against the amendment. When this subject had been presented to the House he had not then or now attached to it that importance which gentlemen appeared to give it. Many questions had been brought to bear on it which were not now connected with it. It was not now a question whether we should commence a naval system. Whilst the House had been amused with an examination of the whole naval system, the only question was, whether in the present situation of our affairs, it would be proper to employ 6,000 or 4,000 seamen, the difference between the bill as sent from this House, and as received from the Senate being 2,000 seamen. The principal objection to the bill in its present form, was the manner in which it had been introduced into the House. We received a bill from the Senate, said he, which is now before a committee of this House; whilst this is under consideration, another bill of the same nature is sent to us, and we are called upon to vote blindfolded, without a single estimate or designation of the object for which this force is to be raised. If convinced that 6,000 seamen were necessary, Mr. Eppes said he would as soon vote for them as for 6,000 troops. But before he incurred an expence of six millions of dollars, for he averred that this would be the consequence of passing the bill, he must be convinced that it was not only necessary that the bill should pass, but that it should pass immediately; and at the same time totally disclaimed any intention of submitting to insults within our waters. The zeal which gentlemen had now displayed would have been better shewn in the case of the Chesapeake. Why did they not then drive the British squadron out of our waters? This affair however had blown over, and now, when a twenty gun vessel went to Savannah, the House was called upon to employ all our vessels to drive it out! Our Executive, he said, was now by law authorised to employ all the armed vessels, and if, with the 2,000 additional seamen granted by this House, he could not drive these vessels out of our waters, he could not do it with all our armed vessels. Mr. Eppes said he should vote for commitment, because it would enable him again to vote on the amendment of the Senate. He disclaimed all the doctrine which had been laid down in respect to navies. Whenever we had war, he said he would employ those armed vessels which we have, he would send them out to sea, and if they should be taken or destroyed, let them go. He had rather they should be destroyed contending for our rights than suffered to rot in this place. It might be proper here to observe something respecting the situation of the frigates. If gentlemen would come forward with a call for an official statement of their situation, whether they were more rotten now than they would be with their compliment of seamen sailing along the coast, he believed it would be found that this was not the fact. Ordinary merchant vessels were kept in good condition at an expence of about ten per cent. per annum, and he believed not more had been employed on the frigates, and that all but two of them could be prepared for service in a short time. Mr. Eppes also objected to the amendments from the Senate, because they were at variance with the measures which the House had adopted. He was for adhering to the embargo yet a while longer. He believed it more for the interest of the nation to husband its resources, than to squander them on an object which could produce no real good. What was to be done with all these frigates? Were they merely to sail along the coast? No; and he knew not in what gentlemen would employ them. He was for waiting till the period arrived at which they might be of service; he was therefore opposed to the amendments of the Senate. He disclaimed permitting them to rot, when there was an occasion for their actual service; but he was not for sending out these vessels to force a war, before a single soldier was ready to march where they ought. So soon as our troops were ready to send to Canada, he said, he was ready to send out the frigates. Whenever it appeared that we were ready to resort to war, Mr. Eppes said, he should be as ready to employ all the energies of the nation as any man.

Mr. Johnson expressed his pleasure at perceiving that the arguments in favor of and against this bill proceeded from the heart, and were not the bickerings of party. He was not disposed, however, to pass a law making it imperative on the President to employ our naval force; he could not see that it would be necessary for defence, because Congress would have authorized the President, independently of the amendments of the Senate, to employ 171 gun boats, and ten small armed vessels, whilst the fortifications of our harbors were progressing with all the rapidity which the season would permit. For enforcing the embargo they were not necessary, because the President was already authorized to employ twelve additional revenue cutters, and to hire 30 other vessels, if necessary. They were not necessary for the protection of commerce either; for what protection would ten frigates afford to the vast tonnage of the U. S. against the great navies of Europe? Mr. Johnson said that Congress had already induced the nation to believe that they would not take off the embargo during the present session; but that it might be removed in May or June. Mr. J. said the people would draw this conclusion from the decision of the House on the amendments offered for enforcing the embargo. And if the House had determined not to strike a blow at this session, was not the proposition now before the House directly in the teeth of the system which they had determined to adopt. He said it was known to many members of the House, and he was not ashamed to avow it on this floor, that if the majority had thought proper to abandon the embargo system, he had been prepared to take other measures. But he took it for granted, from the sentiments of the majority of the House as expressed by their vote, that it would not be repealed at their present session. Will you then now take offensive measures, said he? No; for you have determined to enforce the embargo. For offence, indeed—Mr. Johnson said, that he considered this naval force inadequate, incompetent and inefficient. Whenever there was war on water, he conceived that it must be carried on by private armed vessels; and whenever we did wage war, it must be as much on land as possible. Gentlemen spoke lightly of economy. Mr. Johnson said, he would venture to say that a rational economy would be necessary to carry the nation through the storm, even with the aid of loans and taxes. He thought it proper that the 2000 seamen proposed to be given by the bill as sent from this House, should be authorised, for the purpose of more strongly fortifying N. Orleans, which was the outlet to the whole western country, and he thought it more expedient to keep in the Treasury the money which the bill from the Senate proposed to expend.

