

MVB et al, Address to the Electors of New York, 13 February 1810

TO THE ELECTORS

OF THE

*STATE OF NEW-YORK.*

Fellow Citizens,

You will soon be called upon to select a suitable person for the office of Chief Magistrate of this state. The happiness of the people depends so much on the character and conduct of their rulers, that it is an all incumbent duty which they owe to themselves, to their country, and to posterity, to adopt the utmost deliberation, and to cherish the most ardent patriotism, when they proceed to exercise the great franchise which distinguishes a citizen from a subject, and a freeman from a slave. The extensive powers which are vested in the governor of this state, and the important duties which he is bound to perform, render the election of a suitable character an object of the first importance and an obligation of the highest nature. The supreme executive power and authority in the state are vested in him: he is commander in chief of the militia, a member of the council of revision, and president of the council of appointment. It is his duty to recommend such matters to the legislature as shall appear to him to concern the good government, welfare and prosperity of the state; to correspond with the general government, and other states; to transact all necessary business with the officers of government civil and military, and to take care that the laws are faithfully executed.

As the governor is made the constitutional medium of communication with the national and state governments, the maintenance of a friendly understanding with our sister states, and with the United States, must greatly depend upon him. It cannot be doubted that the prosperity of the American people is inseparably connected with their union, and that this union is promoted by cultivating a cordial friendship between the states, by exploding unjust prejudices, by inculcating a common interest, by dispensing impartial benefits, and by maintaining the powers of government in the hands of men who are the sincere friends of the republican system. In ordinary times, then, it would be no less your interest than your duty to choose a chief magistrate who would realize the great objects of his appointment.

But the present period imperiously demands from you the application of extraordinary vigilance, and the exertion of extraordinary industry. The impartial, the pacific, the wise and the patriotic conduct of our national government, has not been able to shield us from the convulsions which have agitated the other nations of the earth. The storm which has deluged Europe with blood, and which has desolated the most fertile regions of the Eastern hemisphere is perhaps, threatening our country. France and Great Britain, in their conduct to each other, and to other nations have trampled under foot the most sacred principles of national law, and have demonstrated that their only restraint must be the adoption of coercion. And while the one controls the destinies of Europe, and the other bears unlimited sway over the ocean, neutral and unoffending nations have been offered up as victims of the shrine of rapacity; have been compelled to submit to the most unjust spoliation, and to embark in the most unnecessary and ruinous wars. Separated by an immense ocean from this theatre of blood and desolation, it was to be hoped that our exemption from insult would have corresponded with our impartial neutrality, and that the last hope of free government, and the only asylum of civil liberty, would have remained free from violation. In return for our impartial discharge of the duties of neutrality, we have been robbed of its rights, and deprived of its benefits. Our seamen have been incarcerated in floating dungeons; our vessels have been burnt on the ocean; our harbours and waters have been made the scene of outrage; an American citizen has been killed within our jurisdiction by a foreign power; a national ship has been attacked and captured; and our citizens violently wrested from her and murdered. The property of our citizens to an immense amount has been seized and confiscated. Our commerce has been proscribed; our remonstrances have been treated with contempt, and our government has been insulted and defied[.] The belligerent powers have claimed and exercised the extraordinary right of interdicting and destroying the commerce of neutrals. The distresses of our citizens and the embarrassments of our country must be attributed to the violence of foreign nations, not to the want of justice or wisdom in the government.

When Great Britain manifested a returning sense of justice, and exhibited a disposition to abstain from insult and spoliation, our national government immediately availed itself of this favorable indication and concluded an arrangement with her minister plenipotentiary, which atoned for the violation of our national honor in the case of the Chesapeake, and restored the blessings of commercial intercourse between the two countries, leaving our commercial and other restrictions in full operation against France. And it was hoped that this arrangement

would be followed up by a treaty which would settle on the basis of equity and justice the amicable relations of the two countries. This state of things was hailed by all parties as a propitious era in the annals of America. It received as it deserved, the voice of unqualified and universal panegyric, and the great controversy between the republican party and their opponents was, to whom ought the merit of this arrangement to be ascribed.

