# National Intelligencer.

## & WASHINGTON ADVERTISER.

VOL. VIII. WASHINGTON CITY, PRINTED BY SAMUEL HARRISON SMITH, PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE. NO. 1181.

*FIVE DOLLARS PER ANNUM,* MONDAY, MAY 9, 1808. *PAID IN ADVANCE.*


## CONGRESS.

*HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6.

*Debate on the passage of the bill for raising an additional military force.*

*(CONTINUED.)*

MR. G. W. CAMPBELL said, that notwithstanding the long time that had been spent in the discussion of this bill, he felt it his duty to state to the House the reasons that would influence him to vote in favor of it; and he deemed it the more necessary that he should do so, because attempts had been made to impress the public mind with an opinion, that those who were disposed to raise this army, had abandoned the principles they maintained in former times, when they had insisted that standing armies were dangerous to liberty and the rights of man, and that the chief reliance for security and defence ought to be placed on the militia. I am, (said Mr. C.) and always have been one of those who think we ought to rely on the militia as the main support and defence of our country in the day of danger. I consider them as the great bulwark of our liberties, and believe we may repose the highest confidence in their patriotism and courage. I am also, as I always have been, opposed to standing armies. I have considered them and still consider them as the bane of freedom, as the instrument in the hands of a despot, with which to scourge the people, reduce them to submission and deprive them of their liberties. In this view I consider large standing armies in times of peace. But at the same time that I entertain this opinion, I believe that a regular force may in certain cases, and under certain circumstances, be necessary. I consider it as a kind of necessary evil, which we cannot in those cases do without, and which may be essentially useful in repelling invasions of our rights and territory, and rendering more secure, while kept within proper limits, our liberty and independence. I wish it therefore to be distinctly understood, that though I shall vote for the bill on your table, I have not changed my opinion with regard to the confidence we ought to repose in the militia, nor as to their efficiency in ordinary cases for the defence of their country. I have not, sir, altered my opinion on these points, and the only difference which exists between myself and many others on this subject, appears to be that, I consider the present crisis to be such as requires us to prepare for a state of war, while they seem to think there is no necessity for making such preparations. I also believe (what I presume few if any deny) that in a state of war a regular force is necessary to aid and support the militia. This seems to be admitted on all hands, and indeed little or no argument can be necessary to prove that there are certain services to which the militia are not competent, and which ought not to be required of them. It has been said that in ordinary times they may be relied upon for every purpose. Though this position may in the general be true, yet there are some exceptions to it in the present situation of our country, and I may be permitted to state some services which are important, and which ought not to be imposed upon the militia. Among those may be mentioned the protection of the most exposed points on our extensive frontier—I will instance New Orleans.—Should an attempt be made to invade your territory, no place is more exposed or seems to promise a greater prospect of success to the invader than New Orleans. When danger threatens, what is there to protect that city from a sudden attack by either of the belligerent powers. You have no effective militia there sufficiently numerous to defend it, and it is 7 or 800 miles from the body of the militia of the western country. Exhausted by so long a march, is it to be expected that the militia would be willing to remain for months and perhaps years as a permanent protection to that place? Suppose they would submit to any burthens which you should impose upon them, and I am confident they will never shrink from any duty which may be assigned them by their country, is it consistent with propriety, is it honorable to the nation to impose this task exclusively on the militia of the western country? Are your militia to be called out and to remain out to protect the many exposed points from Detroit to New Orleans, to repel the savages or a neighboring enemy, should he meditate an attack on that quarter? These duties would be too arduous to impose upon them. Their vast distance from the scene of action, and the sickliness of the climate to which they might be called, would expose them to diseases and fatigue, which their constitutions would be incompetent to sustain, and even bear down the strongest constitutions, & damp the most ardent disposition to serve their country. I say therefore that whether we are actually at war or threatened by it, it is important to have an active disposable force to be stationed at those places, to repel the first attacks, until your militia can be called out to support them.

