

to take him, for the present, as he presents himself to the country and the world in his message. The ideas there grouped are: "no compromise which the United States ought to accept can be effected—I have withdrawn the proposition which I made in deference to my predecessors—I now go for the whole territory, it is ours by clear and unquestionable right, which cannot be surrendered without dishonor." The President desires us to invest him with the power of notice, to the end that he may, at the expiration of twelve months, take possession of the whole country, or, in other words, make war on Great Britain. I am amazed to hear gentlemen aver that even a forcible seizure of the whole country will not involve the United States in a war with that power. I am as certain we shall have war, if we push our claim to that extremity, as if we were to send a fleet of steamers into the Thames to capture the palace of St. James. I admit that giving the notice is not per se a belligerent act—it furnishes no *casus belli*, for it is a right secured by treaty—but I object to voting the notice in connexion with the declared purpose of the Executive to lay hold of the whole of Oregon. So I insist the matter stands on the record. If the President is right in the assertion that we in truth and in fact own the whole territory, then, the moment the treaty is abrogated, it will become his sworn duty to execute the laws of the United States over the whole of Oregon; and that I maintain is war!—open, flagrant war. You will in effect invest the President with the power to bring the question in dispute, at any moment he pleases after the treaty is annulled, to the arbitrament of the sword. I will not consent to part with the war power, if giving the notice is an exercise of that power, as many insist, in the form of a notice to quit to be served on Great Britain. This power is a trust involving every thing dear and sacred to men, which the Constitution has wisely put into the hands of Congress, and which should be guarded with ceaseless vigilance.

But suppose we look out of the record; how does the matter then stand? Can any honorable member tell us what is the real policy of this Administration? Is it their purpose irrevocably to stand on the parallel of 54 deg. 40 min. I must confess, that their conduct has been so inconsistent, I find it impossible to form any satisfactory opinion on the subject. Without dwelling on the inconsistency of claiming at one moment the whole territory, and at the next of offering to surrender one half of it to Great Britain, what are we to think of the fact of their recommending no measures to strengthen either the defences or the finances of the country? The appropriations suggested by the department are all peace appropriations. Our army is a skeleton—our fortifications are unarmed and unmanned—and our navy (in comparison with that of Great Britain) is insignificant. I know it is said that a republic can never prepare for war till after it breaks out. If by this it be meant that we cannot in peace be prepared for an aggressive war, I admit it; but we can, and should, in critical circumstances, prepare in advance for a defensive war. If I knew that this Administration are resolved to exclude Great Britain wholly from Oregon, I would, if I could, instantly put every thing on the war establishment. The whole energies of the American people, and resources of our vast country, should be consecrated to that object. I should deem it to be an imperative duty to augment greatly the resources of the treasury; for money, after all, is the sinews of war. We should place the credit of the republic on high ground, and the Government beyond the possibility of financial disgrace. We have men in abundance, brave, patriotic, and devoted; but we should be in a condition to command the entire pecuniary means of our own country, and, if need be, of continental Europe. I should be prepared, in such case, to come into this Hall and here encamp till these objects are accomplished. But this Administration, so far from strengthening the finances, (as, for example, by laying duties on the free articles, such as tea and coffee,) propose to give them a fatal blow by the overthrow of the present tariff; and not only that, but to rush us into a war with Great Britain on a sub-treasury scheme! An independent treasury! What a glorious engine of war! Why, your war would not be declared three months before your Government