

necessity of selling British property, to raise the whole sum of fourteen millions two hundred and twenty thousand dollars, required by congress of this state in nine months, and the people, you assert, cannot raise by taxes more than nine millions of that sum, without being greatly distressed, the deficiency therefore of five millions two hundred and twenty thousand dollars must be made good out of the sale of British property. As you are presumed to be best acquainted with the circumstances of the people, we will not contradict the assertion, but we cannot refrain from remarking, that if true, it was not altogether so prudent to disclose this inability in the bill, and to dwell on it in your message. As we bear our proportions of the taxes, so we feel for, and must earnestly wish it were in our power, to alleviate the distresses of the people; the sale of British property, especially in the way you propose, might, and probably would, involve them in greater difficulties and distress hereafter. We have already assigned our reasons for this opinion, and it is the fixed, and almost unanimous determination of this house (could we reconcile the confiscation of that property with the spirit of our constitution, and our ideas of justice and true policy) not to suffer an immediate sale of any part of it; from what we have premised, you will not be at a loss to account for this determination. If the people cannot raise by taxes more than nine millions of dollars in nine months, without feeling the distress you mention, impossibilities are neither to be expected from us, or them. You seem to hold out an opinion, that our part of the expence of the war may be altogether defrayed by taxes, and the sale of British property; the opinion we conceive to be erroneous; the latter fund, in the way you propose to manage it, would soon fail, and to us it appears to be impracticable to raise annually, by taxes, a sum any ways adequate to the annual expenditure of the war, and of our civil establishments; the most opulent countries have not been able to tax their subjects so high. Yet are we not destitute of resources to carry on the war, even if internal loans should not supply the deficiencies of taxes. When the representatives of the United States perceive the impracticability of supporting the war by taxes, and internal loans, only, necessity will force them to adopt a measure, which justice and true policy dictate, and which had been ere now adopted, if partial interests had not interfered, and prevented its adoption. By making the back lands a common stock, and by selling a part of them, millions might in time be brought into the public treasury, and in the mean while great sums would probably be advanced on that security; monies may be borrowed in Europe, and of this we suppose the congress have assurances, by the late notice of their intention to draw bills of exchange to the amount of £.200,000 sterling. The enemy's hope,