

*7 Heads
in the
Mexican War
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SPEECH

OF

MR. CALHOUN, OF SOUTH CAROLINA,

ON

THE BILL MAKING FURTHER APPROPRIATION TO BRING THE
EXISTING WAR WITH MEXICO TO A SPEEDY
AND HONORABLE CONCLUSION,

CALLED

Amended

THE THREE MILLION BILL.

DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, FEBRUARY 9, 1847.

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SPEECH

OF

MR. CALHOUN, OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

The bill making further appropriation to bring the existing war with Mexico to a speedy and honorable conclusion, being under consideration—

Mr. CALHOUN rose, and thus addressed the Senate. Never, Mr. President, since I have been on the stage of action, has our country been placed in a more critical situation than at present. We are not only in the midst of a very difficult and a very expensive war, but we are involved in a domestic question of the most irritating and dangerous character. They both claim our serious and deliberate consideration, and I do trust that before this session closes, late as it is, they will both receive a full discussion. It is due to our constituents that the actual state of things in reference to both should be fully understood. For the present, I propose to consider the question which is more immediately pressing—how shall the war be conducted to bring it most advantageously to a successful termination? Or, to express it a little more fully, how shall it be conducted to enable us most advantageously to effect all the objects for which it was made? For it is only by effecting those objects that the war can be properly said to be successful.

There are two ways in which the war may be conducted. The one is, to push on offensive operations until Mexico is compelled to yield to our terms. The other, to take a defensive position and to maintain and secure the possession of the country already in our military occupation. The question which I propose to consider is, which of these two plans of operation ought to be selected. It is a grave question; in my opinion, next in importance only to the war itself. I have given it my deliberate consideration, and the result to which I have come is, that we ought to choose the defensive position. I shall now proceed to state the reasons upon which that conclusion is founded.

I believe it is the policy best calculated to bring the war advantageously to a successful termination; or, to express it more fully and explicitly—for I wish to be fully comprehended on this important question—to bring it with *certainty* to a successful termination, and that with the least sacrifice of men and money, and with the least hazard of disastrous consequences and loss of standing and reputation to the country. If I rightly understand the objects for which the war was declared, I feel a deep conviction that, by assuming a defensive attitude, all of them may be effected. I say, if I rightly understand, for, strange as it may seem, those objects, even at this late day, are left to inference. There is no document

in which they are distinctly enumerated and set forth by the Government, and of course they can only be ascertained by viewing the messages of the President in reference to the war, in connection with the acts of Congress recognizing its existence, or for carrying it on. I have examined them, and particularly the message of the President to Congress, recommending that Congress should make war, for the purpose of discovering the objects for which it was made, and the result is that they were threefold: first, to repel invasion; next, to establish the Rio del Norte as the western boundary of Texas; and thirdly, to obtain indemnity for the claims of our citizens against Mexico. The first two appear to me to be the primary, and the last only the secondary object of the war. The President, in his messages, did not recommend Congress to declare war. No. He assumed that war already existed, and called upon Congress to recognise its existence. He affirmed that the country had been invaded, and American blood spilt upon American soil. That assumption was based on the position that the Rio del Norte was the western boundary of Texas, and that the Mexicans had crossed that boundary to the American side of the river. This he affirmed was an invasion of our territory.

The act of Congress reiterated the declaration that war had been made by the Republic of Mexico, and thus recognised the Rio del Norte as the western boundary of Texas, and the crossing of that river by the Mexicans as an act of invasion. Hence, both the Executive and Legislative branches of this Government are committed to the fact that the Rio del Norte is the western boundary of Texas, and that crossing it was an invasion on the part of the Mexicans. To repel the invasion and establish the boundary were then clearly the primary objects of the war. But having got into the war, the President recommends it to be prosecuted for the other object I have mentioned—that is to say, indemnity for our citizens—a recommendation, in my opinion, proper; for while we are engaged in war all the differences between the two countries ought, if possible, to be settled. These appear to me to be the objects of the war. Conquest is expressly disavowed, and, therefore, constitutes none of its objects. The President, in addition, recommends that we shall prosecute the war in order to obtain indemnity for its expenses, but that in no sense can be considered as one of its objects, but a mere question of policy; for it can never be supposed that a country would enter upon a war for the mere purpose of being indemnified for its cost.

