

## Document Five

### Debate in the House of Representatives, Dec. 1811

#### Felix Grundy of Tennessee

[We are called on to decide] whether we will resist by force the attempt, made by [England], to subject our maritime rights to the rule of her will; for my part I am not prepared to say that this country shall submit to have her commerce regulated, by any foreign nation. Sir, I prefer war to submission.

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 action of this Government.

It cannot be believed by any many who will reflect, that the savage tribes, uninfluenced by other Powers, would think of making war on the United States. They understand too well their own weakness, and our strength. How, then, sir, are we to account for their late conduct? In one way only; some powerful nation must have turned their peaceful disposition towards us into hostilities. Great Britain alone has communication with those Northern tribes; I therefore infer, that if British gold has not been employed, their trinkets, and the promise of support and a place of refuge if necessary, have had their effect....

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. That nation will lose her Canadian trade, and, by having no resting place in this country, her means of annoying us will be diminished. The idea I am now about to advance is at war, I know,

with sentiments of the gentleman from Virginia: I am willing to receive the Canadians as adopted brethren; it will preserve the equilibrium of the Government. When Louisiana shall be fully peopled, the Northern States will lose their power; they will be at the discretion of others, and then this Union might be endangered – I therefore feel anxious not only to add the Floridas to the South, but the Canadas to the North of this empire...

## Document Six

### **John Randolph of Virginia Mr. Randolph, December 10 (His remarks were recorded in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person)**

An insinuation has fallen from the gentleman from Tennessee, (Mr. Grundy) that the late massacre of our brethren on the Wabash River had been instigated by the British Government. Has the President given any such information? Has the gentleman received any such, even informally, from an officer of this government? Is it so believed by the Administration? I have cause to think the contrary to be the fact; that such was not their opinion. This insinuation was of the grossest kind – a presumption the most rash, the most unjustifiable. He was ready to march to Canada. It was indeed well calculated to excite the feelings of the Western people particularly, who were not quite so tenderly attached to our red brethren

Advantage had been taken of the spirit of the Indians, broken by the war, which ended in the Treaty of Greenville. They had been pent up by subsequent treaties into nooks seeking to extinguish their title to immense wildernesses, for which, (possessing, as we do already, more land than we can sell or use) we shall not have occasion, for half a century to come. It was our own thirst for territory that had driven these sons of nature to desperation, of which we felt the effects....

Name, however, but England, and all we are up in arms against her. Against whom? Against those whose blood runs in our veins; in common with whom we claim Shakespeare; whose form of government is the freest on earth, our own only excepted, from whom every valuable principle of our institutions had been borrowed – representation, jury trial, our whole civil and criminal

theory – against our fellow Protestants identified in blood, in language, in religion with ourselves.