Mr. Durell professed his astonishment at the opposition made by gentlemen in the minority, to the prompt passage of the bill; for he had always understood it to be the duty of the minority to yield to the majority, when its will was fairly expressed—Some of these frigates, he said, were so far gone that they would soon be not worth repairing; and that was one reason why they should be immediately put in a state of preparation. The gentleman from Kentucky, wanted 2000 seamen to go to one place to the south-west. Mr. D. said, he wanted 2000 to go to the east. He did not consider this proposition as at all premature Was this House to come to a declaration of war, before it could be induced to pass this bill? Gentlemen had said, that if the embargo did not produce an alteration in our situation before September, they would abandon it, and take a measure more coercive. Supposing this to be the case, in what situation would the nation find itself? Completely unprepared. The preparation for defence belongs to us, said Mr. Durell; the direction of it when prepared is reposed in the Executive. He said, that gentlemen seemed to think that these vessels could be prepared for sea in four and twenty hours. Not so; it would require three or four months, if ample appropriations were made, to prepare them for sea. It would be two months before a single frigate could get out of the capes of Virginia.

Mr. Taylor said, he agreed with his colleague (Mr. D. R. Williams) that any important measure taken by this House, ought to be adopted by something like an imposing majority. In addition to this idea he said, he would call the attention of the House to what was alledged yesterday, and neither denied then nor now, that that Department of our government which was responsible for the execution of all laws, and for keeping the nation in a state of peace, in terms as clearly to be understood, as it conveyed in a formal message for the purpose, had declared that it did not want this additional force. He thought, it fair to conclude that a difference of opinion existed on this subject in the three great Departments of the government. Even if the principle were not in itself all important, Mr. Taylor said, it would seem to him, that the extraordinary situation in which we were placed, would require that this subject should have a full discussion.—And besides, (said he) it seems to me to be a duty which we owe to ourselves, that the honorable body which sent us these amendments should not in this way force upon us a measure, when they have already, in the usual course of business presented the same measure to our consideration, which has been referred to a committee of the whole. It was all important, he said, in a matter of such magnitude, that all the branches of the government should move hand in hand—There had been no estimate of the expences of this thing. He asked, if there would not be a propriety, if it was the conviction of this House and the other branches of the government, that these vessels should be put in service, in directing the Secretary of the Treasury, or the committee of Ways and Means, to find out a source from which those expences were to be raised; and in enquiring whether the nation must not again resort to eight per cent. loans for the support of this establishment. He believed, that this proposition, if meant to enforce the embargo, was leading to an abandonment of the embargo system. This was clear to his mind; for if the nation were once convinced that the expence of this system, was as great as the expence of an actual war would be, there was no doubt what would be the voice of the nation. The embargo would be abandoned and war adopted in its stead. If we were to have peace, as he had heard from all the gentlemen who were in favor of the amendments from the Senate, then he would say, notwithstanding all the disregard to popularity which gentlemen might profess, the incurring the expence of fitting out all this navy, of retaining a regular army of 10,000 men, and a provisional army of 50,000 men, who were to be clothed, and fed, and paid from time to time, and which, disguise it as they would, was but a standing army of 50,000 men on furlough—the expence necessary for carrying on such a system as this, would bring gentlemen, whether they would or not, to think of the popularity of the measure. Why was not this measure carried into effect at the last session of Congress? Was it that Great Britain had discovered a greater disposition to yield her orders in council than she did now? Mr. T. said, the nation stood in the same situation now as it did then, except that the breaking up of the negociation with Mr. Rose, at the last session, seemed to give the atmosphere more of hostility and war, than at any time during the present session. When the affair of the Chesapeake had been recent, and a mockery of discussion had taken place on it, why had not this measure from the Senate, the members of which held their seats for the term of six years, and were secure in their seats for two, four and six years, been adopted then? Mr. T. recalled to the recollection of the House, the circumstances which had broken down the former administration, amongst the most prominent of which was the establishment of a Navy. The fact was, he said, that no administration, even if composed of Adamites, Pickeronians, Jeffersonians and Madisonians, all combined to assist one another, could not uphold this navy system in time of peace.—The common sense of the nation would frown them down. He said, he was willing that the next administration should have fair play. There seemed to be a disposition to identify the future administration with the present—he liked it the better for it—the future administration would then be opposed to having this millstone swung round its neck, for the present Executive had given an intimation as plainly as he could, that he wanted not this force. He wished every President to have fair play, and where his patriotism was undisputed, that he should not have measures forced upon him, which he did not desire. Mr. Taylor said, he had not expected to hear from the gentleman from Maryland, (Mr. Key) who last year voted for gun-boats as auxiliaries to fortifications, that he now wanted frigates as auxiliaries to gun-boats.—Next, 74 gun ships would be wanted as auxiliaries to frigates, till they got to ships of 120 guns, as auxiliries to gun-boats! The example of former nations, he said, ought to impress gentlemen with the importance of this subject. Gentlemen had said, that the marine league from our shore had been violated; and so Mr. T. said, that of France had constantly been, except where her batteries had driven them away. But had France sent out frigates for *guarda costas*? No; with all the revenue which she had at command, she had considered the naval system as a system of profusion, of throwing away money. And when the few frigates which she possessed had escaped from her harbors, had they hugged along the coast? No; for that was the place of greatest danger; they had ran on in the night time till they got off from their own coast for safety. And if we were to send out frigates he hoped they would not be *guarda costas*, but go off to some distance, and play hide and seek with the enemy, and not stay in the very place where they would be sought for.