I hold, then, Mr. President—such being the objects of the war—that all of them can be accomplished by taking a defensive position. Two have already been thoroughly effected. The enemy has been repelled by two brilliant victories. The Rio del Norte is held, from the mouth to its extreme source, on the eastern side, by ourselves. Not a Mexican soldier is to be found there. As to the question of indemnity to our citizens, such has been the success of our arms that we have not only acquired enough for that, but vastly more, even to comprehend, great as they already are, the expenses of the war, if it should be judged to be wise and a just policy on our part to make Mexico responsible for them. Here arises the question—shall we hold the line we now occupy, and which we cover by our military forces, comprehending two-thirds of the whole of Mexico, embracing the valley of the Rio del Norte, on the west side, as far as the Sierra Madre, and on the north to the southern limits of Lower and Upper California and New Mexico—shall we hold all this, or shall we select some

other position better calculated for the object in view? I am not prepared to discuss this point. I have not the requisite information, and if I had, it would not be necessary, with the object I have in view. What I propose to discuss, in the absence of such information is, what considerations ought to govern us in selecting a defensive line. These must be deducted from the objects intended to be effected by taking a defensive position.

The first and leading condition that ought to govern should be to select a line that would fully accomplish the objects to be effected in making the war; avoiding the appearance, however, of taking any portion of the country on the mere principle of a war of conquest. But what may be required in reference to this consideration may be enlarged by the other considerations he would now proceed to state.

The first and most important of them is, that in selecting a defensive line, it should be such as to possess, in the greatest degree, such natural advantages as would require the smallest sacrifice of men and money to defend it; and among others, such as would afford every facility for drawing promptly supplies of men and provisions from the adjoining country. The next consideration in making the selection is, that the country covered by it should be convenient and desirable for us to possess, if in the ultimate adjustment of the difference between us and Mexico, it should become the established boundary of the two countries. I go further, and add, that it should be such as would deprive Mexico in the smallest possible degree of her resources and her strength; for, in aiming to do justice to ourselves in establishing the line, we ought, in my opinion, to inflict the least possible amount of injury on Mexico. I hold, indeed, that we ought to be just and liberal to her. Not only because she is our neighbor; not only because she is a sister republic; not only because she is emulous now, in the midst of all her difficulties, and has ever been, to imitate our example by establishing a federal republic; not only because she is one of the two greatest powers on this continent of all the States that have grown out of the provinces formerly belonging to Spain and Portugal; though these are high considerations, which every American ought to feel, and which every generous and sympathetic heart would feel, yet there are others which refer more immediately to ourselves. The course of policy which we ought to pursue in regard to Mexico is one of the greatest problems in our foreign relations. Our true policy, in my opinion, is not to weaken or humble her; on the contrary, it is our interest to see her strong, and respectable, and capable of sustaining all the relations that ought to exist between independent nations. I hold that there is a mysterious connection between the fate of this country and that of Mexico, so much so, that her independence and capability of sustaining herself are almost as essential to our prosperity, and the maintenance of our institutions as they are to hers. Mexico is to us the forbidden fruit; the penalty of eating it would be to subject our institutions to political death.

The next consideration is, that the line should be such, in the event of its being ultimately established between us, as would lead to a permanent peace between the two countries; and, finally, that it should be such as would lead to as speedy a peace as possible, and for this purpose it should be eminently coercive. Neither of these requires any illustration.

Such being the considerations that ought to govern us in selecting a defensive line, the next question is, what line would best fulfil them; and here

again, I am not prepared to pronounce definitively. It requires a more exact knowledge of the country than I possess or can derive from any of the maps, all of which, there is reason to believe, are more or less imperfect; but while I do not feel myself prepared to pronounce definitively, I am prepared to suggest a line, which, in my opinion, to a very great extent, will fulfil most of these considerations; and what recommends it more strongly to me is the fact, that it is substantially the one which the Executive themselves, as I infer from the declaration of the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, contemplate establishing even in the event of a successful offensive war. The line to which I refer is the following: beginning at the mouth of the Rio del Norte, and continuing up the same to the Pass del Norte, or southern boundary of New Mexico, about the thirty-second degree of north latitude, and thence due west to the Gulf of California, which it would strike, according to the maps, nearly at its head, and thence down the Gulf to the ocean.

I now propose to turn back and compare this line, with the considerations which I have laid down, as those which ought to govern in selecting a defensive line. It will secure all the objects for which the war was declared. It will establish the Del Norte as the western boundary of Texas throughout its whole extent, from its mouth to its source; it will give us ample means of indemnity, even if the cost of the war itself should be deemed proper to be included in the indemnity, which, as at present advised, I am far from being disposed to countenance. The next consideration is, that the line should be such as would involve in its maintenance the least sacrifice of men and money. In reference to this the one suggested has great advantages. In the first place, on its east side, the Del Norte would constitute the line, a broad, rapid, and navigable stream, of which we would have the entire command, and in the next it would be near to the settled parts of Texas, from whence, in an emergency, the forces and the means of supply necessary for its defence may be promptly derived. The whole extent of this portion of the line is less than four hundred miles, measured on the map. I have consulted the opinions of military men of judgment and experience, in reference to its defence, and they inform me that three forts properly located, one not far from the mouth of the Del Norte, another somewhere near Camargo, and a third at the Pass del Norte, properly constructed, and garrisoned with a suitable force, would be sufficient for its defence. The fort at the Pass del Norte would, from its position, not only defend the river itself, but protect New Mexico, by commanding the only passage though which the Mexicans could invade it. Four regiments would be ample to garrison the forts, after the first year, when they would be completed.

