

WAR OF 1812 DEBATE \_\_\_\_\_ PRO-WAR ARGUMENTS

"I have no hesitation, then in saying, that I have always considered the impressment of American seamen as much the most serious aggression."

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"The naked truth is, she comes, by her press-gangs, on board of our vessels, seizes OUR native seamen, as well as naturalized, and drags them into her service."

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"Sir, is the time never to arrive, when we may manage our own affairs without the fear of insulting his Britannic majesty? Is the rod of British power to be forever suspended over our heads?"

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"Where is it written in the book of fate that the American republic shall not stretch her limits from the Capes of the Chesapeake to Nootka Sound, from the Isthmus of Panama to Hudson Bay?"

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"It cannot be believed . . . that the savage tribes, uninfluenced by other powers, would think of making war on the United States. How then, sir, are we to account for their late conduct? In one way only: some powerful nation must have intrigued with them. Great Britain alone has intercourse with those Northern tribes. If I am right in this conjecture, war is not to commence by sea or land. It has already begun."

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"Canada . . . innocent! Canada unoffending! Is it not in Canada that the tomahawk of the savage has been moulded into its death-like form? From Canadian magazines, Malden and others, that those supplies have been issued which nourish and sustain the Indian hostilities?"

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"Haughty as she is, we once triumphed over her, and if we do not listen to the councils of timidity and despair we shall again prevail. In such a cause, with the aid of Providence, we must come out crowned with success; but if we fail, let us fail like men, lash ourselves to our gallant tars, and expire together in one common struggle, fighting for 'seamen's rights and free trade.' "

(over)

WAR OF 1812 DEBATE \_\_\_\_\_ ANTI-WAR ARGUMENTS

"France has never in good faith complied with the proposal held out by the United States in that law." (Macon's Bill Number Two)

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"But it is said that war is demanded by honor. If honor demands a war with England, what opiates lulls that honor to sleep over the wrongs done us by France? On land, robberies, seizures, imprisonments, by French authority; at sea, sinkings, burnings, under French orders. These are notorious. Are they unfelt because they are French?"

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"American citizens have been frequently mistaken for British subjects; but I do not know of any instance in which a real American has been reclaimed, where sufficient testimony of his being an American has been adduced, in which his liberation has been refused."

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"[U]pon the whole, we have reaped greater advantages, and suffered fewer inconveniences from the existing state of things, than it was natural to expect. During a considerable part of the time, in which so large and fair a portion of Europe has been desolated by the calamities of war, our commerce has flourished to a degree surpassing the most sanguine calculations. Our merchants have been enriched beyond any former example. Our agriculture has been greatly extended, the wilderness has blossomed like a rose, and cities and villages have sprung up, almost, as it were by the force of magic."

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"They [Canadians] have been represented as ripe for revolt, panting for emancipation from a tyrannical Government, and longing to enjoy the sweets of liberty under the fostering hand of the United States. . . . [But] . . . the Canadians have no cause of disaffection with the British Government."

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"An insinuation has fallen that the late massacre of our brethren had been instigated by the British government. Has the President given any such indication? It [the insinuation] was destitute of any foundation, beyond mere surmise and suspicion. It is our own thirst for territory, our own lack of moderation, that has driven these sons of nature [Indians] to desperation."

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"Will the advantages to be derived from the conquest of Canada be an equivalent for the loss and damage we may sustain in other quarters? . . . In our extensive shores and numerous seaports, we know not where the enemy will strike; or, more properly speaking, we know they will strike when a nation is defenseless. Their fleets will hover on our coasts, and can trace our line from Maine to New Orleans in a few weeks. . . . The ruin of our seaports and loss of all vessels will form an item in the list of expenses."