he is, he will find it very difficult to tell how it is to operate on France without operating on England; nor will it operate on England alone; for, if your merchants had been as honest as your planters, the West-Indies would have been already starved. Only hold on to the embargo; it must produce something. The British may throw some few supplies into the islands; the French cannot—and they have no means of subsistence but by America.

I did not say that the embargo would answer all purposes. It will answer no purpose if you raise armies. You must lift it when your resources are cut off. When the springs of your cash are dried up you must find resources. I would be glad that the chairman of the committee of Ways and Means would tell us what are our ways and means, when our resources are cut off and cash gone. There is a bit of a sedition law (the bill to punish conspiracy to commit treason) on your table: I thought the thing was rickety and could not live; you will soon have food enough for it. You will have an alien law; nay it is on the table a ready (the bill to amend the naturalization laws.) What comes next? A stamp act and direct taxes, I suppose. If peace, let us know it; if war, do not conceal it. I would drain the treasury for the sake of holding on the embargo; or, raise an army and like a vast billow sweep our enemies from our land.

The yeas and nays were then taken on the passage of the bill, as follow:

YEAS.—Messrs. Alexander, L. J. Alston, W. Alston, Bacon, Bard, Bassett, Bibb, Blackledge, Blake, Blount, Boyd, Boyle, Brown, Burwell, Butler, Calhoun, G. W. Campbell, Clinton, Clopton, Cobb, Cook, Culpepper, Cutts Davenport, Dawson, Deane, Desha, Durell, Elliot, Eppes, Findley, Fisk, Franklin, Gardner, Goodwin, Green, Harris, Heister, Helms, Holland, Holmes, Howard, Humphreys, Ilsley, Jackson, Jenkins, Johnson, Kenan, Kirkpatrick, Lambert, Lewis, Love, Lyon, Macon, Marion, Masters, M'Creery, Milnor, Dan. Montgomery, J. Montgomery, N. R. Moore, T. Moor, John Morrow, Newton, Nicholas, Porter, Pugh, Quincy, Rhea, (Ten,) J. Richards, M. Richards, Riker, Russell, Smelt, Smilie, J. K. Smith, S. Smith, J. Smith, Southard, Stedman, Storer, Tallmadge, Taylor, Thompson, Trigg, Troup, Van Allen, Van Cortlandt, Van Rensselaer, Wharton, Wilbour, M. Williams, Wilson, Winn, Witherell—95.

NAYS—Messrs. Champion, Chittenden, M. Clay, Dana, Ely, Garnett, Gray, Hoge, Mosely, Pitken, Randolph, Sloan, Stanford, Taggart, Verplanck, D. R. Williams—16.

The Speaker having put the question on the title, to wit: "A bill to raise an additional military force."

Mr. BLOUNT said that he had voted in the minority on the vote for recommitment, as he had some doubt whether the bill contained a positive limitation as to the duration of the force. He had voted for the bill under the idea that it was a temporary force and that it could be so expressed in the title. He therefore moved to amend the title so as to read "An act to raise troops for the present defence of the U. States."

Mr. RANDOLPH said he should be reluctant to oppose this motion if made by a gentleman opposed to recommitment; still more so when made by a gentlemen who was sufficiently accommodating to have consented to enable them to remedy the defect in the bill; but he submitted it to the gentleman, when the bill was not in substance that which he wished it to be, whether it would be proper, by a sort of misnomer to give the bill a new title, purporting to be that which in fact which it was not. This would be sailing under false legislative colors. He hoped and sincerely trusted that his friend from N. C. would not suppose that he meant to impute any thing improper to him; but the title now expressed what the bill was; and the only way to get at the object, after they were satisfied that the fathers of the political church were against them, was to move to recommit it, and then send it back to the Senate; for he hoped to God that this bill would not pass, as he had known bills passed, relying upon the Senate to amend it. He hoped this House would not do wrong that others might put right that which they had done wrong. He could have no interest in diminishing the very small minority on the passage of this bill, and yet the course he had pointed out (recommitment) would cause such a diminution, because, except the gentlemen from North and South Carolina, (Messrs. Stanford and D. R. Williams) and himself, not a single man had objected to the bill on principle. It is very late in the day, (said Mr. R.) and I am tired; yet, if this motion be pressed, I must call for the Yeas and Nays on it—though I do not wish to detain the House; for I am as anxious to get out of it, now and forever I was going to say, as any one. The gentleman from N. C. has seen the defect in the bill and wishes to remedy it by an amendment of the title. You are going to do by this bill what you have done in the case of the embargo; to to put a great power in the hands of the President that you may ask him to give it back if he will. If he does not please, you must get the consent of two-thirds of each House to lift the embargo. I believe such powers as these never were trusted to one man by any free people. It is bad enough to lay taxes without limit; but to raise armies without limits is really a much more serious thing than that; and no man can doubt that this is an army without limitation to time. Do not tell us about the term of enlistment: the English army is always enlisted for a term of years; but it is continued in perpetuum by gradual enlistments. If there be a radical defect in the bill I hope it will be cured radically; that it will be recommitted, as it ought to have been been before. I must ask for the Yeas and Nays upon the motion, to have it distinctly shewn that I was not one of those who christened the babe over again, by a name which does not comport with its parentage or birth.

Mr. DANA suggested the propriety of amending the amendment so as to read "for the *future* defence" instead of "the *present* defence of the U. S." He thought would be more conformable to the character of the bill.

Mr. BLOUNT said his object was to express the view with which he had voted for the bill. The title was not drawn by himself, but handed to him by a gentleman who in all legislative matters was correct. He regretted that the bill had not been recommitted; but there was now no alternative. If he did not move a new title to it, he could not express the views with which he voted for it. It was not sailing under false colors as the gentleman had chosen to term it; for the intention of himself and his friends was to provide a force which would enable us to punish the next insult or act of hostility, whether from England or France. He joined the gentleman in the call for the Yeas and Nays; and though the gentleman had voted in so small a minority, he hoped sufficient number of gentlemen would be found in the House willing to indulge him in that call.

Mr. LYON said he had voted for this motion as a standing regular force, and he was perfectly satisfied with the bill. He had no idea of fighting under false colors.

A motion to adjourn was negatived, Ayes 19.