The other portion of the line, extending from the Pass del Norte to the Gulf of California, and thence through the gulf to the Pacific Ocean, would be still more easily defended. The part which extends from the mountains that border New Mexico on the west, and which separates the waters of the Del Norte from those which fall into the Colorado and the Gulf of California, passes through a country inhabited on both sides by Indian tribes through its whole extent, and requires neither men nor forts for its defence. It is in length about three hundred and fifty miles. The residue is covered by the Gulf of California. A few small vessels, which could be furnished under the peace establishment, with a single regiment, would be ample for its defence, and the protection of California. Hence, five regiments, with a small

naval force, supported by the contiguous population, would be sufficient for the defence of the whole line against any force which Mexico could bring against it.

The next point to consider is, what would be the expense of maintaining this force, in addition to what the peace establishment would require. On this, too, I have consulted officers of experience, and they are of opinion that two and a half millions of dollars annually would be sufficient.

The next consideration is, that the country to be covered should be convenient and desirable to be held by us, if, as has been stated, on the settlement of our differences with Mexico, the line should be established as the permanent boundary. And here again it possesses striking advantages. It is contiguous to us. It has on its eastern side the Rio Del Norte as the boundary between it and Texas, and on its northern, the southern boundary of Oregon, through its whole extent. But what makes it still more desirable, and what is of vastly more importance to us, is the very circumstance which makes it of little value to Mexico, as it regards its strength or resources; and that is that it is almost literally an uninhabited country. It covers an area of 600,000 square miles, with a population of less than 100,000, of all complexions and all descriptions, being but one inhabitant to each six miles square. It is indeed as sparsely settled, and even less so, than the country in the possession of the neighboring Indians. It is this very sparseness of population which renders it desirable to us; for if we had the choice of two regions of equal extent, and in other respects equally desirable, the one inhabited and the other not, we would choose the uninhabited, if we consulted the genius of our government and the preservation of our political institutions. What we want is space for our growing population, and what we ought to avoid is, the addition of other population, of a character not suited to our institutions. We want room to grow. We are increasing at the rate of 600,000 annually; and in a short time the increase will be at the rate of 1,000,000. To state it more strongly, we double once in twenty-three years, so that at the end of that period we will number forty millions, and in another twenty-three years, eighty millions, if no disaster befall us. For this rapidly growing population, all the territory we now possess, and even that which we might acquire, would, in the course of a few generations, be needed. It is better for our people and institution, that our population should not be too much compressed.

But the very reasons which make it so desirable to us, make it of little advantage to Mexico. Her population is nearly stationary, and will not, at her present rate of increase, within the period I have specified as that within which our population will have twice doubled, be but a few millions more than at present. Indeed, so far from being valuable to Mexico, it is directly the opposite; a burden and a loss to her. It is, in the first place, exceedingly remote from her. California is as far from the city of Mexico as it is from New Orleans, and New Mexico is not much nearer to it than it is to Washington. They are both too remote to be defended by so weak a power. It is a remarkable fact in the history of this continent, that the aboriginals in this and the adjacent portions of Mexico, encroach upon the European occupants. The Indians are actually gaining ground upon the Mexicans, not but that they are brave and capable of defending themselves with arms, but the jealousy of the central government had in a great measure disarmed them, while from its feebleness and remoteness, it is incapable of

affording them protection. It is said that there are not less than three or four thousand captives from New Mexico and the neighboring States, in the hands of the Indians. Such being the state of things, it is manifest that while the acquisition would be of great importance to us, it would, instead of being a loss to the Mexicans, be a positive gain. The possession by our people would protect the whole of the adjacent portions of Mexico from the incursions and ravages of the Indians, and give it a greater degree of security and prosperity than it ever has experienced from the commencement of her revolution, now more than a quarter of a century ago.

