

caused our maritime and other rights to be respected. Unfortunately for our country, it was a departure from that policy that has brought us into our present situation. It is not surprising that many mistakes should be made respecting the *spirit and policy of '76*, by those who must have derived their information from tradition, and not from their own personal observation. I have noticed that many of those who say the most on that subject, were either not born, or were in their cradles, or have since migrated to the United States, to enjoy the fruits and blessings of that revolution.

The patriots and statesmen who guided our public councils at the commencement of the revolution, believing our rights were invaded, and our liberties endangered by the arbitrary and unwarrantable claims of the British parliament, resorted first to respectful petitions and remonstrances, to induce the British government to abandon their unjust claims, and adopt such measures as would secure our rights and liberties. But when these means were found to be ineffectual, they nobly dared to make their appeal to *arms*, and to declare themselves a free and independent nation: and though we were without a regular organized government, and had neither army nor navy, they dared, in defence of their just rights, to wage war with a powerful nation. They did not tell us that we must abandon our right to navigate the ocean, or yield up any other right because of *surrounding dangers*. The maxims then were, that *rights*, which were not worth defending, were *no rights*: that to be *respected*, we must convince others that we would not *tamely submit to insult*; and that to preserve *peace* we must be prepared for *war*. This *spirit and policy* carried us safely through the revolutionary war, established our independence, and secured our national sovereignty; one essential attribute of which is, the right to navigate the ocean. In 1783 we obtained an honourable peace. In 1793, war having commenced between France and England, our maritime rights were invaded by the latter, and our vessels were captured and condemned under the memorable November orders. An attempt was then made to introduce the same policy to defend our rights and vindicate our honour, which is now, and for some time has been, in the flood tide of experiment. The famous resolutions proposing duties of *discrimination* between foreign nations, the entering into a *commercial warfare* with England, and propositions for a *non-intercourse law*, and *sequestration* of British debts, will be remembered. The journals of that session of congress contain a record of them, and will shew who were the *friends* and *advocates* of that policy.

Fortunately for the nation, we then had a chief magistrate who was actuated by the *spirit*, and well knew, and was determined to pursue the *policy of '76*. He boldly came forward, and put an end to all those projects, by nominating an envoy extraordinary to the court of Great Britain, to remonstrate against the wrongs, and demand satisfaction for the injuries we had sustained. That minister