These halcyon days were of short duration, Great Britain relapsed into her former injustice, as soon as the pressure was removed which produced the arrangement on her part. And without assigning satisfactory reasons for her conduct, she has violated her solemn agreement, and has continued her spoliations and aggressions. Instead of dispatching a minister possessed of friendly dispositions, and clothed with ample powers, a man who had at Copenhagen outraged the honor of all neutral nations, was sent to this country, who has declared that he was not authorised to explain the conduct of his government, or to offer any redress for the aggressions which have been committed on our neutral rights. The solitary proposal made by him in the case of the Chesapeake, was coupled with the most unjust provisions; an admission that our government was wrong in issuing a proclamation for preventing a repetition of outrage; an admission that naturalized citizens are not entitled to the national protection, and an admission that Great Britain had a right to demand the delivering up even of American citizens who might have deserted from the tyranny of impressment, and the rigor of imprisonment. He also avowed in the most explicit terms the right of Great-Britain to proscribe our commerce: He declared that the orders in council would be persisted in: He admitted that he had no proposal to make, no explanation to furnish, no redress to administer. His whole object appeared to be, to embarrass our administration; to alienate the affections of our citizens; to sow the seeds of discord; to rally round him a band of disaffected spirits, and to cherish a British party in our country. In his anxiety to dishonor our government in the eyes of our citizens, and to degrade it in the estimation of mankind, he had the unparalleled audacity to impeach its veracity; to charge it with a fraudulent and dishonorable collusion with his predecessor, Mr. Erskine: and in the face of its solemn asseveration, with entering into arrangement, knowing it to be contrary to instructions. To remove the justly merited imputation of perfidy from the British, he did not hesitate to attribute the most dishonorable turpitude to the American government. The honor of the nation required that no further communication should be had with this insolent minister; and with this annunciation to the British cabinet, it was at the same time signified that we would be ready and

willing to negotiate through any other channel that might be substituted.

If our administration had tamely submitted to the unjust imputation of the dismissed minister, the men who now criminate, would have been among the first to charge them with an acquiescence in the calumny, and with the most abject timidity. Animated by resentment encouraged by support, and impelled by a wish to promote the interests of Great Britain, the discarded minister published an appeal to the American people against the American government. He has fixed his residence in our chief commercial city; he has collected around him a band of malcontents, and we have reason to believe that he has enlisted in his interest a number of unprincipled men, who have united their efforts to destroy the influence and to paralyze the exertions of the national administration. And it has now become a question, fellow citizens, not between parties in this country, but between the United States and Great Britain; whether our national honor shall stoop to the arrogance of a British minister, and our national rights be sacrificed to the usurpation of a British king.

We fully believe that the national administration have fulfilled with the utmost impartiality the duties of neutrality, and have at all times cherished the most sincere disposition to cultivate the relations of amity with the belligerent powers; and we are equally confident, if the American nation were firmly and cordially united in opposing foreign aggression, and in supporting the national government, that our exterior relations would have assumed a more pleasing aspect. However we may differ on questions of interior policy, yet in controversies with foreign nations we ought to exhibit ourselves, a united people. It is to the divisions among ourselves, that foreign powers ascribe their prospects of success. Calculating more upon the pressure of intestine opposition, than upon the operation of their own measures, they confidently expect from our government abject submission and disgraceful acquiescence.

It is therefore a paramount obligation to select such candidates at the approaching election as are the decided friends of the national administration, as are ready to render it all the aid and co-operation in their power, and to maintain with all their energy the honor and rights of the United States, against the claims, the usurpations, and the aggressions of foreign powers.

At a numerous and general meeting of the republican members of the legislature, and of republicans from different parts of the state, held in the city of Albany, on the

fifty day of February, it was unanimously agreed to recommend to the Electors of this state the re-election of DANIEL D. TOMPKINS, the present governor, & of John Broome, the present lieutenant governor. Most of you, fellow-citizens, are fully acquainted with the characters, the merits and the services of these distinguished men. In private life, they are among our best and most exemplary citizens: in public life they are the decided friends of republican government, of the national administration of the union of the states. The support of these men is identified with the support of the general government.

