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CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. WEDNESDAY, January 2.

DEBATE on Mr. STEELE'S MOTION for the REDUCTION of the MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT of the UNITED STATES.

In Committee of the Whole. Mr. WHITE in the Chair.

Mr. Wadsworth first noticed Mr. Steele's statements and calculations .-These he said, were erroneous, and even if correct, the inferences the gentleman had drawn from them, did not appear to him just. He was surprised the gentle-man should so positively have pledged himself for their accuracy, when they were so very far from deserving that character. As the statements of Mr. Steele had been published to the world he tho't it right to state in what they are errone-

ous.

The great object of that gentleman in offering his calculations to the House, was to shew a prodigious progressive encrease in the expences of the war department, since the establishment of the new government. For this purpose he had compared what he stated as the appropriations of the years 1700, 1701, and ations of the years 1790, 1791, and 1792, with one another, and with the fum now called for from that department for the year 1793.

Mr. Wadfworth proceeded to shew the inaccuracy of the gentleman in this at-tempt, by the following statement.

Mr. Steele stated, that for 1790, the

department amounted to	ter-master'
	Dollars
Whereas the fum appropri-	
ated was 20,000	
Omitted by Mr. Steele For the hospital in the fame year, Mr. Steele	5,000
ftates 1.000	
Sum actually appropriated 1,250	
Omitted For contingencies in the	250
fame year, Mr. Steele	
states 3,000	
Snm actually appropriated 3,750	
Omitted	750
Pay, fubfiftence and cloathing for 1790, Mr. Steele states 126,020 Sum actually app. 147,100.	8
Omitted	21,080. 8
Total omissions for 1790	27,080. 8
-	
In the year 1791.	
Mr.Steele states the Ouar-	
Sum really appropriated 75,000	
Omitted	50,000
The hospital department 1,635.20	
Really appropriated 5,635.20	

5,000

158,475.80

331,788.20

25,000

173,312.40

252,312.40

Contingencies at Appropriated

Omitted 'ay, fublishence, and cloathing, at ppropriated

Omitted

Total omiffions

In the year	r 1792	N. Carlo
Mr. Steele ftates the Qu		no contract of
termaster's deprt. at	50,000	
Sum really appropriated	1 120,000	
	-	
Omitted		70,000
Hospital department at	6,000	
Really appropriated	15,000	
Omitted		9,000
Ordnance department at		
Appropriated	28,704.64	
0		
Omitted		21,500
Contingencies at	20,000	
Appropriated	50,000	Mr.
0-1-1	100000000000000000000000000000000000000	- Subbis
Omitted		30,000
Pay, Subfiftence, and		
cloathing	270,374.70	
Appropriated	707 405 42	THE VALUE OF THE PARTY OF THE P

Omitted 437,030.72 Total omissions for 1792 Dolls. 567,530.72

From the foregoing, the inaccuracy of Mr. Steele's statements, and of the calculations founded on them, were evident. The prodigious rapid encrease of the war department expences did not appear, and the gentleman's faving plan, founded on the difference of the appropriation for 1792, and the sum estimated for 1793, proved very trifling indeed, amounting

to a few thousands only.

Mr. Wadsworth faid he did not positively pledge himself for the absolute ac-curacy of his statements, but if there were errors in them he ventured to say they were but trifling.

He next took notice of Mr. Steele's arguments relative to the ordnance department. From what had been faid by that gentleman on this he truly thought, as he had expressed it, that the business bore a ludicrous appearance. but on further enquiry, by looking over an account of the expenditures of the war department, it appeared that the large sums appropriated for the ordnance department, far from being expended in the purchase of cannon, not one shilling had gone to that use, it was all for repairs to arms, &c. The state-ment of the gentlemen in this particular he could not conceive confistent with can-

As the gentleman from N. C. rested his affertion of abuses in the war department, on the statements he had produced, these affections, he conceived, he sufficiently answered, by shewing the statements mis-

Mr. Wadsworth referred to parts of the Secretary at war's reports to flew that that officer had been in favour of conciliatory, and averse to hostile measures with the Indians, to another part to show his opinion where and how militia were effec-

He next turned to the causes of the war. The establishment of a war department was, in his opinion, by no means, as had been suggested, the cause of the Indian war, but rather the effect. The war existed before the establishment of the prefent government, it is an inheritance from the old confederation and fo is the war department. The history of its origin and progress was in record and might be traced by a reference to the refolves of congress. The war existed in 1784. A communication received fome years back from the executive of Georgia would e-vince its existence and shew its violence. The executive complained that the fron-tier was too thinly fettled, and some counties broken up, and ordered out 3000 men to protect it,—fince that even the city of Savannah was, he had heard, fo feriously threatened, that the citizens were obliged to keep guard in it-and this before the present war system.

Neither could the present mode of carrying on the war be called the creature of the war department. It was rather the Prefident's war, -or the war indeed of the house, the war of the legislature : the plan was a good one as the experience of the President in these wars made him a proper judge; it had his approbation and

a rentioned feveral inflances of the cruelty of the whites towards the Indians, he also stated the information of Judge Innis, of the depredations of the Indians: the fingle district of Kentucky had lost from 1783 to 1790, 1500 men, women, and children, killed and taken, with 2000 horses and other property, amounting to at least 50,000 dollars, and to these he attributed the war in which we were involved. The history of the settlement of Kentucky, if recurred to, would afford a feries of causes of Indian hostilities. Two hundred persons had annually fallen facrifices to the Indians in this district.