The next consideration is, that the line should be such, if it should be established as a boundary, as would lay the foundation of a permanent peace between us and Mexico; and here again it has remarkable advantages—it is impossible for us to prevent our growing population from passing into an uninhabited country, where the power of the owners is not sufficient to keep them out. In they will go. We may pass laws heaping penalty upon penalty, but they will be of no avail to prevent our pioneers from forcing themselves into the country, unless efficiently resisted by the power in possession. Of this we have abundant proof from experience in our relations with the Indians. Many and severe laws have been passed to prevent intrusion upon them, with little effect. In the end, the only remedy has been found to be, to purchase their lands, and remove them to a greater distance. If such is the case with the Indians, where the population is more dense, and our means of preventing intrusion much greater, it would be vain to expect that we could prevent our people from penetrating into California, or that the government of Mexico would be able to prevent their doing so. Even before our present difficulties with Mexico, the process had begun. Under such circumstances, to make peace with Mexico without acquiring a considerable portion at least of this uninhabited region, would lay the foundation of new troubles and subject us to the hazard of further conflicts—a result equally undesirable to Mexico and ourselves. But it is not only in reference to a permanent peace with Mexico that it is desirable that this vast uninhabited region should pass into our possession. High considerations connected with civilization and commerce make it no less so. We alone can people it with an industrious and civilized race, which can develop its resources and add a new and extensive region to the domain of commerce and civilization. Left as it is, it must remain for generations an uninhabited and barren waste.

This brings me to the final consideration that the line should be such as to cover an extent, ample for the purpose of coercing a settlement, and in this respect, the one suggested leaves nothing to be desired.

But while I suggest this as a definite line, if a better cannot be found, it would be very far from my views to hold the country which it covers absolutely. My opinion is, that it ought to be held as the means of negotiation. We ought to say to Mexico, that such is our intention, and that if she is ready to negotiate, we are; and not only to negotiate, but to settle fairly, justly, and liberally, and with a view to a permanent peace between the two countries; and if, for that purpose the part held by us should be considered more than an indemnity, to pay liberally for the balance.

But in order to render the means of coercion more effectual, I would hold, not absolutely, but also subject to negotiation, the ports of Mexico now in our possession, and which we could retain without too great a sacrifice of men

and money. These ports I would open to the commerce of all countries, subject to a rate of duty that would barely cover the expense of maintaining the line.

I have now fully shown that we may certainly maintain this line, and thereby accomplish all the objects for which the war was declared, and that with little or no sacrifice of men or money, or without hazard or loss of reputation; and I may add, with a fair prospect of laying a foundation for a permanent peace between us and Mexico, on the final settlement of the differences between us. What would be its fruits? A speedy reduction of a large portion of the expenses of the war, by discharging the whole of the volunteers as soon as a defensive position is taken, which may be in the course of a few months. It would make a saving of fifteen or twenty millions of dollars during the year; the necessity for additional taxes would be avoided; credit would be immediately restored; a considerable portion of the loan might be dispensed with; and last, though not least, a measure which many of us on this side the chamber have so much at heart, I mean that of free trade, would be rescued from great and impending danger. The short experience we have had of its operation holds out the prospect of almost unbounded prosperity to the country; not so much in consequence of the reduction of our own duties, as that made by Great Britain, which has opened her ample market for grain and other provisions of every description.

But it may be objected to the policy, that, with all its benefits, it would not bring peace. I think otherwise. What reason would Mexico have for holding out? None that I can perceive. On the contrary, she would see that we had undertaken to do what we could certainly perform—what our strength was abundantly adequate to go through with, without hazard or difficulty—she would also see that she had everything to lose and nothing to gain by holding out, and that if she obstinately persisted in refusing to treat, she might lose the territory covered by our line, without compensation, instead of being liberally paid for its value beyond full indemnity for our claims against her.

But there are other and powerful reasons which would induce her to come to terms. By assuming a defensive position, and ceasing to push offensive operations against her, the feelings of the people of Mexico would in a short time undergo a great change. They now regard the war as a war between races and religions, and thus regarding it, they are under the excitement of the strongest and the profoundest feelings of our nature. Every nerve is braced, and every arm strengthened in resistance to us. The resolution of the whole country is to oppose us to the utmost of their power and resources. A defensive attitude on our part would tend powerfully to abate these deeply excited feelings. The war would no longer be regarded as a war of races and religions. They would no longer dread the extinction of one or the other. The ordinary every-day business of life would gradually absorb their attention. Add to this the effect which the possession of their ports would have upon their finances, by cutting off the most prolific branch of their revenue, and there would seem to be fair grounds for believing that, within a short period, much shorter probably than could be effected by offensive operations, she would be ready to negotiate and settle the differences between the two countries by a permanent peace. But, suppose in all this I am mistaken, and that Mexico will persist in holding out with her characteristic obstinacy, what would be the re-

sult? We will have war without expense or hazard—a war partaking much more of the character of peace than of war, so far as we are concerned. Our population would flow into the territory covered by our defensive line, and enable us to reduce the military establishment which would be necessary in the first instance. Above all it will once again place us on *terra firma*, and enable us to see beyond the dark curtain which is now suspended between us and the future.

