

to continue to treat them as of this character, and to oppose them by remonstrance, until the national honor demanded a more decided and vigorous course of proceeding. But is it not true that the unexampled fury and peculiar character and extent of the European contest—the power of the principal parties in the war, the complaints of administration against both, the remoteness of our situation, and our incapacity of bringing into operation against them any effective means of annoyance, our destitution of competent fleets and armies, the state of our finances and the example of other nations; is it not true, that these and other circumstances combined to furnish the most fastidious honor with a dispensation from ordinary rules and obligations, and a fair apology for avoiding altogether, or at least for postponing until fully prepared, this last and terrible resort of nations? No precedent to the disadvantage of the country, and no abandonment of just rights, could have been inferred from this forbearance.

Besides—in whose estimation was the national honor endangered? Were we bound to dishonor ourselves in the opinion of France, that we might preserve the good graces of Britain, or to embroil ourselves with the latter, that our chivalrous spirit might be respected by the former? Or were the unresisting vassals of French power among the nations of Europe to be the arbiters of our honor? Or was it desirable to secure the applause of other neutrals who would willingly bestow upon us their admiration in exchange for the profit to be derived from avoiding our example? Certainly when the passions of these evil times shall have subsided, the American nation will be convinced, as the people of Massachusetts are convinced, that this is not a war for honor, interest or independence, but the miserable catastrophe of a plan of policy founded on the pride of system, and in hatred of one nation and partiality to another—passions which in their

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