

FROM THE BOSTON CENTINEL.  
**THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES.**

The first movement of a free, but oppressed People, is seen in Petitions and Remonstrances:—Like skilful Mariners, Administration ought to foresee the storm, in the swell which precedes it; and by an early attention to the Voice of the People avert it. They must have an imperfect knowledge of men who have yet to learn, that those who are most loth to engage in opposition to foreign or domestic tyranny, when roused into action, are the most formidable in their proceedings." ANONYMOUS.

NEW-BEDFORD, August 19, 1808.

Agreeably to notification, the inhabitants of New-Bedford, county of Plymouth, met in Town-Meeting this day, Seth Spooner, Esq. Moderator.—The Hon. Lemuel Williams, moved, that a respectful Petition be drawn, to be presented to the President of the United States, requesting that the existing Embargo Laws be repealed, or suspended, in whole or in part, agreeably to the power vested in him, by Congress. The motion passed unanimously. A committee was then chosen to draw and report the Petition, consisting of John Mason Williams, Esq. Samuel Rodman, Joseph Rickelson, Thomas Nye, jun. Esq. Killey Eldridge, Alden Spooner, Esq. and Samuel Perry, Esq. The committee retired, and afterwards reported the following draft, which was accepted UNANIMOUSLY, and the Selectmen were directed, in behalf of the Town, to transmit the same to the President.

To the President of the United States:

The inhabitants of New-Bedford in Town Meeting legally assembled, respectfully represent:—

That their attention has heretofore been devoted in a great measure to commercial pursuits. Their local situation, their long established habits and the large amount of property which they have invested in shipping render them dependent upon commerce for their prosperity and almost for their subsistence. The several Laws laying and enforcing an Embargo on all ships and vessels in the ports and harbours of the United States, have therefore in their operation, pressed with peculiar severity on your Petitioners.

Impressed with the importance and necessity of yielding prompt obedience to the laws of their country, and cherishing a hope of speedy relief they have submitted with a patient characteristic of faithful citizens to the embarrassments resulting from this measure:—They readily admit, that, on a sudden emergency, an Embargo may at times be necessary as a temporary expedient, to continue until a full knowledge of the dangers that threaten commerce may be generally diffused; but they are convinced that its long continuance must be productive of great and extensive calamity, not only to them but to the United States at large.

Their shipping and commodities for maritime trade and enterprise, left on their hands without value either for sale or employment, rapidly falling to decay and destruction, are rendered totally useless to their country and productive only of accumulating expenses to themselves. By depriving the Seamen of their usual means of subsistence, the continuance of this measure must either reduce them to idleness and beggary, or compel them to seek employment in a foreign country, and thus deprive the nation of their services when the restrictions on commerce may no longer exist.

We conceive it will have a tendency to diminish the respect which has hitherto been rendered to the constituted authorities of the country and to create a habit of evading the Laws.—Allured by the prospect of inordinate gain the desperately enterprising will invent means of evading the provisions of these laws; and a frequent repetition of such transgressions will eventually establish an extensive and inveterate habit which may never be eradicated and may produce a serious and lasting effect on the future revenues of the nation.

It may tend to exhaust the nation of the current coin.—Adventurers will and do find methods of transporting specie into the provinces adjacent to the United States and of receiving articles of foreign production in return. Gold coins, affording the greatest facility of transportation already command a premium. The silver will follow when gold can be no more procured; and the country thus be drained of its circulating specie. The speculator taking advantage of long lines of frontier and extensive sea coast of the country, the whole of which cannot at all times be strictly guarded, is thus rapidly accumulating a fortune, while the fair and honest trader is suffering the severest embarrassments and privations.

It will probably have a tendency to demoralize the character of the citizens by introducing idleness and its concomitant vices. This effect will extend gradually to every position of the community. The farmer, deprived of a market for his surplus productions will be less powerfully stimulated to exertion; the numerous tradesmen whose employment is dependant on commerce, will most severely suffer by the total stagnation of that business, which has been their sole support, and former habits of industry will be universally relaxed. Those who have pursued the means of subsistence on the ocean are suddenly deprived of their employment. Their inclinations and habits are totally averse to agricultural pursuits, and the mind incessantly compelling to action, will at length, find employment in criminal indulgence.

These are few of the numerous evils which we apprehend will result from a continuance of the embargo. Already feeling in a great degree, these calamities, and fearing their more extensive influence and powerful pressure, your petitioners have waited in silence, but with anxious solicitude for their removal. They will not question your disposition to alleviate, so far as you are constitutionally authorized, their accumulating difficulties;—and they find with pleasure, that the laws of the United States empower you to suspend, in whole or in part, the operation of the Embargo, whenever the situation of foreign nations may in your opinion render it expedient.

