

WASHINGTON.
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JANUARY 31.
IMPORTANT MESSAGE.

The President by Message transmitted the following copies of letters from the Agents of the United States in France, to Mr. Secretary Smith, viz.

Copy of a letter from Jonathan Russell, Esq. Charge d'Affaires of the United States at Paris, to Mr. R. Smith, Secretary of State, dated

PARIS, December 11, 1810.

SIR—On the evening of the 9th inst. I learnt that the Essex frigate had arrived at L'Orient on the 4th, and had been put under quarantine for 5 days for the want of a bill of health, during which time the messenger is not allowed to come on shore. At the same time that I received this intelligence, I was also informed that the brig New-Orleans Packet, was seized at Bordeaux, under the Berlin and Milan decrees, by the Director of the Customs at that place. The simultaneous occurrence of these two events, formed in my opinion a crisis which required a prompt decision of this government. Under this impression, I immediately addressed to the Duke of Cadore the note of which the enclosed is a copy, and in which I thought it politic to remonstrate with firmness, against the proceedings of the Director of the Customs at Bordeaux, and to leave the government here at liberty to disavow them. This disavowal, however, I am persuaded depends entirely on the nature of the despatches brought by the Essex. I feel, therefore, the most lively anxiety to receive them. In the mean time I give this letter a chance of reaching you by a vessel about leaving Bordeaux for New-York.

Since my last the Hanseatic towns have been annexed to this empire.

I have informed Mr. Pinkney of the arrival of the Essex, and suggested to him the possibility that the Proclamation of the President had come out by her, in order that he might, if he thought proper, make a final attempt to obtain a repeal of the Orders in Council, while it was yet in the power of the British ministry to do it with a good grace.

I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed)

JONA. RUSSELL.

Hon. Robert Smith, Secretary
of State, United States.

Mr. Russell to the Duke of Cadore.

PARIS, December 10, 1810.

SIR—I have this moment learnt that the American brig New-Orleans Packet, lately arrived at Bordeaux, has with her cargo, the bona fide property of citizens of the United States, and laden at the port of New-York, been seized by the Director of the Customs under the Berlin or Milan decrees. I have also been informed, that this Director of the Customs, not satisfied with this hardy violation of the solemn assurances given by your Excellency to General Armstrong on the 5th of Aug. last, and confirmed by your letter to him of the 7th September, that these decrees were revoked and would cease to operate from the 1st of November, has, without regard to the plighted faith of his government, announced his intention of selling the provisions which constitute a part of the cargo, under the pretext that they are perishable.

The clear and unequivocal manner in which the revocation of the Berlin and Milan decrees were announced by your Excellency, forbid me for a moment to suppose, that the violent proceedings of this man will be sanctioned by His Majesty the Emperor and King, or that the least delay will be allowed in placing the property thus arrested at the free disposition of the owner, whose confidence alone in the good faith with which it becomes nations to perform their engagements, has brought him to the place where he is so inhospitably treated.

I am persuaded that your Excellency will not, on this occasion, attempt to remind me of the conditions on which the revocation of those decrees were predicated. These conditions were in the alternative, and the performance of either is sufficient to render absolute and perpetual that revocation.—It is of no importance that the British Orders in Council have not been withdrawn, if the United States, in due time, perform the condition which depends alone on them.—And what is this condition? Why, to execute an Act of Congress against the English, which to be thus executed, requires the previous revocation of these very decrees.—The letter of your Excellency of the 5th of Aug. appears to have been written with a full knowledge of this requisition of the law, and manifestly with the intention to comply with it, in order that it might be competent for the President of the United States to exercise the contingent power which had been given to him.

It will not be pretended, that the decrees have in fact been revoked; but that the delay of the United States in performing the condition presented to them authorises their revival. The case of the New-Orleans Packet is the first which has occurred since the first of November, to which the Berlin or Milan decrees could be applied, and if they be applied to this case, it will be difficult for France to show one solitary instance of their having been practically revoked. As to delay on the part of the United States, there has been none. No official information of the letter of your Excellency of the 5th of August, left France for the United States, owing to circumstances which it was not in the power of General Armstrong to controul, until the 29th September, and to this moment I have not learnt that such official information has been there received. I might indeed have learnt it, and been able now to have communicated to your Excellency, the measures on which the President has decided in consequence of it, had not the frigate Essex, despatched by him, been put under quarantine on her arrival at L'Orient, for the want of

a bill of health, and the messenger thereby detained since the 4th of this month.