But it is said by gentlemen who admit that in time of war a regular force may be necessary, that they will not raise a single man till they see the enemy. I would not have believed that any gentleman would make such an assertion, if I had not heard it on this floor. If I had not heard gentlemen say that though you are surrounded by dangers, they will not vote to raise a single regiment, no not a single man to defend their country. Can gentlemen justify this conduct to the nation? Are they willing to remain inactive and unprepared, with their arms folded up, until you are actually attacked, until the enemy is at your door, and then it will be too late to prepare to resist him? Will this be doing justice to the nation? Will this be acting like men ought to do, who are appointed the guardians of the American people, and to whom are confided the protection of their best rights, their liberty and independence? It will not, sir, the nation will never sanction such conduct. But, sir, if the militia are sufficient under all circumstances to repel an enemy, however formidable, in the first instance, will there be any occasion to raise a regular force to support them, after they have withstood the first impulse and acquired more experience? I should presume not. I have always understood that one great object of regular troops was to give discipline and energy to the militia when first called into service, and that after they had served some time, say one or two years, they in fact became regular troops, for all useful purposes. Though in the first instance considerable inconvenience and difficulty were experienced with regard to them, for want of system, for want of the habit of acting in concert, for want of discipline—a regular force also answers an important purpose, by being distributed at those places where danger is most to be apprehended, and serving as firm bands, around which the militia would rally at the call of their country. The regularity and discipline of the former would give confidence and energy to the latter, while in turn the latter (the militia) being their fellow citizens, and fighting by their side in defence of their country, would add courage with enthusiasm to the skill and discipline of the regular troops. A regular army is made acquainted with and preserves the knowledge of military tactics, and is prepared to infuse it among the militia when called into service. But that we should remain inactive, and wait until our enemy shall come to our doors before we begin to prepare, when it is admitted on all hands that we are threatened with danger, appears to me extraordinary, and is a line of conduct that I could not reconcile to myself, to my constituents, or to my country. I do not feel disposed, like the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. Williams) to express my resentment in terms so highly aggravated against Great Britain and France, as he has done. I can see no real benefit likely to result from calling them by hard names—yet I do not mean to reprehend his conduct in this respect. I have no doubt he expressed his real feelings, and I believe, I view the conduct of those nations with as much abhorrence as any man in this House. But how the gentleman can represent them both as so hostile to this country, and their measures towards it, so unjust, so contrary to all the known laws of society, and even of humanity, as to induce him to call one the Tyger and the other the Shark, and yet in the same breath refuse to make any preparation to raise any force to defend the nation against the ravages of those *wild and voracious animals*, is to me beyond all comprehension. Can gentlemen be serious when they aggravate and paint in the highest colors the atrocity of the conduct of those nations, and yet tell you there is no necessity to prepare for war. Surely, sir, when this nation is threatened with dangers from abroad, from more quarters than one, as has been stated on this floor, it is high time to prepare for defence, to prepare to resist those dangers, and our preparations ought certainly to bear some proportion to the dangers that threaten us, and be in a great degree regulated by the disposition those powers have manifested in their acts, to harrass and destroy our commerce, violate our rights, and murder our fellow citizens.

