Option 1

Defend Rights and Honor Through Unlimited War

The United States can no longer put up with the outrages perpetrated against it by Great Britain. Marauding Indians on the frontier, the ruthless impressment of our sailors, the seizure of our ships: Britain has pushed us too far. We must act now.

In 1776, we Americans decided we could no longer tolerate British oppression and declared independence. The ensuing conflict resulted in the recognition of America's independence in the 1783 Treaty of Paris. Since that time, however, Great Britain has continually attempted to keep its newly independent colonies in a dependent position. In the 1780s and early 1790s, the British limited our access to British ports, impressed American sailors, and maintained a presence in six forts located in the Northwest Territories that they had previously ceded to the United States. While relations improved a little with the signing of the Jay Treaty and the cooperation that occurred between Britain and the United States during the state of war with France, things have only become worse since then.

The resumption of hostilities between Britain and France in 1803 has resulted in increasing tensions. The British view control of the seas as essential to their survival. In their view, there is no right to neutral shipping. Any ship heading to France is considered fair game for seizure and sale. The victors of Trafalgar think that the ocean belongs to them. It does not. They dare anyone to challenge their claims upon nature's natural highway. This interference must stop. Our nation's commerce depends on the right of neutral shipping.

Britain's insatiable need for sailors in their navy has also led them increasingly to impress Americans on the high seas. Although claiming only to be interested in capturing and returning British sailors who have fled the harsh conditions of its navy, native-born as well as naturalized Americans have also frequently been impressed. The practice of impressment has not only resulted in a violation of American rights, it has resulted in violence against Americans. The outrageous attack of the HMS *Leopard* on the USS *Chesapeake* in 1807 left twenty-one American sailors dead or wounded. We will not tolerate these insults to our nation's honor any longer.

On the western frontier, Great Britain incites the Indians to massacres of unspeakable brutality. With promises of an independent nation between the United States and Canada and an ample supply of weapons, the British have unleashed terror on the frontier through their Indian allies. Have they no shame? Where is the honor in having others massacre innocent settlers? It is time for us to claim this land as our own and to strike back against the source of British aggression on this continent—Canada.

It is time that we stop trying to speak a language of accommodation and compromise that Britain does not understand. In the 1770s, the Olive Branch Petition fell on deaf ears. In the first decade of the nineteenth century attempts at "peaceable coercion" are met with disdain. Force is the language of the British. To maintain its independence and preserve its honor, America must abandon negotiation and fight fire with fire.

Our forefathers triumphed less than three decades ago against the British. Their sons will rise to the occasion again. Let us make sure they did not spill their blood in vain and sacrifice lives for a short-lived experiment in constitutional government. The time for talk has passed. America's rights, honor, and credibility must be preserved. Without them, independence is just a meaningless word.

FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

Felix Grundy, Congressman from Tennessee:
"What, Mr. Speaker are we now called on to decide? It is whether we will resist by force the attempt made by that government to subject our maritime rights to the arbitrary and capricious rule of her will; for my part I am not prepared to say that this country shall submit to have her commerce interdicted or regulated by any foreign nation. Sir, I prefer war to submission. Over and above these unjust pretensions of the British government, for many years past they have been in the practice of impressing our seamen from merchant vessels; this unjust and lawless invasion of personal liberty calls loudly for the interposition of this government. This war, if carried on successfully, will have its advantages. We shall drive the British from our continent—they will no longer have an opportunity of intriguing with our Indian neighbors, and setting on the ruthless savage to tomahawk our women and children."

Richard M. Johnson, Congressman from Kentucky:
"...we must now oppose the farther encroachments of Great Britain by war, or formally annul the Declaration of our Independence, and acknowledge ourselves her devoted colonies.... Before we relinquish the conflict, I wish to see Great Britain renounce the piratical system of paper blockade; to liberate our captured seamen on board her ships of war; relinquish the practice of impressment on board our merchant vessels; to repeal her Orders in Council; and cease, in every other respect, to violate our neutral rights; to treat us as an independent people."

