

doubt on this floor. But suppose they should be so unreasonable as to resist, and have to be taken by force, and a few of them happen to be killed. Could a war be avoided? Can gentlemen be serious in uttering language like this? Would Great Britain allow for one moment any such course to be taken with a British subject? Why, sir, there is not on the face of the globe a nation which affords such perfect and efficient protection to her subjects as that powerful nation; and it is the idlest thing possible to suppose that, under such circumstances, a war could be avoided.

What, then, is our true course on this subject? I have endeavored to show that, although "inactivity" *was* our true policy, it is so no longer; that the joint occupation cannot with safety long continue; that a notice, if given with merely the declarations of the President and his confidential friends, and other members of this House, will greatly impede, if not entirely prevent, negotiation, and, if followed up by military possession, lead to violence and war. Under these circumstances, in my own view, the wiser course is to authorize the Executive to give the notice, expressing upon the face of the resolution which shall authorize it, that it is done with the view of bringing the negotiation to a speedy and amicable termination of the differences, recommending that negotiation be renewed, and that the matter should be settled as civilized men should settle such a question. Under these circumstances, it is my opinion, that it is more likely to lead to peace to pass such a resolution, than to take no action on the subject.

I shall accordingly, before I close, offer an amendment, or rather a substitute for the original resolutions.

All say that they desire peace. How is that to be obtained? It is not to be obtained by threatening, in a boastful strain, to sweep England from the continent, or to take Canada in ninety days, and give it back, and take it again in ninety days—to drive her fleet from the ocean. It is not to be preserved by the use of abusive epithets, or repeated and unceasing attacks upon Great Britain. Much of this has, indeed, been very harmless. It has been only ridiculous. All the four-footed beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air, and amphibious animals, too, have figured in this debate. The poor lion is utterly destroyed, and the eagle is a most persecuted bird—the bear and the crocodile, and the serpent and the anaconda, have not been forgotten. In relation to the American eagle, these figurative gentlemen should have remembered that he grasps the olive branch as well as the arrows; and I hope that this emblem may not prove false by the prevalence of rash and imprudent counsels, and a thirst, an unholy thirst, for dominion.

Two other republics, one of ancient, and the other of modern times, have gone forth to battle, and to slaughter, under the auspices of this noble bird. The Roman eagle of ancient, and the French eagle of modern times, had the arrows, but not the olive branch. Let us take warning from their example and their fate. This unbounded appetite for conquest and territory ruined them. In the one case falling to pieces by its own weight, and in the other by an union of the whole civilized world, as against a common enemy—*hostis humani generis*.

The views freely expressed on this floor accord with the course of policy pursued by the French republic—like the farmer, who considered himself very moderate in his views, we only want all the land which joins us. Texas we have taken, and now we hear proposed, with apparent sincerity, that we take California, and Mexico, and Cuba; and that we sweep