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SPEECH  
OF  
MR. BARROW, OF LOUISIANA,  
ON  
THE OREGON QUESTION.

DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE U. S., ON THE 30th OF MARCH, 1846.

The resolution in relation to Oregon being under consideration—

Mr. BARROW addressed the Senate nearly as follows :

It was said, Mr. President, early in the session, by the honorable Senator from Ohio, (Mr. ALLEN,) chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, that before the American people were called upon take up arms in defence of their rights in Oregon, *their hearts should be prepared for war*. I had imagined the belligerent spirit then manifested on that side of the chamber to have passed away; but the renewed exhibition of this morning from the same quarter intimates plainly that the honorable chairman conceives that, if not by him, by this debate, or by somebody or something else, that preparation of hearts he so much desired has been brought about. For he seemed to kindle up at the idea of the Senator from Massachusetts, (Mr. WEBSTER,) that opinion at large, both at home and in Europe, had settled, or was fast settling, down to the conclusion that this Oregon controversy ought to be amicably adjusted, *substantially* on the basis of the 49th parallel of latitude. Called upon by the Senator from Massachusetts to say whether or not he concurred with him in the supposition of this tendency of public opinion, the honorable chairman declared a persuasion directly opposite, and unchanged since the beginning of the session. So far, he said, as he had been able to arrive at the opinion of the people of the United States, they were yet in favor of 54° 40'. The honorable chairman must then consider the preparation of the American heart finished; for, whenever it is by our people determined to assert and maintain their title up to 54° 40'—to the whole of Oregon—they must be prepared to go to war, and need indulge no other thought.

I cannot agree, sir, with the Senator from Ohio. I cannot believe that either the public feeling or the public understanding of this country is yet prepared for a war with England to obtain the whole of Oregon. Three months ago I did fear that by the deliberate, systematic, and persevering efforts put in use here and elsewhere to mould the people to that political purpose, the existing controversy might be shaped to a bloody conclusion. I did fear that the American people might be involved in a war with a great nation, their brothers in interest, in language, and in religion, not less than in descent, before they were made aware of the nature and the value of the subsisting controversy. But my fear has to a great degree passed away. I do not now apprehend any such national misfortune, unless our Chief Magistrate should abandon what I believe to be his present purposes.