I have now stated the reasons why I am in favor of taking a defensive position. I have, I trust, shown that we can by it bring the war to a successful termination, with little or no sacrifice of men and money, and without hazard of any description whatever. It remains to be shown, what are the grounds of my opposition to the continuance of an offensive war, and if I am not greatly mistaken, they are as strong as can well be conceived. I am opposed to it, for the very reverse reasons to those I have stated. There is no certainty, in the first place, that it will bring the war to a successful termination; and in the next, if it should, it would be at a vast expense of men and money, and with no inconsiderable hazard of disastrous consequences, and loss of national reputation.

In order to understand fully and correctly the force of the objection to continuing and pushing offensive operations, it is indispensable that the object *intended* to be effected should be distinctly and clearly perceived, for until that is understood, we can form no decisive opinion in reference to it; and here I premise, that its object is not conquest, or the acquisition of territory, for that is expressly disavowed. I further premise, that it is not to acquire additional means of indemnity, for I have already shown that we have ample means now in our hands to effect that purpose. If then it is for neither the one nor the other, I ask what is its object? But one answer is given; to obtain peace; or to use the language most commonly employed, to conquer peace. But how is peace to be obtained? It can only be by treaty. War may be made by one nation, but peace can only be made by two. The object then is to obtain a treaty; but what treaty, one that will suit Mexico? That can be obtained at any time. No, the treaty which is wanted is one that will suit us; but how can that be effected, but by compelling Mexico, by force of our arms, and *at our dictation*, to agree to such terms as we may dictate; and what could these terms be, but to secure all the objects for which the war was declared; that is, as has been shown, to establish the Rio Del Norte as our western boundary, and to obtain ample territory as the only means of our indemnity?

The intention, then, is to compel Mexico to acknowledge that to be ours which we now hold, and can, as I have already shown, easily hold, without her consent. This is all—more or less cannot be made of it. But how is Mexico to be compelled to sign such a treaty. We are informed that, for that purpose, the intention, in the first place, is to take Vera Cruz, and the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa, and then to march to the city of Mexico, and there to dictate the treaty. Now, with this object in view, I ask the Senate, is it worth while to pursue a vigorous war to compel Mexico to acknowledge that to be ours, which we hold, and can easily hold, against her consent. Is it worth while, even if we were perfectly certain of complete success by taking Vera Cruz and marching to Mexico, and there dictating a treaty at the end of this campaign? What would be the sacrifice, in effecting this, of men and money? The army authorised to be raised is about seventy thou-

sand men, and the expense of the campaign may be put at thirty millions of dollars. It will probably exceed it by several millions, but I desire to be moderate. Suppose the active force in the field be 50,000 men, what then will be your sacrifice under this supposition? the loss of thirty millions of dollars. And what the sacrifice of life will be, may be judged of by looking at the past. One third-must be put down as certain to perish, not by the sword only, but by disease. Sixteen thousand lives then must be sacrificed. Now, I put it home to you Senators. Is it worth while to make this immense sacrifice of money and men for the mere purpose of obtaining the consent of Mexico to hold what we can so easily hold in despite of her? I put a graver question. I appeal to the conscience of every Senator who hears me, can you as a Christian, justify giving a vote that would lead to such results? Nay, is there one of you, who would give thirty millions of dollars, and sacrifice the lives of sixteen thousand of our people, for the two Californias and New Mexico? I answer for you, there is not one; and yet we propose to pursue a war, which, if terminated in a single campaign, and most fortunately, would lead to these sacrifices.

But is there any certainty our forces would reach Mexico by the end of this campaign; or if they did that a treaty could be dictated? These are the questions that next demand our serious consideration.

An offensive war, such as we propose to carry on, looks as a possible event ultimately to subduing the country. Viewing it in that aspect, the war is but barely commenced. It is true we have acquired two-thirds of the territory of Mexico, but let it be remembered, these two-thirds are adjacent to us; let it also be remembered that it is sparsely populated. To give a vivid conception of its extent, the portion of Mexico held by us is almost 100,000 square miles more than the whole extent of the magnificent valley of the Mississippi, embracing the entire region between the Alleghany and Rocky Mountains. But although such is the immense extent of the territory, there are but six or seven hundred thousand inhabitants scattered over its surface.

