

The right of the majority to govern, flows from the fitness of things. It is the law of nature, because it is the dictate of reason, applied to human society. A measure proposed in the legislative halls, to advance the common happiness of a nation. The opinions of the members are divided. Which party is to govern? When the majority of the nation speak through its constitutional organs, the first principles of the government are lost sight of unless the voice of that majority is obeyed. The presumption at once arises, when an act receives the sanction of a majority of the representatives of the people, that a majority of the people themselves require and approves it. What is the voice of the majority in Congress, but the voice of the people, speaking by proxy? How absurd would it be, therefore, for the few to impeach the conduct of the many—for an inconsiderable portion of the states to menace the subversion of the government, the dissolution of the Union, because the many demand the adoption of a measure, which, in the opinion of the few, militates against *their* interests? Previous to the war of eighteen hundred and twelve, a large proportion of the American people, indignant at the accumulated wrongs of the British government, claimed at the hands of their representatives in Congress, a declaration of hostilities against England. This was an act of sovereignty, the exercise of which, the majority of the people had the constitutional right to demand. The minority that availed themselves of that occasion to threaten the dismemberment of the Union, was regarded universally, as an unprincipled faction; and the posture in which impartial history will present them to future time ought ever to operate as an example to deter, rather than to be imitated. If the great interests of the nation are to be promoted by the encouragement and protection of domestic industry; on what principle of reason, or of sound policy should those interests be abandoned? Does not self preservation—does not national independence—do not the future glory and stability of our institutions require, that the end of all laws should be the advancement of the *general* welfare? It may be said that the majority may be mistaken. This may be; and so may the minority. The chance of error is greater with the smaller than the larger number. And even if the majority prove to have erred, they will be more contented to bear the ills of their own making, than the ills which would be brought upon them, or which they would fancy were brought upon them, by the success of the minority.