Henry Clay, Speaker of the House of Representatives:
"What are we to gain by war, has been emphatically asked? In reply, he would ask, what are we not to lose by peace?—commerce, character, a nation's best treasure, honor! If pecuniary considerations alone are to govern, there is sufficient motive for the war. Our revenue is reduced, by the operation of the belligerent edicts, to about six million of dollars, according to the Secretary of the Treasury's report. The year preceding the embargo it was sixteen...."

John C. Calhoun, Congressman from North Carolina:
"I believe that in four weeks from the time a declaration of war is heard on our frontier, the whole of Upper Canada and a part of Lower Canada will be in our power."

John Rhea, Congressman from Tennessee:
"Not long after the Treaty of Peace, England began her course of inimical depredations, and increasing them in number and in magnitude, in proportion from the time of their beginning, has steadily persevered in the execution of them to the present day; and all that time the United States have persevered in their endeavors, by negotiation, to obtain an amicable settlement of differences. Yes, they have persevered, in a manner bordering too near to humiliation, to avoid war and to live at peace; but every friendly proposition has been rejected, and it seems as if nothing but the reduction of this nation to a servile state of colonial existence, can satiate the appetite of voracious England. If, then, war shall be, let England look to it—human blood, in the event, will be poured out, and will flow to increase that ocean of blood that loudly calls for retribution. In relation to the issue of a war, the United States have nothing to fear; for on this side is arrayed eternal justice, unfurling her flaming standard and conducting to victory."

Andrew Jackson, Volunteers to Arms:
"For what are we going to fight? To satisfy the revenge or ambition of a corrupt and infatuated ministry? To place another and another diadem on the head of an apostate republican general? To settle the balance of power among an assassin tribe of kings and emperors? Or to preserve to the prince of Blood, and the grand dignitaries of the empire their overgrown wealth and privileges? No. Such splendid achievements as these can form no part of the objects of an America war. But we are going to fight for the reestablishment of our national character, misunderstood and vilified at home and abroad; for the protection of our maritime citizens, impressed on board British ships of war and compelled to fight the battles of our enemies against ourselves; to vindicate our right to free trade, and open a market for the productions of our soil,

now perishing on our hands because the mistress of the ocean has forbid us to carry them to any foreign nation; in fine, to seek some indemnity for past injuries, some security against future aggressions, by the conquest of all the British dominions upon the continent of north America. Here then is the true and noble principle on which the energies of the nation should be brought into action: a free people compelled to reclaim by power of their arms the right which God has bestowed upon them, and which an infatuated King has said they shall not enjoy."

John C. Calhoun's report to the House of Representatives from the Committee on Foreign Relations:
"But the period has now arrived, when the United States must support their character and station among the nations of the earth, or submit to the most shameful degradation. Forbearance has ceased to be a virtue. War on the one side, and peace on the other, is a situation as ruinous as it is disgraceful. The mad ambition, the lust of power, and commercial avarice of Great Britain, arrogating to herself the complete dominion of the ocean, and exercising over it an unbounded and lawless tyranny, have left to neutral nations an alternative only between the base surrender of their rights, and a manly vindication of them. Happily for the United States, their destiny, under the aid of Heaven, is in their own hands. The crisis is formidable only by their love of peace... Your committee, believing that the free-born sons of America are worthy to enjoy the liberty which their fathers purchased at the price of so much blood and treasure, and seeing in the measures adopted by Great Britain, a course commenced and persisted in, which must lead to a loss of national character and independence, feel no hesitation in advising resistance by force; in which the Americans of the present day will prove to the enemy and to the world, that we have not only inherited that liberty which our fathers gave us, but also the will and power to maintain it. Relying on the patriotism of the nation, and confidently trusting that the Lord of Hosts will go with us to battle in a righteous cause, and crown our efforts with success, your committee recommends an immediate appeal to arms."

BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING OPTION 1

1. The honor and pride of the United States are at stake. The United States can not suffer under the monarchical tyranny of Great Britain ever again.