The great events which have occurred in Europe appear to your petitioners to have materially changed the aspect of our foreign relations.—Spain and England are at peace,—

The British Orders in Council, with respect to Spain, and her immense colonial dependencies are doubtless revoked, and the United States may now participate in an extensive and profitable commerce with Spain, Portugal and their colonies, in a commerce which is interdicted by no Imperial Decrees or Royal Proclamations. Employment is now offered for their perishing shipping and a profitable and an extensive vent for their surplus commodities. If the present opportunity is seized and improved, a great portion of this immensely lucrative commerce may be enjoyed by the citizens of the United States, but if now neglected by them, will probably be soon monopolized by others to their entire exclusion.

Your petitioners rejoice that you have now an opportunity of relieving them and their suffering country from their present embarrassments and distresses, and of again restoring them to the freedom and blessings of commerce. They therefore pray, that the several laws laying and enforcing an embargo on the ships and vessels in the ports and harbours of the United States may be suspended in whole or in part according to the powers vested in you by the Congress of the United States, and as you in your wisdom and superior means of information may deem most expedient.

From WISCASSET, August 17, 1808.

A town-meeting was held this day for the purpose of petitioning the President to suspend the Embargo: when the Hon. Thomas Rice was chosen moderator; and a committee, consisting of Messrs. Payson, Nickels, Bayley, Bradford, and Austin, reported the following petition; which was unanimously agreed upon. We were pleased to see many vote in favour of the petition who usually vote on the democratic side. The meeting was full and respectable.

To the President of the United States.

The citizens and freeholders of the town of Wiscasset, in the District of Maine, in legal Town-Meeting assembled respectfully represent:—

That a great portion of their property is vested in navigation:—That on commercial pursuits solely depends their prosperity, and in a great measure their means of subsistence: That the laws of Congress laying an Embargo on the vessels and export trade of the country by checking industry and enterprise in their operations, very severely affect your petitioners; and that they are desirous those laws of the government should be repealed as speedily as constitutional authority and procedure will admit, and may be considered consistent with the honor and welfare of the nation.

With great sincerity your petitioners express a cordial attachment to the constitution, and declare their determination to submit to the laws of their country; nor will they ever be averse from making any sacrifices which shall be necessary to preserve the peace and independence of the nation. But living under a government formed by and for the good of the people—a government founded in and supported by public opinion; they conceive it a duty which they owe, not only to themselves and their country, but to their rulers, to communicate their sentiments with freedom on questions of great national importance. They cannot therefore for a moment admit, that an application of this sort will be considered an improper interference.

It is not the object of your petitioners to criminate the government for a measure, which is found by experiment to prolific of distress:—Reasons of state unknown to them may have existed, which in the opinion of government rendered a temporary Embargo necessary, both to preserve navigation, and to manifest a just resentment for the aggressions of the belligerent powers of Europe. Though the arbitrary orders of the belligerent nations which are so hostile to the commerce of America, have not been formally rescinded, yet the prospect of new channels of trade; and from the ports of Spain and Portugal, serve to press the conviction that great advantages would immediately accrue, by permitting the citizens to renew their commercial pursuits.

Believing, therefore, that the evils of the Embargo are daily increasing;—that the dissatisfaction and complaints of the people are becoming greater under the distressing effects of this measure; that they shall be wholly incapable in this state of things, either to discharge their personal demands, or to contribute to the revenue of government;—and that the advantages of active commerce would far overbalance all the losses to which it is exposed;—their request is, that the restrictions laid on commerce may be removed whenever their repeal can be effected without compromising the dignity, or sacrificing the interests of the nation.

**PROVIDENCE TOWN MEETING.**

The following is a copy of the Petition of the Town of Providence, to the President of the United States, adopted on the 10th instant.

To the President of the United States.

THE Inhabitants of Providence, in Town Meeting legally convened, request liberty respectfully to represent.

That to petition their Government, is one of the political rights of a free people; and we are confident a respectful exercise of that right will ever be grateful to a President of the American nation. When grievances are felt, citizens must look to rulers for redress; where the people have deposited the massy treasure of their sovereignty, thither will their hearts turn for relief; nor can any attribute of dominion be more illustrious than a power of granting it. To you, Sir, has been committed the care of the Commonwealth; and by a law, solely for that purpose provided, the whole power of suspending from the commerce of our country the domestic restrictions with which it is oppressed, and almost destroyed. We, in common with many of our fellow citizens, have long felt and still painfully feel, the ruinous consequences which continually result from all those laws imposing an Embargo on the ships and vessels of the United States. National benefit was doubtless an item in political calculation, when these laws originated; but this benefit is either too distant or too uncertain to fill on our apprehension, whilst nothing can hide from our perception all those evils daily passing before our eyes, and which government itself could not have fully apprehended, until the