It is this adjacent country, thus sparsely inhabited, which we have overrun, and now hold by military occupation. We have met, in conquering it, but little resistance, except from the regular army of Mexico, and as yet have gained in reality but little in a military point of view. Instead of conciliating the inhabitants they are reported to be more hostile than ever, and not an inconsiderable portion of our army will be required to hold and defend the country we occupy. As yet we have scarcely approached Mexico proper, consisting of the elevated plain on which the City of Mexico stands, and the hot regions extending on the east, along the Gulf of Mexico to Yucatan, and along the borders of the Pacific and the Gulf of California, on the west. Within these comparatively narrow limits, consisting of one-third of all Mexico, there is at least seven millions of people, fully ten times as many as the portion of Mexico we occupy. Here, too, is the seat of her wealth, and power, and civilization. The character of the country, and its climate, present formidable obstacles to an invading army. The approaches to the table land are few, passing through narrow defiles, and up steep acclivities, and the region itself is mountainous and rough in the extreme. It may be compared, in a military point of view to Mount Atlas, in Africa, or the Caucasus, in Europe. To this may be added a scanty supply of food for men, and forage for horses, of an invading army. The climate of the hot regions, both

on the Pacific and on the Gulf, is extremely sickly, especially that of the Gulf, to which our military operations in reference to the City of Mexico will be directed. Perhaps there is none on earth more so. It may be said to be the native home of the yellow fever, one of the most terrific of diseases. It prevails during eight months every year, and not unfrequently during ten months; and what adds to the difficulty in the way of an invading army, is the prevalence of sudden and violent storms, during the period of the year when the fever does not prevail. April itself is a sickly month, and March doubtful. We are now near the middle of February, and may have in the field force sufficient to take Vera Cruz; but I appeal to all sides, have we force enough, or can we have force enough in time to avoid the vomita, and march to the City of Mexico during this campaign? I will not say we have not, but I say with confidence that there is no certainty that we have or will have sufficient for such an enterprise.

But if we fail to reach the city this campaign, what will be its effects? We shall be worse off than we now are; a year will be lost; Mexico will be encouraged and we discouraged; she will add to her fortifications and defences, and increase her supplies of arms, in which she is now especially deficient.

But suppose we should be so fortunate as to be able to reach the City of Mexico? Is there any certainty that we should be able to dictate a treaty such as we desire? With whom have we to deal? A race of people renowned above all others for their obstinacy, and the pertinacity of resistance—a people whose hereditary pride is, that they rescued their country when overrun by the Moors, after a war of seven or eight centuries—a people who for eighty years waged war for the maintenance of their dominion over the Low Countries—a people who, for twenty years carried on the war against her own colonies, before they would recognize their independence. Such are the people with whom we are contending, and is it certain that such a people will be compelled by our occupying the City of Mexico, to yield to our terms? We must remember that the city is not to Mexico what Paris is to France; on the contrary, all her internal struggles, with almost no exception, prove that the City of Mexico, in a military point of view, has very little control over the country.

But, if there be no certainty either that we can reach Mexico, or reaching it, can compel her to yield to our terms, we may have another campaign before the war can be concluded, by what is called vigorous measures; and here the question presents itself, shall we have the means—can we raise the men and money to carry on the third campaign? Remember, it must be much more costly, and require a greater force than what is required for the approaching campaign. It will be carried on at a greater distance from us, and every step as we advance will require a larger detached force to occupy and cover our rear. Bear in mind also, that it will be of a different character from either the past or the approaching campaign; for if we conquer the city without obtaining peace, one of two results will follow, her government will withdraw or be dispersed, and we shall, in either case, be compelled to subdue and hold the country in military subjection. In either case, we shall have a guerrilla war, such as now exists between France and the Arabs in Africa, and between Russia and the Circassians in the Caucasus. Shall we be able to raise the men and the revenue which will be required to carry on the extensive military operations incident to such a war? Can you rely up-

on raising volunteers? Will not the first flush of feeling which accompany the commencement of a war, and which leads to the spirit of volunteering, expire by the commencement of the third campaign? Is it not probable, that the many volunteers who will return with broken constitutions—who went for glory, but return with shattered health—will greatly discourage the ardor of volunteering, strong as the impulse is in the breasts of our young and patriotic countrymen. The probability is, that we must mainly rely for men on the ordinary process of recruiting; and can we certainly calculate in that way to raise fifteen or twenty thousand men for the third campaign, for that number at least will be required?