2. The United States should have the right to trade with any nation as it sees fit.

3. Force is the only message that Great Britain will understand.

4. The land on the frontiers and in possession of the Indians as well as the British colonial possession of Canada ultimately should belong to the United States.

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION 1

1. Great Britain has ignored our good-faith efforts to negotiate solutions. They have refused to honor their treaty obligations to abandon their forts in the Northwest and they have incited Indians on the frontier. Their impressment of seamen and limitations on our trade shows that they are treating us like we are still their colonies. Force was what forced them to accede to our demands during the War of Independence. Force is what will stop them now.

2. Expansion to the west will bring valuable land to our farmers, offer more opportunities for trade, and quell the troublesome Indians. Declaring war will allow us to take these lands.

3. Britain's Orders in Council have stifled our economic growth. We have not been able to trade with France or with other European nations as is our right. We must insist on our rights as an independent nation.

Option 2

Defend Rights and Honor Through Limited Maritime War

British provocations necessitate action. Let us protect our ocean-going trade and our sailors. We must stop Britain's violations of our rights on the high seas. Turn loose our skillful sailors and new navy and strike a blow for what is right.

Britain's interference with American shipping, its impressment of American sailors, and its incitement of the Indians on America's western frontier require a serious response. The time for talk is over. America's consistent attempts to use diplomatic channels and economic coercion to rectify the situation have fallen on deaf ears. Britain does not give us the respect that we deserve. As we learned during the American Revolution, Great Britain understands only force. It is time to send a clear message.

The use of force, however, should be limited to the American navy and authorized privateers. Do we seriously believe that we can beat the mighty armies Britain has mustered to contain Napoleon? Do we dare risk the hardship of foreign soldiers on our soils? The majority of our grievances revolve around British naval actions. Since the British are most vulnerable on the high seas, the American response should focus on this theater.

As we learned during the state of war with France, America can wring the necessary concessions from a European power without a prolonged and costly ground war. The use of American naval vessels as well as privateers authorized by letters of marque will enable America to strike at the lifelines of the British war effort. As an island nation engaged in a life and death struggle with a continental power, the British are extremely vulnerable to interference with their shipping. Their soldiers abroad rely on receiving supplies carried by ships. Their civilians at home depend on the free flow of commerce upon the high seas. Interfering with its trade will be the quickest way to get our antagonist's attention.

In addition, a naval conflict allows America to avoid the devastation that is associated with a ground war. Why should we risk our cities? Our citizens can be spared the trauma of war while sailors exchange salvos on the high seas. Civilians will also be spared the costs of sustaining the large army necessary for ground war operations against the British. With the removal of the whiskey tax early on in Jefferson's first administration, all direct taxes imposed by the federal government were abolished. Let us not compound the problems caused by the British by reinstating taxes that strike at the heart of every American's right to spend his income as he sees fit.

The mighty British army has too much experience for us to defeat it on land. Let us steer clear of the expansionist dreams of Mr. Clay and his compatriots. We must be wise in how we choose to defend ourselves.

The time to act is now. The place to act is on the high seas. Interference with America's neutral trading rights and impressment of our sailors must be stopped by an aggressive campaign at sea. A limited maritime war is our best option. Rights and honor are defended without the costs and bloodshed associated with an unlimited war.

FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

Chauncey Goodrich, Senator from Connecticut:
"Our course is to use our endeavours to free our commerce from the fangs of the Law, to fortify our most prominent harbors, to equip and man our navy—to provide a means of defence—and there to pause."

John Jacob Astor, New York merchant:
"...we are full of speculation and conjecture as to the measures to be next adopted by government. Some say war with England and other with France and England while some believe that all restriction on commerce will be taking off [sic] and that our merchant vessels be permitted to arm. This I believe will meet the more general approbation."

Samuel Mitchill, Congressman from New York:
"An embargo ought to be accompanied with another—with letters of marque and reprisal. We ought to let the cannon accompany the flag. The voice of the cannon ought to speak the voice of the nation, under the stripes of the nation."

James Monroe, Secretary of State:
"I am convinced that it is very important to attempt, at present, the maritime war only."