Mr. Newton said he was willing to support on his shoulders all the odium which the adoption of this measure would excite. Instead of a millstone hung around the next President's neck, it would be a buoy to support him. If any effect was produced on the popular feeling, it would be against those who refused to adopt the measure. In case of an attack any where, would not every man who refused to send out this force, be censured for having done so? Surely he would. Those who are opposed to us, said Mr. N. who say that we are in possession of power and abuse it, will justly come forward and say that the helm of state ought to be wrested from our hands, because we shall have left the nation exposed to the insults of a foreign power. When the subject presented itself thus, he said it had an awful bearing. There was no fear of war from sending out our navy. Was the power of peace or war placed in the hands of a naval commander? No. Gentlemen had said that the Decaturs of the nation would be seeking opportunities to wipe away the disgrace of the affair of the Chesapeake. Did gentlemen recollect that Decatur and the Chesapeake had been out some time on the coast? There was no fear of their precipitating the nation into war. But it was said that the President did not want this force because he had not required it. Mr. N. called upon gentlemen to recollect that the President had at the opening of the session devolved upon Congress the work of preparation. He quoted the President's message to shew that he had not said what should or should not be done, but that the representatives of the nation, coming from the midst of the people, were the best judges of what ought to be done. Mr. Newton said no man within these walls or in the U. S. had more respect for the President of the U. S. than himself. As much as he respected that man for his eminent services, the reward of which he trusted he would receive, and that his retirement would be as honorable as that of any statesman or patriot that ever lived, yet, if he differed in opinion with this exalted character, he said he should consider it his duty to pursue the dictates of his judgment. If this bill were not passed, he conceived that the President, seeing from the debates of Congress the disposition of a considerable portion of the representatives of the nation, and those from the parts most exposed to foreign attack, would immediately order all the naval force to be put into requisition. Impressed as he was with the necessity of this measure, and not seeing any good which could result from the recommitment of the bill, he should adhere to the vote which he had given; and particularly as he considered that the safety of the U. S. required the passage of the bill.

DEBATE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS.

[CONTINUED]

DECEMBER 8.

Mr. Key said that it was with much regret that he had seen the course which the debate on the first resolution had taken; as the propositions contained in that resolution met his entire and full approbation, he could have wished that instead of the discussion which had taken place, a silent dignified vote, the spontaneous effect of feeling and judgment, had at once passed. It would have been a better course, would have had a better effect, and kept the American mind from the impression which the protraction of the discussion must have occasioned, when taken in connection with the subject. A view however of the embargo had been gone into in respect to its past effects at home, and its probable future effects at home and abroad. As that course had been adopted, he said he should find an apology, for the time which he should occupy, in the present eventful crisis, and the interest it universally excited.

I did myself believe (said Mr. Key) that the first resolution was an abstract proposition, and I still think so, although gentlemen consider it special, but surely a special proposition may be an abstract one. That which I consider an abstract proposition, is one out of which no future legislative proceedings can grow; but I agree that the crisis well warrants an expression of the public voice.

