

I therefore say frankly, that our title to that part lying north of the 49th parallel, is not so "clear and indisputable" as it is to the portion south. And had our negotiators effected a settlement on that line in 1818, '24, or '27, the country and the world would have acquiesced in its equity and fairness. And had Mr. Polk adjusted the matter on this basis in 1845, the country would have been less inclined to have grumbled at the result, than it would have been to have smiled at the sudden evaporation of his inaugural claim. And I say here, sir, that if honorable negotiation can effect a compromise, substantially on this line, wo to the man who plunges us into a war for that to which our claim is not "clear and unquestionable." I am not saying that we have no color of title north of this line, nor that our adversary has a perfect one; but I would say, that our rights there are a fit subject for honorable negotiation.

As we have rights, therefore, in Oregon, I shall vote for the notice, believing its tendency will be, not to provoke war, but quicken negotiation, and produce an amicable adjustment. Embarrassments will but thicken around by every month's delay. The irritated feelings between the two countries is every day rising higher and higher; and unless an adjustment be speedily effected this feeling will place the question beyond the control of negotiation. In its present shape the temptations for political capital are too strong to be resisted by party demagogues. It should, if possible, at once be placed beyond their reach.

Moreover, the notice is not of itself just cause of offence. It is a stipulated right in the convention of 1827. Great Britain having agreed that we might give it, will not thereby have any cause for offence. And if Mr. Polk and his advisers see fit to surround it with offensive embarrassments, provocative of war, on their heads be the consequences. But I do not believe that war will come of it. The respective nations have interests too vast and momentous involved in the issue. The age is too enlightened and peaceful—public sentiment too much advanced in correct views—the matter *really* in dispute too small—to warrant the probability of so direful an event. Besides, one section of this Union is already planting itself in hostility to a war, and that section generally bears sway in the nation. To that section the present Chief Magistrate is known to be closely allied, easily swayed by its counsels, and controlled by its preferences. That section, well knowing the disastrous effects of a war upon its cherished interests, is alarmed at its bare possibility. Yes, Mr. Chairman, the scene has been one a little amusing, to see gentlemen who, twelve months ago, were ready to brave war, dishonor, and disgrace to grab what did not belong to us, now fluttering with the timidity of an affrighted maiden at the bare mention of taking possession of what *does* belong to us. They were loud in shouting responses to the Baltimore compact—"All Oregon and Texas," while that was to gain them a President and Texas; but, these obtained, the compact is repudiated.

I ask my Northern Democratic friends if this is the way their Southern allies fulfil compacts? Have you not been cheated? Is this the reward for your Texas fealty? Would you not have been wise to have kept Texas as a hostage for Oregon a few weeks? Pray, then, profit by experience. Don't be caught a second time. Southern friendship you will find co-extensive with Southern interests, and deep as Southern pockets. They want your help on one occasion more. They wish your co-operation in striking down the tariff of 1842. Give them this, and let them stave off Oregon, till the deed is consummated, and then, my word for it, the favors you get from them for Oregon, or for any other interest not kindred to their own, will be few and far between. And to that portion of the Southern army who originated and consummated the Texas scheme, and who now hesitate about Oregon—who start back, and cry out, "A lion in the way!"—to you I would say, if war *shall* come, remember that you have aroused the spirit of territorial acquisition, which is now returning to trouble you. You have labored for nine years to wake up a national hatred against Great Britain for her anti-slavery movements. That hatred aroused, is now casting heavy embarrassments over negotiation; embarrassments which are hourly multiplying the chances of war. And with the horrors of war floating before you, I should not wonder if your vision rested upon results connected with it. Does it not a little trouble you, when you think of the long line of FREE States that will yet be carved out, stretching three thousand miles west to the Pacific Ocean, coupled with the probability that all CANADA may yet be called in to restore the lost balance of the Union? If your sleep is disturbed by the horrors of war—if the visions of British steamers in your harbors—of your cities in flames—of marshalled "regiments of black troops" in your midst—if these haunt you, and if all these, in due time, shall be realized—point to Texas, and say, this is the price we pay for it, remembering, that He who sits in the circle of the Heavens, and holds the balance in His hands, will mete out justice to nations, as well as to individuals.

Thanking the House for their kind attention at this late hour, and you, Mr. Chairman, for the firm support which you have given me, and tendering my acknowledgments to the gentlemen over the way for the calm and *uninterrupted* manner in which they have permitted me to speak, I relieve your patience.