James A. Bayard, Senator from Delaware, in a letter to his son:
"The Western and Southern Gentlemen are alarmed by a point very seriously insisted upon by the northern—that in case Canada be conquered, that it shall be divided into States and inalienably incorporated into the Union. You will see the great and permanent weight which such an event would throw into the northern scale. No proposition could have been more frightful to the southern men, and it seems they had never thought of what they were to do with Canada before, in case they conquered the country, but they prefer that Canada should remain a British Province rather than becomes States of America. The consequence has been that they now begin to talk of maritime war, and of the ocean being the only place where G. Britain is tangible. What I am now telling you is not an affair generally or publicly spoken of. It has existed but a short time and passes as yet in whispers and a semi-confidential way. I am inclined to think it true and likely to produce important results."

Pennsylvania Senator Andrew Gregg, Resolution to House Declaration of War:
"Resolved, That the bill, entitled 'An act declaring war between Great Britain and her dependencies, and the United States and their Territories,' be recommitted to the committee to whom was committed the Message of the President, of the 1st instant, with instructions to modify and amend the same, in such manner that the President of the United States shall have power to authorize the public armed ships and vessels of the United States to make reprisals upon the public and private ships and vessels, goods, and merchandise, belonging to the Crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or to the subjects thereof; and also to grant letters of marque and reprisal, under suitable regulations, to be provided in said bill, to private armed ships and vessels to make like reprisals."

U.S. Navy Commodore Stephen Decatur:
"The plan which appears to me to be the best calculated for our little navy...would be to send them out with as large a supply of provisions as they can carry, distant from our coast and singly, or not more than two frigates in company, without giving them any specific instructions as to place of cruising, but to rely on the enterprise of the officers."

Virginia Senator William Branch Giles, Resolution to the House Declaration of War:
"Resolved, That the bill, entitled 'An act declaring war between Great Britain and her dependencies, and the United States and their territories,' be recommitted to the committee to whom was committed the message of the President of the United States of the 1st instant, with instructions to modify and amend the bill, in such manner as to authorize the President of the United States to instruct the commanders

all ships of war belonging to the United States to recapture any vessel thereof bound to any port or place prohibited to such vessel by the British orders in council, dated the—day—which may have been previously captured by any British armed vessel; and, also, to capture any British armed vessel which shall resist such recapture, or be found hovering on the coasts of the United States for the purpose of interrupting their lawful commerce, and to bring the same into any port of the United States for adjudication and condemnation. And, further, to instruct the commanders of all ships of war belonging to the United States, to recapture any vessel of the United States navigating the ocean conformably to the laws of nations, which may have been previously captured by any French armed vessel; and also to capture any such French armed capturing vessel, and, in like manner, to bring in the same for adjudication and condemnation. And to authorize the President of the United States to cause letters of marque and general reprisal upon the public and private ships and vessels, goods, and merchandise, belonging to the crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or to the subjects thereof: and, also, upon the public and private ships and vessels, goods, and merchandise, belonging to the crown of France, or to the subjects thereof."

BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING OPTION 2

1 The United States should have the right to trade with any nation as it sees fit.

2. Neutral nations should not be made to suffer because the major powers have engaged in the folly of war.

3. Great Britain did not respond to our requests during the colonial period until we defeated them on the battlefield. They will not concede anything except by force. However, the battlefield today is the high seas.

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION 2

1. A declaration of unlimited war is too risky for the United States. The army of the United States is small and inexperienced. Britain has been battling the mighty armies of Napoleon. We would be foolhardy to think we could defeat the experienced army of Britain.

2. Our sailors are skilled and our merchant ships numerous. We should play to our strengths. We should arm our merchant ships and provide them with letters of marque so that they can strike out at British interests. The use of force against British ships will be the quickest and in the long run most successful way to get them to respect our rights.

3. There is no advantage to be gained from adding Canadian territory to our country. This will only tip the delicate political balance in favor of the northern states.

Option 3

Delay an Armed Conflict Until Prepared

British injustices are severe. We must prepare for war. But we are not yet ready to strike against such a powerful nation's army and navy. We need time to prepare.