Although our opponents, taking advantage of the pressure of the times, arising from foreign aggression, have, by the most unexampled efforts and the most unwarrantable measures, succeeded in obtaining a small majority in one branch of the legislature, yet the result of last election, conducted under every disadvantage, and with exertions not equal to the emergency on our part, sufficiently demonstrates the certainty of success, if our zeal and industry shall be called into action. And on an occasion like the present, and at a crisis which implicates not only the most sacred interests of our country, but perhaps the final destiny of republican government, we trust that every faithful citizen will be found at his post on the day of election that all justifiable measures will be resorted to, in support of our candidates; that all personal considerations, and all local divisions, will be sacrificed on the altar of patriotism; that the great republican party will exhibit itself in all the majesty of renovated vigor and consolidated strength; and we have no doubt but that under the blessings of the Almighty dispenser of all good, the result will prove honorable to the state, and beneficial to our common country.

Nathan Smith,	Samuel L. Mitchell
Alexander Rea	John Woodward
Chauncey Loomis	Daniel Bull
Selah Strong	Joshua Hatheway
Nathaniel King	Homer B. Phelps
Simeon West	John C. Hogeboom
John Cramer	Jonathan Rouse
De Witt Clinton	John King

George Rosecrantz	Elam Tilden
John McLean	Elias Osborn
Benjamin Pond	W'm W. Gilbert
John Nicholson	Ebenezer Wakley
Sylvanus Smalley	Calvin Wheeler
Adrian Hegeman	Isaac Kellogg
Samuel Tooker	John Brett
David Thomas	Benjamin Bevier
N. Williams	James Clemens
Roger Skinner	Eleazer Smith
Moses I. Cantine	Ephraim Fish
Samuel Hawkins	John Fish
Philip S. Parker	Ab'm E. Brouwer
Charles D. Cooper	Luther Rich
Abraham Rose	Elnathan Sears,
A. Comstock	W'm M. Diamond
Arch. S. Clark	Elbert C. Tymen
Stephen Bates	Auth V Santvoord, jr.
Henry Bloom	John N. Quackenbush
John P. Anthony	Barent Smith
Augustus Wright	Richard Duncan
Solomon Townsend	M. Van Beuren
John Rose	Aaron Clark
Halsey Rogers	Joel Lee
William Colling	Benjamin Wallace
Andrew Rogers	Ichabod Prall
Huet Hills	Nathaniel Locke
Oliver Huntington	James Birdsall
Lucas Elmendorf	Am'm J. Hardenbergh
James Burt	Elisha Barlow
Samuel Haight	Salmon Buel
B. M. Van Beuren	E. Burnham
John Taylor	Jacob Gebhard

Squire Monro	Peter S. Van Orden
Caleb Pell	Ab'm Hasbrouck
Jonas Earll	John Conklin
W. Livingston	D. A. Brinckerhoff
H. Leavenworth	Jonathan Kyes,
James L. Hogeboom	John M. Canfield
Lewis Graves	Joseph Kline, jun
John Gale	Jacob Haight
W'm Huggins	John V. D. S. Scott
D. L. Van Antwerp	Wilhelmus Brandon
Philetus Swift	Isaac Dubois,
Charles Selden	Benj. R. Bevier
Levi Hansen	Z. Schoonmaker
Victory Birdseye	Barent Vanderpoel
B De Witt	W'm Munroe
Israel Carl	Charles Kellogg
Joseph Morrell	F. A. Bloodgood
John Champlin	James Finch, jun,
Jason Kellogg	Samuel Wigton
Thomas Farmar	John Noyes
Barnet Mooney	Casper M. Rouse
Tredwell Scudder	Stephen Close
Christo. P. Bellinger	Samuel Lewis
Nicholas Carle	James W. Gazlay
Peter B. Casler	Robert Jenkins
John I. Casler	David Woods

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