Much has been said on this floor, particularly by a gentleman from N. Carolina, (Mr Stanford) with respect to the danger of a standing army—and he stated the horror the people felt, at the beat of the drum in time of recruiting soldiers—and I suppose they must have felt the same horror at the sound of the fife as it generally accompanies the drum on those occasions I regret that the gentleman has represented his constituents, so timid as to be alarmed even at the sounds that usually accompany war. I must however believe, that this timidity, this horror at the sound of the drum are confined to the grave matrons, the fond mothers and tender hearted sisters, of those in the gentleman's district, who may be about to risk their lives in defence of their country, and do not affect the people generally in that quarter. I entertain a much more favorable opinion of their patriotism and bravery. But such arguments can have no weight in regard to the present question, whatever plausibility they might claim in relation to a standing army in time of peace, they are entirely misapplied in the present instance. In time of war, or when threatened by war, a military spirit, a martial enthusiasm ought to be encouraged, ought to be cherished and excited among the whole people of this country—in times of peace this is unnecessary. There is little or no analogy between the force proposed to be raised by this bill and a standing army in time of peace, such as the gentleman from N. Carolina seems to have had in view, and which is so terrific to his people. Almost every man in the House is opposed to a large standing army in time of peace, such as could intimidate the civil authority, or endanger liberty—objections that are valid against such an army do not apply to the force intended to be raised by the bill, which is a temporary force, raised on the emergency of the present state of our affairs, and to be disbanded whenever that emergency ceases.

Gentlemen have indeed brought to view our situation in 1798, when they say an army was unnecessarily raised, and also that in 1805—6, when we refused to raise one, and on these two points have insisted that there is no more—nay, some have gone so far as to say that there is not as much occasion for this force now as there was at those respective times for raising an army.

It appears that the principal difference between us arises from two positions which have been assumed by the opponents to the bill, in both of which I conceive they are mistaken. The one is, that the force to be raised by the bill is a standing army of the kind hitherto so much opposed—and the other, that the present crisis is not such as to require us to prepare for a state of war. With regard to the first position, notwithstanding what has been said by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Dana) and his acute knowledge of the gramatical institutes and construction of language, I must deny that the force to be raised by this bill is intended as an addition to the peace establishment or that the bill justifies such an inference. The gentleman admitted the words of the bill would not support this construction, but he insisted according to the spirit of the law it must be sound. The bill proposes to raise an additional military force. Now, said the gentleman, a military force and the peace establishment must be the same, because we have at present no military force but the peace establishment. The peace establishment is certainly a military establishment; but an addition made to the peace establishment would be so expressed, and would be different and distinct from troops raised towards a war establishment, as these are. This force if raised will be as stated in the bill, an addition while in service to the present military peace establishment; but will not form a part of it. So the understanding of nine tenths of this House is, that this is a specific force to meet a crisis, which may probably occur in our public affairs—a state of war—and it is distinctly understood that they are to be disbanded when that crisis is over, or the probability of war ceases. But, says a gentleman, it may continue for ever; I do not think it necessary to enter into an enquiry how long it may be requisite to keep these troops in service; it is a sufficient answer to the gentleman from Connecticut, that this establishment is in the power of the government and of this House; and so soon as the exigency ceases, it cannot be supposed that this branch of the government would be disposed to continue them any longer in service. So long as continuing this army remains exclusively in this House, there can be no danger of its being retained any longer than the crisis may require. This House has the power to refuse making appropriations to support such army, and when that is refused it must be disbanded. This is supposing an extreme case—that the other House will not agree with you to discontinue it by repealing the law, which can hardly be expected to occur.

With regard therefore to the position that this is a standing army in the sense in which it has been stated, it is not supported by the bill or by any fair inference from it, and the moment it is examined, it will appear unfounded, and the grounds on which opposition is made to this bill by the gentleman from North-Carolina and others, will thereupon entirely vanish. In the same manner the argument that it will affect the morals of the people and endanger civil liberty, is futile; for the moment that the idea of its being a standing army, such as is to continue in time of peace, ceases, that moment all possible force which those arguments could give to the opposition also ceases and leaves this without being affected by them—we may therefore lay them entirely out of the question.

The second position taken, viz: that the present crisis does not require preparation for a state of war, may require somewhat more particular notice. We are called upon to review the scenes of '98, when our vessels were captured, and which was said to be a time of greater danger than the present. At that time I did not pay much attention to politics, but according to the best information I have been enabled to obtain, our situation then was extremely different from what it is now. The government of France was at that time struggling for existence against a powerful coalition, in which were united the great powers on the continent, as well as Great Britain. Her government was not firmly established; and it was not known how long she could oppose the powerful torrent of that coalition. For this reason it was that those who opposed the regular force at that time said there was no occasion for raising an army. It was contended that France had no land forces to spare, nor had she a maritime force sufficient to transport them to this country; if even she had them to spare at home. It was therefore contended that war was not to be expected.

