

Your honours cannot discover the justice of seizing and applying British property, to relieve our people from heavy and intolerable taxes, and to enable them to continue the war. We support the measure by the rule of justice, applicable to our citizens, and the subjects of Great Britain. By justice we mean a constant regard to the common interest, and in conformity to it, rendering to both parties what they are entitled to, by a natural or political claim: and we understand the true principles of justice to be, to do unto others what would be right for them (in a similar case) to do unto us. To examine this subject. The people of the colonies (now United States) oppressed by the king and parliament of Great-Britain, applied for a redress of grievances. Force was employed to compel their submission to acts destructive of their natural and civil rights; hostilities were commenced against them; they resisted by arms; such resistance was necessary and justifiable. The war continued; the object of America was confined only to a redress of grievances. The king and parliament of Great-Britain declared the people of the colonies in rebellion, that their property taken on the sea should be liable to seizure and confiscation, and that it was lawful and just to seize and destroy their persons and property. Great-Britain continued the war, and with her fleets and armies did seize and destroy considerable property of our people. The war on the part of Great-Britain was offensive and unjust, on our part not only defensive and just, but necessary. From the 19th of April, 1775, until the fourth day of July, 1776, the object of the war, on the part of America, was only to obtain a redress of grievances; during that period her resistance, being originally lawful and justifiable, the war was truly and properly a *civil war*. At length this and the other colonies were compelled to separate from the British empire, and to become sovereign and independent states. On that ever memorable and glorious event the object of the war was changed, and from that moment the war became a *public war*, and all the rights of an independent nation then attached to this and the other states in the union. Permit us to inform your honours what the late and celebrated Vattel says on this subject. "*Civil war* breaks the bands of society and government, or at least it suspends their force and effect; it produces in the nation two independent parties, considering each other as enemies, and acknowledging no common judge. Thus they are in the case of two nations, who having a dispute which they cannot adjust, are compelled to decide it by force of arms. Things being thus situated, it is evident that the common laws of war, those maxims of humanity, moderation, &c. are in *civil war* to be observed on both sides. If this is not observed, the war will become cruel and horrid; and its calamities will increase on the parties.