Unquestionably Great Britain has gone too far. It must revise its current practices. Its consistent interference with American shipping, impressment of American sailors, and incitement of the Native Americans on American borders is cause for great concern. America must respond if its rights and honor are to be preserved.

However, now is not the time for us to respond with armed aggression. Neither our navy nor our army is prepared to resist one of the world's greatest powers. After years of neglect under the Jefferson and Madison administrations, how can our armed forces resist the victors of Trafalgar and the battle-tested soldiers of the Duke of Wellington? At this time, discretion is the better part of valor. America must proceed prudently or risk losing all it has worked so hard to gain over the past several decades.

If the United States delays a declaration of war until the fall, we can gain almost six months and perhaps even more time to prepare for war against the British. And prepare we must! Currently, our armed forces, weakened through years of inactivity and budget cuts, are in no condition for a war. Our navy lacks the necessary vessels to battle Britain's larger ships and our army is small and unprepared. What warrior begins a conflict without the ability to inflict pain and harm on the enemy? Great Britain has only become stronger as a result of the continuous warfare with France. To expose this nation to devastating attacks by the British without the power to retaliate in kind or even the ability to defend ourselves seems to place honor and rights before common sense.

How shall we buy the time we need? On April 1, 1812, Congress instated a ninety-day embargo against Great Britain. This embargo hits Great Britain where it hurts with none of the negative risks associated with waging a war for which we are unprepared. We can extend this embargo until November and let it have its effect before launching an armed crusade against Great Britain. By November the bad weather in the Atlantic will work to our advantage, serving as a shield against British naval incursions. This will give us additional time for preparation. We can use this time to strengthen and further prepare our forces and seaports. Stalling in this way is not a sign of weakness or indecision. Rather, it demonstrates an intelligent use of all our advantages as we prepare for battle against a powerful enemy.

Although justified in our anger, now is not the time to engage the British in a military conflict. By delaying a declaration of war, we can allow economic warfare to have its effect, put off a conflict until the natural blockade of poor weather can provide us with a military advantage, and gain valuable time to prepare for a military conflict.

FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

Thomas Sammons, Congressman from New York:
"[We] would not wish to engage in a war unless we were attacked on our own territories or brought on by our enemies, before we are prepared with an army and would for the present remove all restrictive measures for emports and exports."

Philadelphia resident Manuel Eyre to Congressman Roberts:
"Would it not be best to procrastinate the time of making war until we are better prepared to strike the first blow with effect—late in the fall and winter British ships of war cannot encounter the tempestuous weather on our coasts without almost inevitable destruction—by that time the enlistments of our new army will have greatly progressed & and our sea ports better fortified?"

Obadiah German, Senator from New York:
"...if we were even in a state of preparation, and possessed the means of insuring a favorable issue, it would be bad policy for this country, at the present time, to enter into war with Great Britain, although perhaps many weighty reasons might be adduced in support of such argument. I will first call the attention of the Senate to the ability and strength of the nation we are about, by this bill, to declare war against. Gentlemen ought to recollect, that Great Britain has almost constantly engaged in war for twenty years past against one of the most powerful nations that ever existed; and for a considerable part of that time, the energies of her enemy have been directed by war's favorite genius—NAPOLEON, who has succeeded in uniting nearly the whole force of the Continent of Europe against her; against that very nation which we are about to assail; and what has been the effect? Is Great Britain less powerful now, than she was twenty years ago? No, sir, this constant warfare has increased her powers instead of diminishing them. Great Britain is a wily, active nation. She has been trained to war. She will not measure her steps and movements by ours; if we are not prepared to defend our seaports, she will not wait until we are; and should she get possession of New Orleans, it will cost much blood and treasure to dislodge her. I do not, Mr. President, draw all these discouraging pictures, or relate these lamentable facts, because I would shrink from the conflict or terrors of war, for the defence of the rights of my injured country, sooner than any gentleman of this Senate, nor with a wish that all these evils may be realized; my object is to avert them from my country. I do it, sir, to check the precipitate step of plunging my country prematurely into a war, without any of the means of making the war terrible to our enemy; and with the certainty that it will be terrible to ourselves, or at least to our merchants, our seaports, and cities. Yes, sir; the millions that your merchants will lose in consequence of this rash, this premature step, will strike them with terror and dismay from New Orleans to Maine. A country well prepared to meet war will scarcely find war necessary, but if it cannot be avoided, preparation does away half its terrors. And if gentlemen will show me an army of twenty-five thousand men, well formed, disciplined, and supplied, at the place of the grand rendezvous near Albany, give us a reasonable increase of our navy, and will place both the great belligerents on equal footing, (as I consider them equal trespassers on our rights,) then, I say, if Great Britain will not do us justice, I will vote at the proper time a declaration of war against her; and I will use my utmost exertions to make the war terrible to her, but to declare war without the means of making the enemy feel its horrors, and at a time when it must produce evil and terrors only to ourselves, strikes me with astonishment."