I understand it was then insisted upon by those who opposed the raising an army, that the government of this country at that time appeared to act as if they wished to court a war with France, and indeed it has been so stated on this floor during the present session by the gentleman from N. C. (Mr. Macon) and because the then minority (who are considered as having become the present majority in a political sense) considered it impolitic and unjust to aggravate or provoke a war, and that the country was not in danger of either invasion or attack from any quarter, they therefore opposed the raising an army.

I take it for granted that these were their reasons; and were this a similar crisis, would oppose the bill upon your table, and in doing so, should act on the very same principles as that on which I shall now act in voting for it. With regard to our situation in 1805—6, I can speak with somewhat more precision, being here at that time, and having a much better opportunity of being acquainted with the circumstances of our public affairs, and the causes that led to the then differences between us and Spain.

There was indeed some appearance of war on our south-western frontier; but what were the causes of it? Not such as to promise any serious consequences. I will not take up the time of the House in detailing the differences which then took place between some Americans and certain disorderly persons in the Spanish territory; they are already known to the House, and when fairly examined they will clearly prove that Spain had no intention whatever of going to war with us at that time. We have had all the evidence on this subject before us, and there is no proof of any serious hostile disposition towards us, on the part of the Spanish government. One circumstance goes far to prove that the Spanish officers did not intend to commit any act of hostility, or to violate our territory in this transaction—which is, that the Spanish troops remained on their own side of the line, until those persons (the Kempers) whom they had procured to be taken, were delivered to them on their own territory, by some American citizens. This was the clearest proof that they were determined to avoid committing any act of hostility, or even entering on the American territory; and though they may have used fraudulent means to obtain their object, it is clear they had no authority from their government to disturb the peace subsisting between the two nations. With regard to the dispute respecting our boundary west of the Mississippi, it related to a small tract of country uninhabited, bordering on the Sabine river, and extending from that river towards Natchitoche. Whatever our claims were and still are, and however well founded they may be to territory far west of the Sabine, the dispute at that time was confined to the small tract above described. The Spanish commanders informed you they were ordered to maintain the most friendly relations with the American government and people, were expressly ordered not to act on the offensive, but only on the defensive; but that they were directed and thought it their duty to occupy the territory in question, because they believed it belonged to their government. On the other hand our government claimed it under the treaty and convention with France for Louisiana, and considering it as our property we deemed it our duty to take possession of it, and not suffer it to be occupied by a foreign power. The dispute was therefore only co-extensive with that small tract of territory (on which there were no inhabitants,) for neither party evinced any disposition to extend its claim forcibly at that time beyond its limits. It was merely a dispute about the real right to the territory in question, to which each party might honestly consider his claim valid. This was the ground of difference, when at the same time negotiations on this subject were pending at the court of Spain. It was at that time also generally understood that France was favorably disposed towards the United States in regard to this dispute. There was no apprehensions entertained that she would support Spain in her claim to the territory in question; on the contrary there was reason to believe she would not. Whatever might be the opinion of France in regard to our claim to the Floridas, under our treaty with her, there was no reason to believe from the documents laid before us, and the best information that was possessed, that she would countenance or support the claim of Spain to the territory in question, on the Sabine, claimed by us under the Louisiana treaty, or her claim to any part of the country west of the Mississippi, which we claimed by virtue of that treaty. There was not any reasonable ground to expect a coalition between France and Spain on this subject. Spain stood alone to support her claim. She had only a handful of troops, not exceeding 6 or 800, who declared their intention to act on the defensive only, and who in fact al-