But, suppose this surmounted, a far more difficult question presents itself; can you raise the ways and means? The resources from treasury notes will have been exhausted, and we shall have to resort to loans and taxes as our only means. Can you borrow a sufficient amount to meet the demands of the campaign, probably not less than twenty-five or thirty millions of dollars, but at an enormous rate of interest? Can you impose taxes to a great amount? On what will you lay them? On imports? The duties on them may be increased, but to no great amount; additional duties on many of the articles would diminish instead of increasing the revenue? Will you lay direct or internal taxes? The resources of the country are great, beyond almost any other, but there are two circumstances which will interpose to prevent their being reached. The first is, that many of the States are deeply in debt, and have imposed very onerous taxes to meet their own obligations. Can you impose additional taxes without greatly overburdening the people of those States. Remember, that by the constitution, all taxes must be uniform throughout the United States, and of course, what is imposed upon one must be equally imposed on the other. Will the people of the indebted States bear additional taxes? Will Pennsylvania, with forty millions already on her shoulders? Will the imposition not compel her and other of the indebted States to suspend the payment of interest on their debts? Will it not prevent Maryland, Indiana, and other States deeply in debt, from the resumption of the payment of interest on theirs? Will not the effect be to widen the sphere of repudiation, so as to comprehend most of the indebted States. Is there the slightest chance with this prospect before us, that internal taxes to any considerable amount will be imposed by Congress for the further prosecution of an offensive war? Can any one answer in the affirmative, who has witnessed the strong indisposition to impose additional taxes at the present session.

But suppose this difficulty interposed by the indebtedness of many of the States to be removed? There is another still remaining, not less formidable. Is there sufficient unanimity and zeal in favor of the war to warrant the belief that Congress would impose internal taxes to carry on offensive operations? Does this session furnish any evidence of any such zeal or unanimity? On the contrary, does it not furnish ample evidence that there is great division and want of zeal in reference to the war? We would be blind not to see that a very large portion of the people honestly believe that the war might and ought to have been avoided; that it was commenced by the Executive without the sanction of Congress or the Constitution, and that it is highly inexpedient and injurious. What my opinions are on all these points, I would be glad to explain on a suitable occasion; but I do not regard this to be the proper one, to mingle my own private views and sentiments in ref-

erence to the causes of the war, and the manner in which it was commenced, with the deeply important subject under consideration—how the war shall be conducted, so as to terminate it most favorably to the country.

But suppose all these difficulties to be removed, there remains another still deeper and more alarming to be met—one touching the very foundation of our Union; how shall the territory be disposed of if any should be acquired? Shall it be for the benefit of one part of the Union to the exclusion of the other? We are told, and I fear that appearances justify it, that all parties in the non-slaveholding States are united in the determination that they shall have the exclusive benefit and monopoly—that such provisions shall be made by treaty or law, as to exclude all who hold slaves in the South from emigrating with their property into the acquired country. If the non-slaveholding States having no other interest but an aversion to our domestic institutions, (for such is slavery as it exists in the South,) if, I repeat, they can come to the conclusion, to exclude the South from all benefit in the acquired territory, with no other interest but that, I turn to their representatives on this floor and ask them, what they suppose must the feeling of the slaveholding States, to whom this question is one of safety and not of mere policy, to be deprived of their rights, and their perfect equality secured by the Constitution, and to be assailed in their most vulnerable point? Be assured, if there be stern determination on one side to exclude us, there will be determination still sterner on ours, not to be excluded.

Now if I may judge from what has been declared on this floor, from what I hear on all sides, the members from the non-slaveholding States, if they were sure that slavery would not be excluded from the acquired territory, would be decidedly opposed to what they called a vigorous prosecution of the war, or the acquisition of a single foot of territory; can they then believe that the members of the slaveholding States, on the opposite supposition, would not be equally opposed to the further prosecution of the war and the acquisition of territory? And how can this war be vigorously carried on for a third campaign, with this known pointed division of opinion between these two great portions of the Union as to the ultimate disposition to be made of the territory to be acquired.

But I will suppose, that all these difficulties are surmounted—that men and money may be had, and that unanimity and zeal existed on all points—the question then presents itself, can you, should you not obtain peace in the city of Mexico,—can you bring this war to a successful termination by subduing the country? Can you certainly—not probably? That is the question. Look at the history of such wars carried on by powerful and highly civilized nations against others poor and less civilized, in mountainous regions like Mexico—the wars of Russia against the Caucasians, and the war of France against the Arabs in Algeria—and take warning. In both there has been powerful and effective resistance against the best troops in Europe, under the lead of their most experienced Generals. And are we to expect to subdue the country without encountering like difficulties? Are you certain that you will not, and that the war will be brought to a termination at the end of the third campaign; that you can effect in a single campaign what has cost France already in Algeria, sixteen—and has cost Russia in the Caucasus, I know not how many? And it may be added, which cost us against a paltry band of Indians in Florida, five campaigns and thirty millions of dollars? Well then, if we are not certain; this war may go on,