disastrous hour of their existence. Government could not surely have calculated, that the spirit of enterprise in our country would have resisted even the most restrictive provisions of these laws, or that apprehensions of such resistance would have brought American ships to blockade American harbours; armed militia against citizens, or pointed the artillery, in the depositories of our national defence, against even the small fish boat that passes these batteries without a formal clearance. Yet these things have come to pass, and are really, compared with other grievances, so inconsiderable, that they almost do not augment the aggregate of national evils. One year ago, Americans might have been found trafficking with almost every maritime nation on earth. Our sails were seen on every ocean, our ships in every port. Americans celebrated the era of their national independence, on the other side of the globe. Then, enterprise had an object. Industry found a reward. The same spirit that ploughed the waves, cultivated the fields. There was one united, one mighty effort, towards whatever could improve and aggrandize our common country. The Embargo was imposed, and every thing is changed. Our ships return silently into port, are stripped, moored, and left to perish at the wharves. Our seamen, are turned into the country, to look for labour which they cannot perform; and beg bread which by industry they cannot earn. But this is not all. Thousands compelled to leave America for subsistence, have enlisted on board ships of war for an indefinite time, and from this hard exile and voluntary servitude no exigence of their country can ever recall them. All the ordinary labourers in the avocations of commerce are left without employment, and must live on charity.—Every sea-port swarms with these children of penury, too numerous for individual beneficence; and what can be expected from social charity, in so great and so common a calamity? The rich suffer with the poor. Goods, imported for a foreign market, crowd the warehouse of the merchants. These have already depreciated to a mere nominal value, and all of them perishable in their nature, must perish on his hands. Every harbour is lined with dismantled ships. The blacks stumps of their spars picture the desolation of our country; while vain efforts are made, in hopes of better days, to project them from the destructive repulse of the water, and the rains and sunshine of a variable climate. Agriculture suffers with commerce. Though our flocks and herds cover the mountains, and our corn and meadows shade the vallies, and the whole earth teem with a rich and multifarious abundance, yet the proprietor of the soil cannot sell his superfluous produce; and, left to perish on his hands, he will be rendered poorer by all the expenses of cultivation. We respectfully hope it may be considered by you, Sir, that the present crisis of affairs in the world, is favourable to a relaxation of the laws which have reduced us to this unprosperous condition.

From information lately received in this country, we respectfully submit that the American people might immediately realize all the benefits of a free commerce with Spain and Portugal, and all their extensive colonies. France now captures our vessels, because they sail contrary to the Embargo: this must cease to be done, if that law were suspended. England has interdicted our commerce with Spain and Portugal, because they were in the control of France. But England is doubtless now in amity with both those powers, and our vessels will of consequence sail unmolested by her ships of war. These two kingdoms, and their numerous and vast dependencies, open a region of commerce almost equal to the hopes, and nearly sufficient to employ all the capital, industry and enterprise of our country.—There the great staples of agricultural produce, from north and south will find a ready and advantageous market.—The immense carrying trade between these kingdoms and their colonies, may be performed by the people of the United States. Their American colonies are more extensive than one of the American continents, and abound with almost every kind of wealth in the world, and the people of those vast regions look to the citizens of the United States as their neighbors, as the inhabitants of a sister continent; and if we readily meet their wishes, all the benefits of a great and reciprocal commerce may be realized by us, until the incalculable treasures of the south shall enrich the merchants and farmers of North America. If the intelligence respecting the political condition of these kingdoms be true, it is respectfully submitted, we cannot be too early in our overtures of amity and commerce to them. Great Britain is perhaps able to perform, and always is ready to embark in the commerce of all nations; nor can the tide of affairs in the world, any more than that of the ocean, be diverged from its course, wherever it has rolled into a deep, regular and natural channel. We may now realize the commerce of these countries; but if it is once grasped by Britain, though wars might be waged for it, yet in all probability it would never be attained by us. Should the era have arrived, when the western is to become independent of the eastern continent, and the storms of European conflict drive us from these shores, still we might enjoy all the benefits of reciprocal amity and commerce between South and North America. We therefore most respectfully request you, Sir, as President of these United States, and by law invested with all the needful power, wisely and deeply to consider, as most unquestionably you will, the national expediency of suspending the Embargo altogether, or partially only, and as it relates to the kingdoms of Spain and Portugal, and their colonies and dependencies.

**TO BE SOLD,**

A Valuable Tract of Wood Land in Prince-Williams County of York, containing 6 Lots from No. 101 to 106.—The above Land will be Sold at a very low rate. For further particulars apply to ROBERT SMITH, Frederick, or ABIGAIL CUTLER Saint John. SAINT JOHN, 5th SEPTEMBER, 1808.

**WANTED IMMEDIATELY,**

A SERVANT WOMAN, who can be well recommended.—To such a person generous wages will be given.—Enquire of the Printer.