I will not undertake to decide whether a bill of health ought in courtesy, to be exacted of a frigate of a friendly power coming in the winter season, from a place not known to have been lately afflicted with any malignant disease; but surely the delay which this exacted occasions, cannot be imputed to a want of a due diligence on the part of the American government.

It is from this view of the subject that I am thoroughly convinced that the application of the Berlin and Milan decrees, by the director of the Customs at Bordeaux, to the New-Orleans Packet, will not be approved by His Majesty, but that prompt and efficient measures will be taken to correct a procedure, which, if persisted in, might produce a state of things which it is the obvious interest of both nations to avoid. I pray your Excellency to be assured of my most distinguished consideration, &c.

(Signed)

JONATHAN RUSSELL.

Copy of a letter from Charles Myer to R. Smith, Esq. Secretary of State.

UNITED STATES CONSULATE—Bordeaux, Dec. 14.

SIR—The Brig New-Orleans Packet, of New-York, Capt. Harris, mentioned in my former letter, has since been seized by the Collector, and her cargo has been put in the Imperial Custom-House.

The schooner Friendship, of and from Baltimore, Capt. Snow, has been sequestered.

FEBRUARY 2.

As soon as the House met, Mr. Eppes moved that the Committee of the whole be discharged from any further consideration of the Non-Intercourse Bill—this motion prevailed. He then moved that the Bill be re-committed to the Committee of Foreign Relations, that some modifications might be made to relieve our citizens from the operation of the Non-Intercourse Law, and to suspend the provisions of the Act, as they effect Foreign Nations, until the cloud which now hangs over our Foreign Relations shall be dispelled.

Mr. Randolph moved to amend the motion, so as to make it read as follows:

That the Bill be re-committed to the Committee of Foreign Relations, with instructions to bring in a Bill to repeal the Non-Intercourse.

A long and very interesting discussion ensued, which lasted to a very late hour.

At five o'clock the question on Mr. Randolph's motion, (the part in italics) was taken by ayes and noes, and lost—Ayes 45, Noes 72.

Mr. Randolph then moved to instruct the Committee to bring in a Bill to suspend the operation of the fourth section of the non-intercourse law.

This question was also taken by ayes and noes, and lost—Ayes 40, Noes 57.

The final question on recommitment was then taken and carried—Ayes 82, Noes 9.

A letter from Washington of February 4, says:

Mr. Eppes, as Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Relations, to whom was referred on Saturday last, the bill supplemental to the act respecting our foreign intercourse, reported a Bill with only a single section, providing:—

“That no vessel which shall have sailed, or merchandise shipped on board of such vessel, from any British port previous to the 2d Feb. 1811, owned solely by a citizen or citizens of the United States, shall be liable to seizure or confiscation for any infraction or presumed infraction of the law, commonly called the non-intercourse law.”

The Bill was read twice and ordered for a third reading to-morrow.

This is probably the only provision which is to be made, relative to the proclamation; and if so our restrictive energies against Great-Britain are again to be enforced.

From WASHINGTON, February 2.

“The poor apologists of every thing said or done by Napoleon, the Printer of the *National Intelligencer*, has had the folly to attempt to explain away the official report of the Duke of Cadore to the French Conservative Senate, in which that mouth-piece of the great Emperor declared, on the 8th Dec. [i. e. 38 days after the 1st November] that the French decrees must be persisted in; and also to make the dupes of the Executive believe, that Cadore referred only to the execution of those decrees on the continent, and not on the ocean; and all this too, in the teeth of Mr. Madison's charge des affaires in Paris. It is a solemn truth, and President Madison knows it—and the people will know it—that the Berlin and Milan decrees have never been suspended for a moment;—that Cadore when he declared they would be revoked on the 1st November, uttered an intentional falsehood; and that the President has information in his possession to convince any one that there is no intention on the part of Bonaparte to revoke them. Mr. Madison has been duped, and his partizans do not hesitate, in private to say so. How he will retrace his steps a second time, remains to be seen.”

FRENCH “PERFIDY”

France cannot show “one solitary instance of the Berlin and Milan decrees having been particularly revoked:—So said the accredited Agent of the United States in Paris, on the 10th day of December, 40 days after the period on which the Duke of Cadore falsely declared—and our Administration was so weak as to believe him—that those decrees would be revoked. But the information could not have excited any astonishment in our readers—They have been constantly cautioned to believe, that the declarations of the French Minister were false and delusive; and events have shown that they have not been deceived. All accounts from France confirm the fact, that the Berlin and Milan decrees have not been, and will not be revoked; and Congress be-

fore it rises must repeal the law under which the President's Proclamation was issued.

