

Washington June 20th - 1812

Dr Brother

You will see before this reaches you that a Declaration of War is proclaimed between this Country and Great Britain; at the commencement of the Session I was in favor of war measures upon American Grounds against France as well as England and that all the Restrictions upon our Commerce should be done away
→ I thought it best ^{in the first instance} to grant authority of Mr. Calhoun & his associates against ^{take care of themselves in their own ways} both & let the Merchants, who understand their concerns better than Gentlemen who live remote over the mountains, care - The Restrictions were attempted to be
→ taken off and to couple France into the Declaration of War, both failed although we have the fullest assurance of the continued French depredations upon our Commerce & burning our ships contrary to all the usages & Customs of civilized Nations. Besides I was opposed to War at this time even with both Nations from the unprepared state of our defence; motions were made to ^{postpone} ~~defer~~ this Bill indefinitely, to October and partly until the first Monday in July, but the Majority would not

consent to a day's delay, notwithstanding it is well known
that from the great number of vessels which are at sea
& which must be taken by the English that ruin
and bankruptcy must befall the merchantile interest
— Besides there is another reason why we ought to
have gone to war with France as well as England
~~Proportionate~~ will not give us any satisfaction for
the compensation upon our commerce, we all expect
a Treaty by the Hornet at least so said the Admin-
istration & after Barlow's detaining her in France
a long time, she was obliged to send her back without
getting an Answer from the French ^{Government} to his mail-
bag of Letters unless ^{it} be the day the Hornet sailed
The French Minister sends a note to Barlow that
he would pay attention to his Letters — Nothing
as yet has been done nor will there be unless
we form a Treaty of Alliance, Offensive & Defensive
as long as the French Crusade against National
Rights shall continue, — I shall be abused by
my enemies and I beg my friends will not with-
draw their favorable sentiments from me until
they shall see the whole of this affair developed by
an abler pen than mine — I have no doubt
the Country ~~will~~ ^{is} be involved in ^{this} war not for
our National Rights & Honor or France
would also have been consulted but to

secure Madison's Election to the Presidency, They
speak openly now & say this war secures the
Election; To what a state of things are we arrived
that the Nation shall be plunged into a destructive
war, its Citizens slaughtered & the Country im-
perished to keep an Administration in power
whose weakness and folly not to say corruption
has nearly ruined the Nation — They ^{have} talked
of taking upper Canada in a few weeks that the In-
habitants would rally around the American Standard and
that there would be no opposition from the British arms
to be dreaded, that Governor Hull had only to cross the
Detroit River and march to Fort Malden which would
immediately open its gates & receive him with open
arms, This I am is somewhat changed since hearing that
at least 3000 men regular & formidable will be at
the point of defence before Gov. Hull will have as
many militia with Boyd's Regiment to attack them

The attacking Fort Malden also spoken off months ago
by our Government openly without keeping it a secret
this I heard myself, and no doubt the British Minister
here was not ignorant of the intention, — What effect
this premature declaration of war will have upon the
Eastern Section of the Nation is quite uncertain, but
I am fearful of the consequences, for they will be made
to feel their ruin and becoming desperate when they
cannot expect any protection for their commercial

rights from the Government, that they entertain a wish to
dissolve the National Convention. That of all things, it is
to be dreaded, for in that case a civil war would in-
evitably ensue while the Lord forbid -