

unconditional, through the hands of Commissioners, acting under an act of parliament, and according to the instructions given to them from the Administration. This ministerial surrender of the act of navigation, as executed in form, under the conciliatory acts, amounts to a national ratification of the commercial treaty between America and France. For this country cannot claim any right to rescind any open commercial treaty entered into by America, having divested themselves of all their right and title to oppose any such treaty, by the general and unlimited concession to America of extending every freedom to trade. Your legal attorneys have publicly and solemnly ratified that act, under national authority. Ministers in this unconditional surrender of the act of navigation, have cut off the right hand of their country, and we must submit. There is no redress.

As to the treaty of alliance between America and France, I conceive it to have been on the part of America, a reluctant act of self-defence; and on the part of France, I conceive it to have been an absolute and direct violation of the laws of nations, with respect to Great Britain. On this latter ground, I think my country has a right to demand that this alliance be relinquished on the part of France. And if I can shew cause to believe, that on the part of America, it was an act of reluctant necessity, I shall hope that this conclusion may be then justified; that the hearts and wishes of America would readily concur in peace with Great Britain, upon the terms of the relinquishment of the treaty of alliance, I mean on the part of France. For undoubtedly they themselves will never make a sacrifice of their honour by breaking a treaty contracted in their necessity, how much soever they may regret that necessity. This treaty, which is now become an alliance between America and France, appears, when it left Europe, not to have been a treaty of alliance, but a treaty of *eventual* alliance. My proofs of this are, first, from the declaration of the French Ambassador, M. de Noailles, on the 13th of March last, in which he says, that the plenipotentiaries of France and America have signed a treaty of friendship and commerce, but without stipulating for any exclusive advantages for France; and he adds, that the King of France has in consequence taken *eventual* measures in concert with the United States of North America. Again, Monsieur Gerard, who was appointed by the court of France to attend upon this treaty in its passage to America, soon after his arrival, on the 6th of August, 1778, introduces it to the Congress with these words, "The hostile designs of the common enemy have given to engagements *purely eventual*, an immediate, positive, permanent, and indissoluble force."—On the same day the Congress return their answer in the following words: "We ardently wish to sheath the sword, and to spare the farther effusion of blood; but we are determined by every means in our power to fulfil those *eventual engagements*, &c." This *eventual* treaty was signed by the American Commissioners at Paris, just in that period of time while they were kept in suspense as to the nature, extent, intentions, or sincerity of the supposed conciliatory propositions which had been announced by the

Minister.