From Washington, February 3.

The Correspondent of the New-York Evening Post thus writes under date of 3d Feb.—“It is now said to be settled that a bill for renewing the Bank Charter will be introduced into the Senate to-morrow or the next day, and there are great expectations that it will pass that Body—Gallatin, I am told has given his opinion unequivocally in favour of the renewal, as has the President. I do not yet believe, however that the bill will pass this Session. A summer Session is now expected, and I think it probable that a bill will be brought in providing for that event, in course of the present week.

In the debate on the non-intercourse question yesterday, every one appeared to be willing to abandon the commercial system, so long and so ruinously pursued by our government, if it could be done with propriety; but the majority pretended to think that the faith of the nation was pledged to France, and that we could not repeal the non-intercourse without being guilty of a breach of faith. After what France has done, one would suppose, it would be difficult for any nation to be guilty of a breach of faith towards her; and if the tables were turned, and England had done what France had done, we should hear nothing about the faith of the nation—we should be at war with her in less than 24 hours.

From the Baltimore Federal Republican.

Mr. QUINCY—It is admitted on all hands, has made “an able and elegant speech” on the bill for the admission into the union, of the Orleans Territory.—His main argument is, that a majority of the Representatives of the states, or a majority of the states themselves in convention, have not a right to admit new members of the union, without the consent of each party to the original compact—that if a majority do undertake to act against the declared will of the minority, or dissenting states, or without giving them an opportunity in convention to express their approbation or disapprobation—then the union is dissolved, and any state that chooses, may act as if released from the obligations of the original compact.

The doctrine is unquestionably sound, and will not be disputed by civilians. Congress have no right to enlarge the union by the creation of new states—The case may be illustrated by familiar doctrines of copartnerships, treaties of alliance and coalitions.

If three men form a partnership for a stated number of years, two have not a right to admit of a fourth, without the consent of a third. If they persist, the third may retire if he pleases.

If two or more nations enter into a treaty of alliance, no new power can be admitted without the consent of each party, because the very inducement and object which may have prompted one party to have joined, might be frustrated by the new admission. So it is with coalitions for mutual defence or aggrandizement, which is but another name for treaties of alliance.

For instance, when the triple coalition of 1805 was formed, suppose Prussia and Austria had claimed the right of bringing Turkey into the league, might not Russia object, upon the score of its interfering with her future views in her regard? If they persisted, the treaty would be violated, and Russia in effect voted out of the coalition.

Suppose a majority of the seventeen provinces of the United Netherlands, had voted by their representatives in the States General, to admit new provinces into the Union, what would have been the effect? It is in vain to say, their constitution and form of government expressly provided against it, by requiring the assent of each province separately to every act of the States General; although such a reservation is not expressly made in the American act of confederation, yet it grows out of the very nature and essence of all compacts, which are broken whenever the parties depart from the meaning and intention of the original agreement.

When the Swiss threw off the Austrian yoke, and formed the Helvetic Union, could a majority of the thirteen confederate Cantons, undertake without the consent of each, to create and admit new Cantons into the confederacy?

To cite another case equally apposite; when Margaret mounted the throne of Denmark, and formed the Union of Calmar, which made her sovereign over Sweden, Denmark and Norway, had she, at the instigation of the two latter countries, included Lapland or Iceland into the confederacy, would not the Union have been dissolved?

NATCHEZ, DECEMBER 17.

Just as our paper was going to press, we were informed of the arrival at this place of Capt. Patterson, of the navy, from Baton Rouge; who, it is said, brings the intelligence of the Western part of Florida being peaceably given up to the United States, (one account says in consequence of a secret treaty between the President of the United States and the Governor of Cuba;) that the proper authorities on the part of our government, now at Baton Rouge, had received assurances that the town and fort of Mobile would be evacuated without opposition, and that possession of the whole country as far as the Perdido would be given to the United States on demand. It is conjectured, that Governor Folch has received orders from the Havana, as to the relinquishment of Florida to the United States, according to the treaty of Session. This corresponds with the report from Pensacola of an arrangement having been made, by the authority of the Regency of Spain, for delivering this country to the United States. The detachment of the troops which marched under Colonel Pike, we understand did not reach Baton Rouge, being met by an express, with orders to return. They are on their way back to camp near this city.