

on the *Caroline*, on the other hand, presents an occasion for the most scrupulous examination by the Government into the facts of that transaction, which, if found as now represented, exhibits an aggression upon us, which Great Britain, in proper time and form, must redress. And that this reciprocal justice will be extended by both Powers, who is authorized to entertain the slightest doubt?

I must be allowed, then, to express my utter dissent from any attempt which may be here made, either by the friends or the enemies of the administration, under a state of information admitted to be doubtful and imperfect, on grounds of acknowledged passion, to force the two nations into false positions. Let us display calmness, moderation, and dignity, which are not only consistent with a firm and inflexible purpose to exact the most scrupulous justice, but afford the best proof of a determination to do so. Yet if, after all, against human expectation, the Government of Great Britain shall, on proper application, refuse to disavow the late aggression of her subjects, and seasonably redress it, and force the necessity of an appeal to arms, our present power and past history leave on my mind no apprehensions of any result inconsistent with the national glory, and the complete vindication of a just cause. And when that deplorable contingency shall arise, it will be seen who are foremost to vindicate by arms the violated rights and offended honor of the country—those under whose auspices that honor has been stained, by withholding justice from an infant republic, because weak, or those who will tolerate no denial of justice by others, *because they deny justice to none*.

I am sensible, Mr. Speaker, that I may seem to evince an unreasonable solicitude on this subject. I persuade myself, however, that I entertain a sincere and profound devotion to the preservation of the national honor, upon principles which will ever ensure, at the hands of other nations, a scrupulous respect for our national rights. If our internal policy is doomed to perpetual vacillation, amidst the clouds of party and faction, I trust that at least the policy which governs our intercourse with foreign nations may, in the sight of all mankind, tower, like the mountain peak, above the region of change or cloud, reposing on its foundation, not of passion, or rash and headlong excitement, with their floods and sands, or short-sighted temporary expediency, but the everlasting rock of undeviating justice.