James A. Bayard, Senator from Delaware:
"It is not enough that we have cause for war; we must see that we are prepared, and in a condition to make war. You do not go to war for the benefit of your enemy, but your own advantage; not to give proofs of a vain and heedless courage, but to assert your rights and redress your wrongs. If you commence hostilities before you are prepared to strike a blow, and while your cities, your territory, and your property on the ocean, are exposed to the mercy of a Government possessing vast resources of war, what can you expect but to add new distresses, defeat, and disgrace to the wrongs of which you complain? It is a strange motive for war—a wish to gratify the rapacity, to swell the triumphs, and to increase the insolence of the enemy. No time has existed for years past when we had less cause to complain of the conduct of Great

Britain. Her vessels of war had all been withdrawn from our coast, as he presumed, in order to avoid collisions and hostility. If the war be suspended till November, the government and the people will both be better prepared to sustain it. Postpone the war, and we will submit to the embargo till November. This will furnish time for the return of your ships and seamen. Are you provided with means to annoy the enemy, or to defend yourselves? Have you an army or navy which can make any impression? Are your exposed towns fortified and garrisoned? Was any nation ever less prepared for war? It would require the whole military force that you now possess to constitute an adequate defence for New Orleans, New York, and Newport. During the winter months you will be defended by the elements. Postpone the war till November, and we shall not have to dread an enemy on our coast till April. In the mean time, go on with your recruiting, fill up, discipline, and train an army. Take the stations, if you please, which will enable you to open an early campaign. Your trade will all have time to return before hostilities commence, and having all your ships and seamen at home, you may be prepared to put forth all your strength upon the ocean on the opening of the ensuing Spring. Shall we, by an untimely precipitancy, yielding to a fretful impatience of delay, throw our wealth into the hands of the enemy, and feed that very rapacity which it is our object to subdue or to punish? We can lose nothing by delay; much will be certainly saved; and at a moment pregnant with great events, it was most evidently our true policy to temporize. You give up no right, yield no pretension, and profit by every day in rendering the condition of the country more secure, and its attitude more formidable. The just appreciation of time is among the highest points of political sagacity."

BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING OPTION 3

1. The United States may not be prepared for war now, but we must get prepared or risk losing our rights as a free and independent nation.

2. Engaging in unlimited war with Great Britain at this time threatens the safety of our coastal towns and cities. There is no cowardice in waiting until we are prepared.

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION 3

1. The U.S. army and navy are much smaller and weaker than Great Britain's. The United States has few experienced troops and naval commanders, while Britain has been at war with France for a generation. Engaging in unlimited war with Great Britain at this time threatens the safety of our coastal towns and cities and puts our merchant ships in increased danger. Delay will allow time to fortify coastal towns and cities and time for U.S. merchant ships to find the safety of their ports.

2. We have successfully contained Indian aggression on the frontier at the Battle of Tippecanoe. Most of our troops are currently engaged on the frontier and we would be foolish to relocate them now to protect our coastline. If we are going to take on battle with the British, we will need time to prepare more troops.

