

continue the impressment of seamen [mark it, reader! any seamen, British or American, naturalized or not] from our vessels, and to restore those already impressed, there is no reason why hostilities should not immediately cease—*securing* these objects, you are authorized to stipulate an armistice.”

Now, no language could be clearer to shew, that the actual discontinuance of the practice of impressment must *precede even an armistice*—In other words, a question which has been twenty years in discussion between the two nations, a question founded on several centuries usurpation, if you please so call it, a question in which Great-Britain is supported by the practice of America and France, as I shall most amply prove; this question which she considers a vital one for her marine, Great-Britain is required to give up as a condition of a temporary suspension of arms.

Mr. Russell our minister understood his instructions in the light in which I do—and no man can understand them otherwise.

In his letter to Lord Castlereagh of August 24, 1812, he says, “that he is authorized to stipulate with his Britannick Majesty’s government an armistice *on condition* that the orders in council be repealed, and no illegal blockades substituted; and that orders be *immediately* given to discontinue the impressment of *persons* from American vessels, and to restore the *citizens* of the United States already impressed.”

Here we find the discontinuance of the practice of impressment a condition precedent to an armistice—It is curious also to notice the legal precision of Russell’s terms—They are to require the discontinuance of impressment of “*persons*,” that is, of all or any persons—but those he requires to be restored are only “American citizens”—we are astonished that they had not the effrontery to demand the re-delivery of British subjects who had been impressed—But on reflection it is as well and nearly the same, because the terms “American citizens” includes British sailors naturalized, many of whom obtained naturalization in twenty-four hours after they came on shore—This topick we shall however examine when we consider the reasonableness of the propositions.

Lord Castlereagh comprehended Mr. Russell’s demand in the same manner in which Mr. Russell had understood his instructions.

“I cannot, said his Lordship, refrain on one single point from expressing my surprise, namely, that as a condition preliminary even to a suspension of hostilities, the United States have thought fit to demand that the British government should desist from its ancient and accustomed practice of impressing British seamen from the merchant ships of a foreign state simply on the assurance that a law shall *hereafter* be passed, &c. &c.”

His Lordship goes on to declare that Great-Britain is now ready, as she has been *heretofore*, to agree to any substitute which may accomplish the same end—But this will come particularly under consideration, when we come to the second proposed division.

The present design is merely to prove, that our government did demand the discontinuance of impressment as a *preliminary* even to any negotiation—But some gentlemen have construed a