I shall take up the report and resolutions as a system, not with a view to condemn the report at all, for I take it as gentlemen wish it to be considered—I understood the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Bacon) as stating that the committee on our foreign relations had said nothing of the embargo. It was not necessary, Mr. Speaker, that they should, for the embargo law continues in operation until repealed But surely it must be recollected that the committee on foreign relations in their resolutions seem to consider the system which they recommend, as including a continuance of the embargo; and I trust I meet the committee on fair and firm ground, when I consider their assent to be implied to the continuance of the embargo, and that it is their opinion that the measures which they recommend, united with the embargo, form an efficient system proper for the American people to adopt at this time. I shall necessarily therefore endeavor to answer gentlemen who have considered the embargo as a wise measure for the American people; that they are competent to bear it; and that it will, if guarded more sedulously, yet work out the political salvation of our land.

That the embargo is a measure severely felt by our country at large, & by some portions of it to a very eminent degree, cannot be denied. I did not expect to hear its effects contradicted; but they have been in some measure softened by the honorable chairman of the committee last [illegible]. I think the pressure of this measure great and in some places requiring all the exertion of patriotism to support it. And as a proof of it, the members on this floor from different parts of the union have only contended which section suffered most. A member from Massachusetts (Mr. Quincy) because he conceives that thirty millions of dollars have been lost to the Eastern country by the measure, hence concludes that the Eastern country suffers most. The gentlemen from the Southern country say that they raise 70 millions of pounds of cotton, of which but ten millions are consumed at home, and the whole of the residue remains on hand; and that having seven-tenths of their produce unsold, conceive that they most sensibly feel the weight of this affliction in their country; a member from Virginia (Mr. Randolph) will not yield the palm of oppression to either. "I live (said the gentleman) in the centre of the tobacco country, whether you draw the line from East to West, or from North to South. We are not less pressed than others for we have no vent for this article so obnoxious in itself, but which the taste of mankind has rendered necessary." Now with great deference to all these gentlemen, I say that my country suffers most. The Southern country possesses its staples, which but remain on hand; its value only diminished by the non-export. Tobacco and cotton may be preserved without material injury for a length of time. We know that at the close of the revolutionary war tobacco bore a greater price than previous to its commencement, and amply remunerated the holders. But I represent an agricultural country.—What can resuscitate wheat devoured by the fly? What restore flour soured in the barrel? our produce perishes, the subject is destroyed. So far therefore as I represent an extensive and fertile farming district, I will not yield the palm of pressure to the cotton and tobacco country. So great has been the feeling of the people that it has wrought a wonderous change in the state which I have the honor to represent; not in men who are either deluded or deceived, as intimated by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Campbell) but men who, by the pressure of the embargo itself, have been driven to reflection, and by reflection removed the film from their eyes, and thereby seen their true interests more distinctly. In the course of the last winter, the legislature of the state of Maryland, believing that the orders in council justified the embargo, and that it was a wise measure, approved of it. Succeeding elections have taken place, and the present House of Representatives tells you that it is most ruinous and oppressive. Such certainly are its effects in the state of Maryland; and I should illy represent my own district, if I did not so declare. Gentlemen will say that I should rather be pleased with the change than regret it; but, so help me God, Mr. Speaker, I am much less anxious what description of citizens administers the affairs of the country, than that they should be well administered; that it should protect the liberty, give to labor its just reward, and promote the happiness and prosperity of the citizens.

But it is alleged by the honorable chairman of the committee (Mr. Campbell) that this is a delusion; that the people do not comprehend the subject; for that it is the orders in council which have produced our embarrassments, and not the embargo—Here, then, sir, I am precisely at issue with that learned and honorable gentleman. I contend that the pressure on the people is caused by the embargo, and not by the orders in council. However speculative theorists may reason, there is proof abroad, and stubborn facts to contradict their reasoning. Test the market from Boston to Savannah, as to the price which you may get at ninety days credit, the embargo being continued, or on condition that the embargo be repealed in thirty days. Is there no difference in the price under these circumstances? I know well from experience, and the whole country knows that if the embargo be now taken off, the price of every species of produce will rise fifty per cent. The depreciation in price then flows from the embargo. Remove it and they will give you more; keep it on and they will give you less. These are stubborn facts, and every man who has gone to the market will attest their correctness. You may reason as you please; but there is not a farmer that can be reasoned out of his senses, especially when they are sharpened a little by necessity. I hold these facts to be more conclusive than any abstract reasoning to prove that the embargo does work a diminution in the value of the articles which we have for sale. If this be the case, it results, sir, that we must ascribe to the operation of that measure the loss our country now so greatly feels. Our citizens are not so uninformed as the gentleman from Tennessee imagines. He thinks, and I agree with him, that the public voice will be generally