3. By relying on the embargo as our first defense and delaying a declaration of war until November, we will be able buy time, prepare for war, and benefit from the seasonal advantage provided by the bad weather that begins in the Atlantic at that time. This weather will prevent Britain from bringing its forces to our shores until next spring. And this, in turn, will give us additional time to prepare our forces.

Option 4

Rights and Honor Are Not Worth Bloodshed

The United States and its citizens are being asked to risk too much for the sake of principles and honor. Engaging in a military conflict with Great Britain not only threatens to undermine our cherished constitutional government, it threatens America's existence as an independent country.

The injustices heaped upon us by the British are many. We do not and cannot ignore the unwarranted British interference with American shipping on the high seas. Nor do we turn a blind eye to the unacceptable practice of impressment. These intolerable behaviors must stop. But a war with Great Britain that would align us with the tyrant Napoleon is not the answer.

For almost two decades while Great Britain and France have engaged in an epic battle, our sailors and merchants have paid a heavy price. The loss of both men and goods to the warring parties has caused both personal sorrow and financial loss. Is a response that will extend this sorrow and loss far beyond the confines of those associated with transatlantic shipping a justified response? Should American civilians risk death and destruction for the rights and honor of a few? Even worse, the British have continually demonstrated their interest in returning America to a state of colonial dependence. Why should we give the British the justification and occasion for doing so?

What about the cost? Americans look unfavorably upon the tax man. Our War of Independence was precipitated in many ways by unjustified attempts at taxation. Since independence, domestic turmoil (such as the Whiskey Rebellion), has been caused by unwanted taxes. A war with Great Britain will cost Americans dearly. All taxes until this point will seem modest and in fact insignificant in comparison with the taxation that will be necessary to wage war against the world's strongest military power. In addition, by resorting to war, we risk losing the millions of American dollars deposited in British banks and losing our cargoes currently on the high seas.

Finally, whether we like it or not, war against the British allies us with Napoleon. Did our forefathers sacrifice their blood in the American Revolution so that we would have the freedom to ally ourselves with one of history's most bloodthirsty dictators? Hasn't France seized more of our ships over the past five years than Great Britain has? Have we worked so hard to establish a constitutional republic at home so that we would have the freedom to support tyranny abroad? No. Freedom at home is inextricably connected to freedom abroad. The United States should not support, directly or indirectly, the work of emperors.

The risk to our nation is too great and the rewards are too few to justify war against Great Britain. Injustices have occurred, but greater injustices will occur if we choose war. Is it worth risking the demise of the world's largest constitutional republic for the rights of a few or the sake of principle? Let the costs be weighed and reason prevail.

FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

Josiah Quincy, Congressman from Massachusetts:
"If our ills were of a nature that war would remedy, if war would compensate any of our losses or remove any of our complaints, there might be some alleviation of the suffering in the charm of the prospect. But how will war upon the land protect commerce upon the ocean? What balm has Canada for wounded honor? How are our mariners benefited by a war which exposes those who are free, without promising release to those who are impressed? But it is said that war is demanded by honor. Is national honor a principle which thirsts after vengeance, and is appeased only by blood?... If honor demands a war with England, what opiate lulls that honor to sleep over the wrongs done us by France?

John Randolph, Congressman from Virginia:
"An insinuation had fallen from the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Grundy) that the late massacre of our brethren on the Wabash had been instigated by the British government. Has the President given any such information? Has the gentleman received any such, even informally, from any officer of this government? Is it so believed by the administration?...This insinuation was of the grossest kind—presumption the most rash, the most unjustifiable.... But is war the true remedy? Who will profit by it? Speculators; a few lucky merchants who draw prizes in the lottery; commissaries and contractors. Who must suffer by it? The people. It is their blood, their taxes, that must flow to support it."