He next proceeded to examine the opinion advanced of the fuperiority of militia over regular forces in an Indian war. He recurred to history to disprove the opinion. So early as the year after Braddock's defeat, he said, Virginia attempted to protect itself against the incursions of the Indiese by establishing a number of posts a-long their frontier. The Indians, notwithstanding, penetrated the frontier, came 60 miles within it, and drove the inhabitants as far as Winchester. In the war which succeeded the peace of '62, garri-fons, 14 or 15 in number, were establish-ed, to afford the wished for protection; they were all captured by the Indians, 3 or 4 excepted. The Pennfylvania frontier had been more than once penetrated notwithstanding the refistance of the militia. He next cited the instance of Col. Bouquet's fuccess against the Indians with only two regiments of regular troops, which had even been much weakened by a long campaign in the West-Indies .-These two regiments marched into the Indian country. At first finding no sup-port on the frontier, and when arriving at Carlifle where he expected to be aided by stores, troops, &c. he found a general panic had taken possession of the frontier—the country of Cumberland, through which he was to pass deserted—the roads covered with distressed families; but here having got together a few pack horses he stood in need of, he still advanced with the few troops under his command, and gave the Indians battle. The combat lasted from one o'clock till night, was renewed the next morning, continued thro' the day, and ended with the total rout & destruction of the Indian army. He then stationed his force in a commanding fort, and fo effectually restored peace to the frontier, and spirit to the inhabitants, that they returned to their homes, which they had abandoned and lent their affiftance against the foe the next campaign. With the militia of Virginia and Pennfylvania he entered the heart of the enemie's country, and forced the Indians to fubmission. He cited another instance of the fuccess of Indians against militia. The engagement between 800 militia, under Gen Herkemer, and 700 Indians, and others, where a total overthrow was given to the militia.

The first check the troops of the United States met with during the operation of the present war system he adverted to, in the expedition under Gen. Harmar. In that instance the want of vigour in the militia is acknowledged by their own commander; and as to the expedition under Gen. St. Clair, the regulars were few and not to be named when compared with the number of the militia. The advanced guard, in this action, composed entirely of thefe, not only run off without firing, but even threw away their guns and perhaps their coats too, which circumstance may account for the appellation of coatmen, given to our men by the Indians.

He next took notice of a late instance, the engagement between Major Adair, commanding a party of militia, and fome Indians. He expressed his good opinion of that officer, but the conduct of his men he wished to bring to view; and this he evinced from the commander's own letter wherein he fays, "that the Indians obtained their end, the triumph is theirs," and in another place, "I will candidly conferences they retreated the Indians, I believe in was more the effect of change than necessity."

Mr. Wadsworth then combated the opinion advanced, that Indian expeditions by militia, were less expensive than by regular troops; after mentioning several sacts to the contrary, he instanced General Clark's western expedition which had cost, he was not prepared to say how much, but immense sums. He appealed to gentlemen who had commanded militia and continentals in the late war to declare which appeared to them the most efficient troops, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Parker) who had spoken in favour of the resolution before the house, he said, in one instance in the late war, if he recollected right, had no great reason to boost of his companions. He mentioned, as encreasing the expence, the wast of stores, inseparable from expeditions with militia, as well as walle of lives. One regiment of militia will destroy, in the same space of time more than a Brigade of regular troops, as it is impossible to introduce discipline among

The fettlement of Kentucky, he faid, which had been protected by militia, had cost more blood than the whole American war, he believed. If the number of lives lost in that undertaking could be computed it would make the reflecting shudder.

Something had been faid of the tardy nature of military operations with regular troops, and it had been remarked, that an expedition this year had not been effected. He attributed this to the flowness of the recruiting fervice, owing to the clamour raifed against the war by those opposed to the present system. Besides, the government had been blamed for not shewing pacific dispositions towards the Indians, and had withheld the war, to procure peace by treaty-a vain hope,-But several attempts had been made on our part to procure peace. The faate of Harding, and others, were melanhooly evidences of this truth : But the certainty was, as it appeared to him, that the Indians must be forced to make peace, they would not be quiet of choice.

A gentleman from Virginia had objected to a respectable military establishment, because it would produce an increase of military among the British and Spaniards, to the North and South of us.—This was no reason with him, why the United States should not make themselves respectable in the eyes of the Indians.

Some years fince, they told us of their confederacy, and to think of no feparate treaties—to keep on our fide of the Ohio. We now flatter ourselves with peace, because they have told us they will treatbut in what langunge, and by whom dictated, I am forbid to tell, the doors were

The same gentleman had also mentioned those enlitting in our fervice as worthless characters: the sweepings of the streets, &c. They appeared to him as respectable, he said, as the generality of those who turned out in the American

He made some further observations on the comparative excellence of regulars and militia, and brought fome further instan-

ces into view in support of his opinion.

Abuses, it had been intimated, had crept into our army; no army could be totally free from abuses, he observed, and he gave it as his opinion, that the army of the United States was as free from them as most, especially when its distance from the feat of government was confidered.

He concluded by a recapitulation of the fentiments he had expressed, and which should influence him to vote against the motion. Especially as the system had, been adopted after mature confideration. To change it now would argue that when it was first adopted, it was done with unbecoming halte, or shew a great instability. The Indians would laugh at us as inconfistent, and might be induced [See last page.]