

ledge is most unquestionably his superiour. My friend's calculations do not look back; they are *prospective*; formed on the risks to be run, if the embargo be removed and the sails of our merchant vessels be again spread on the sea.

But as the gentleman alike disregards such calculations, and the evidence of facts appearing at several insurance offices (and among men of plain, practical understanding, these would be resorted to as sources of correct information) seeing, I say, the gentleman from Virginia is not satisfied with this testimony, why did he not advert to an authority which he holds in the highest respect, the authority of the President and Secretary of State? They have said, that Bonaparte's Berlin decree was an "empty menace," and that *France was without the means of carrying it into effect against the rights and obligations of neutral nations*. But this also the gentleman passes by. Let me then mention one more statement.

In the message at the opening of the present session of Congress, the President informed us, that his ministers in London and Paris had been instructed to explain to the respective governments his disposition to exercise his power of *suspending the embargo laws*, in such manner as to open the way to a renewal of commercial intercourse...but that neither government had accepted his offer. The instructions to his minister in Paris, the President says, were necessarily modified...but how he did not say; and from the obscurity of his language it would be impossible to divine. By looking, however, to the correspondence between Mr. Madison and General Armstrong, perhaps we may discover the boon or boons offered to France, on condition of the Emperor's repealing his decrees. Mr. Madison says, that if France should revoke her decrees, Great-Britain, by following the example, would be obliged to restore to France the full benefit of neutral trade; or, by persevering in her orders, "render collisions with the United States inevitable." And General Armstrong says in the like case, that "it may be fairly presumed the United States could no longer hesitate about becoming a party to the war against England." He adds, that if Great-Britain should not obstruct our trade, the wants of France and her colonies would be supplied...If Great-Britain should obstruct the trade, "the wishes of his majesty [the French emperor] as expressed in February last, would be directly promoted."...What were the wishes so expressed?—No communication of the French government to the American minister, exhibiting those wishes, has been laid before Congress. In the mass of other information communicated, has so important a document been accidentally overlooked?

With regard to the other belligerent, the President speaks a plain language. He says that to Great-Britain, "whose power on the ocean is so ascendant," it was stated explicitly, "that on her rescinding her orders in relation to the United States, their trade would be opened with her, and remain shut to her enemy...in case of his failure to rescind his decrees also." Indeed, Mr. President! Let our ships loose from our wharves, let them take in rich cargoes, and sail for all the ports on the globe...except those of France and