Excerpts from a Resolution of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts:
"A war with Great Britain would furnish temptations to her Government to sequester the millions belonging to our citizens deposited in that country, and an opportunity to her navy and cruisers to sweep the ocean of the remains of our once flourishing commerce. The conquest of Canada, the only point in which she is assailable, would afford no indemnification, if achieved, for the losses to which we should be exposed upon our unprotected seaboard, and upon the ocean. Destitute as we are of a navy, and the means of immediate maritime defence, we cannot perceive in what mode a war with this nation, so powerful on the ocean, can promise the attainment of its avowed object—the revocation of the Orders in Council."

William Coleman, Federalist Editor of the New York Evening Post:
"Citizens, if pecuniary redress is your object in going to war with England, the measure is perfect madness. You will lose millions when you will gain a cent. The expense will be enormous. It will, ruin our country. Direct taxes must be resorted to. The people will have nothing to pay. We once had a revenue; that has been destroyed in the destruction of our commerce.... These remarks will have little weight with men whose interest leads them to advocate war. Thousands of lives, millions of money, the flames of cities, the tears of widows and orphans, with them are light expedients when they lead to wealth and power. But to the people who must fight, if fighting must be done—who must pay if money be wanted—who must march when the trumpet sounds, and who must die when the battle bleeds—to the people I appeal. To them the warning voice is lifted. From a war they are to expect nothing but expenses and suffering—expenses disproportionate to their means, and sufferings lasting as life."

Editor of the Boston Centinel quoted in The Weekly Register:
"It is evident that under the circumstances of this country, a declaration of war would be in effect a license and a bounty offered by our government to the British fleet to scour our coasts—to sweep our remaining navigation from the ocean, to annihilate our commerce, and to drive the country, by a rapid declension, into the state of poverty and distress which attended the close of the revolutionary struggle.... Other considerations come in aid of our confidence—The proposed enemy is invulnerable to us, while we are on all sides open to assault. The conquest of Canada would be less useful to us than that of Nova Zembla, and could not be so easily achieved. Our red brethren, forgetful of the patriotic "talks" of their "father" JEFFERSON, would pour down upon our frontier, and our black brethren would show themselves not less enamoured with the examples of liberty taught in St. Domingo than their masters are with those

derived from its mother country. New Orleans and the Floridas would pass into the hands of the enemy. Our seaports would be under a strict blockade, and the mouths of our rivers would be bridged with frigates."

John Randolph, Congressman from Virginia:
"My design is simply to submit to you the views which have induced me to consider a war with England, under existing circumstances, as comporting neither with the interest nor the honor of the American people; but as an idolatrous sacrifice of both on the altar of French rapacity, perfidy, and ambition. France has for years past offered us terms of undefined commercial arrangements as the price of war with England, which hitherto we have not wanted firmness and virtue to reject. That price is now to be paid. We are tired of holding out; and, following the example of continental Europe, entangled in the artifices, or awed by the power of the Destroyer of Mankind, we are prepared to become instrumental to his projects of universal dominion. Before these pages meet your eye, the last Republic of the earth will have enlisted under the banners of the tyrant and become a party to his cause. The blood of the American freemen must flow to cement his power, to aid in stifling the last struggles of afflicted and persecuted man, to deliver up into his hands the patriots of Spain and Portugal, to establish his empire over the ocean and over the land that gave our fathers birth—to forge our own chains!"

BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING OPTION 4

1. Neither honor nor greed can justify bloodshed.

2. War with Great Britain aligns us with France and the tyranny of Napoleon.

3. Anything but defensive war goes against the spirit on which this nation was founded: the individual's right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS FOR OPTION 4

1. Great Britain's navy commands the oceans of the world and will surely seize our merchant ships. Why provide Britain with another excuse to seize our wealth?

2. France has seized more of our ships in the past five years that Britain has. Why should we help the French by attacking Britain?

3. Indian attacks on the frontier do not justify declaring war against Great Britain. Those claiming British involvement in these attacks have been called upon to offer proof, but have consistently been unable to provide evidence to support their inflammatory claims.

4. The expense of war must be borne by our citizens. Taxes will be levied, an army must be raised, and the blood of our sons will flow. Those advocating war are those who stand to gain not those who will pay the horrible price of war. There will be little benefit to our citizens—only increased hardships.