if offensive operations are to be continued, to the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and I know not what number of campaigns. I say may, for the mere possibility, ought to be sufficient to deter a wise people from a policy which would lead to such disastrous results, as would a long and protracted war, in attempting to subdue Mexico, and where especially so little is to be gained. What can we gain, if success should finally crown our efforts by subduing the country? What would we do with it? Shall we annex the States of Mexico to our Union? Can we incorporate a people so dissimilar from us in every respect—so little qualified for free and popular government—without certain destruction to our political institutions? Or can we bring into our Union eight millions of people all professing one religion—and all concentrated under a powerful and wealthy priesthood, without subjecting the country to the most violent religious conflict, and bringing the government in the end under control of a single sect? No, These difficulties are insurmountable. The question then recurs, what shall we do with the country? Shall we hold it as a subject province? Consequences not less fatal will result from this disposition of it. It would end in the loss of liberty, as it ever has, where free States undertake to hold in subjection extended provinces. The process would be short and easy. It would be followed by enormous patronage, and that again by a corresponding increase of the power and influence of the Executive, and end finally in despotism, by making that department absolute. Such would be the inevitable results, if you should undertake either to incorporate them into the Union, or to hold them as subject provinces, unless indeed the stern conflict between the slave-holding and non-slave-holding States, as to the disposition to be made of the territory, should give a different turn to the conquest, and terminate the whole in a disruption of the Union.

But if the dread of these results should determine us to abandon, after we had subdued it, what we shall acquire by a further prosecution of the war—as we certainly would, if we acted wisely—how strongly it would illustrate the folly of what is called a vigorous prosecution of the war. It would, on that supposition, leave us, as far as the acquisition of territory is concerned, after all our mighty sacrifices and the hazards and disasters to which we may be exposed, where we now stand, and where we may stand and maintain ourselves with perfect certainty, with little or no sacrifice of men and money, and without any hazard of disastrous consequences.

We would be fortunate, among these sacrifices, to escape without an appalling loss of human life, and an immense burden in the shape of a public debt, to be followed by a permanent and irretrievable loss of free trade, for generations to come; to say nothing of the disastrous consequences which the vastly increased patronage of the Government may have upon our free institutions, and the loss of reputation and standing as a government and a people, should we, after putting forth all our efforts to subdue the country in a vigorous war, be baffled in the attempt.

When I said there was a mysterious connection between the fate of our country and that of Mexico, I had reference to the great fact that we stood in such relation to her that we could make no disposition of Mexico, as a subject or conquered nation, that would not prove disastrous to us; nor could we conquer and subdue her without great sacrifice and injurious effects to our institutions.

Hence my opinion, already expressed, that it is our true policy not to weaken nor humble her, but to desire to see her under a safe and stable government, and capable of sustaining all the relations which ought to exist between independent nations. Situated as the two countries are to each other, my conviction is deep, that the prosperity of each, and the maintenance of free and popular institutions on the part of both, depend greatly upon our pursuing towards her a just and liberal course of policy. In this view I hold this war to have been a great departure from our true line of policy, and therefore, deeply to be deplored. Should we be so unfortunate now as to commit the error of determining to prosecute offensive operations vigorously, instead of taking a defensive position, we shall take a step which I fear we shall long have to rue. Thus thinking, I regard it a paramount question—party is nothing to it; but, let me say to whatever party may advise it, that they stake their fate upon a cast which may end in their overthrow and ruin, to say nothing of the higher consideration of disasters to the country, on which I have so fully dwelt.

There is but one way of escape, as far as I am capable of seeing, and that I have suggested. I might say much more to enforce its adoption, but forbear consuming the further time of the Senate. The way I have suggested is not the result of recent reflection, for I have long looked upon the subject with intense interest. Nor is it the first time I have suggested it in my place. During the last session, in a discussion while our doors were closed, on the bill appropriating two millions of dollars for a like object, I suggested, but more briefly, the same plan of policy as the most advisable course, and the only one, as far as I could see, likely soon to bring the war to a certain and successful termination.

With a few observations in reference to myself, I shall close my remarks. I shall feel myself compelled, as the Senate will readily perceive from what I have said, to vote against the amendment of the Senator from Michigan. In reference to that amendment and the bill itself, I reserve an expression of opinion until I see further developments, both as to the course of policy intended to be pursued in conducting the war, and the great domestic question to which I have alluded. My vote may depend upon developments as to both.