

ultimately able to extricate ourselves from the perplexing and distressing situation described by the gentleman from Virginia. That this opinion is correct, the conduct of our naval force in the Mediterranean sea, furnishes ample proof. The war with Tripoli has afforded the only active and *honorable* employment which our navy has had since the treaty with France; and in which the gallant deeds of our little band of heroes, deeds worthy of the American name and character, have commanded the admiration and applause of surrounding nations; and the recollection thereof will be cherished by the American people, when yonder marble monument, erected in honor of those heroes who fell before Tripoli, shall be mouldered into dust.

The question recurs, what is the cause of our present embarrassments? what has brought us into our present sad dilemma? for a sad one it is, if it be true, that we are reduced to the alternative of a war with both belligerents, or the continuance of the present embargo system. Surely they could not have originated in party newspaper publications, or the electioneering squabbles of the *ins* and the *outs*: The effects of these are greatly over-rated. Though they produce much excitement and noise here, they make but a small impression on the other side of the water. The public documents on our table, those furnished last session of congress, and information in possession of the senate, shew that our difficulties arise from our having forsaken the *spirit*, and departed from the *policy* of '76; and, in lieu thereof, adopted that *retiring policy* which recommends the *abandonment* of our right to navigate the ocean, because our commerce is exposed to *danger* from the illegal attacks and depredations of the belligerent powers. The *spirit* of '76 induced us to *face danger*, to secure that right: and would not the *same spirit* prompt us to hazard something in its defence?

It is a painful task to me to undertake to point out the impolicy and impropriety of our present system of measures; but I see no other way of avoiding those evils which the gentleman from Virginia has so forcibly described (to remove which I would most cordially co-operate) or to effect that union in our public councils, which he so ardently desires, and which I most devoutly wish for, than by going into the inquiry, to discover where the error lies.

I shall go no further back than to 1806, the date of the memorials of the merchants of New Haven, and the great cities and towns on the sea coast, now introduced by the gentleman from Kentucky. [Mr. Pope.] They complained of aggressions on their commerce by Great Britain, and prayed that the protecting arm of government might be extended for their relief. The Boston memorial suggested a special mission. They expected, no doubt, that the envoy would be sent, as heretofore, to attempt a friendly negotiation of differences; not to hold out a *non-importation* act for an *olive branch*, or to be bound by instructions to demand, as an *ultimatum*, that the American flag should protect all persons on board our merchant vessels;