

Article Title: Spanish Agressions. From the New York Morning Chronicle. Publication of a memorial by various Philadelphia merchants to the government, saying Spain preyed upon their shipping, luring them into colonial ports and then seizing vessels.

Author:

Published in: New England Palladium

Place of Publication: Boston, MA

Publication Date: 10/2/1804

Tuesday, October 2, 1804.

Spanish Agressions.

FROM THE N.Y. MORNING CHRONICLE.

At the meeting of the sufferers by Spanish proceedings, held at the Coffee-house, Philadelphia, by advertisement, Thursday Sept. 20, Thomas Fitzsimons; William Davy, and Robert E. Griffith, were appointed a committee to frame a Memorial to government, and pursue such other steps as may conduce to the object of obtaining redress and compensation, and to them those who have not rendered statements of their losses, were requested to furnish the same.

A draft of a memorial to government on the subject was offered to the meeting by one of the sufferers, of which the following is a copy, the original was referred to the committee, who it is presumed will report without delay.

MEMORIAL

That you memorialists, with a considerable number of their fellow citizens, by various modes of aggression and depredation by Spanish subjects, under the sanction, connivance or the authority of the government, and by the government and subordinate governments of his catholic majesty, have been deprived of their property, suffered insult, injury, waste and cruelty; feelingly alive to those privations, and those wrongs, representations were made by some to the government of the United States, while others vented their sufferings in the public prints; the records of which bear ample testimony to the numerous and severe afflictions of the citizens of the United States from those sources.

That during the continuance of those hostilities, in which Spain was a party and her own maritime commerce annihilated, her policy dictated, and her colonial governments adopted a system different from the usual routine of Spanish traffic. The vessels of the U. States were invited and permitted, our merchants were lured and engaged to convey the perishing produce of those colonies to the mother country and elsewhere. Many of our most valuable vessels were engaged for that purpose, they arrived in their colonies and were admitted, but no sooner was peace known to have occurred, than the former rigid system of Spain was renewed, their own licenses abrogated, and those vessels, their officers and seamen, subjected to all the vexatious proceedings of power, faithlessness and cruelty, by which many of your memorialists are reduced from affluence to want, and rendered unable to pay their just debts.

Informed of these violences your memorialists confided in the wisdom and energy of their government to obtain them redress and compensation, considering themselves entitled to protection while engaged in fair and honest commerce under the flag of the United States, which your memorialists learned that the government respectfully declare they have not transgressed.

With entire satisfaction, therefore, your memorialists learned that the government of the United States were engaged in negociations for the purpose, but they conceive themselves called upon to express their corresponding disappointment on the publication of the treaty of Madrid, of the 11th August, 1802, which referred so much to interpretation, so much to chance? The adjustment of claims by commissioners your memorialists cannot but approve, but the duties of commissioners it is conceived should be chiefly confined to the to the decision of items and amount of demands, the justice of claims as to principles being first expressly recognized by treaty with respectful submission, your

memorialists beg leave to suggest on this occasion, that the United States render justice to all other nations and people, that equity requires, and the relations existing with the citizens call upon the government to demand for them a compensation for captures made by privateers whether under French or Spanish colours, if fitted out or condemned in any Spanish port, in like manners as the United States have done in a similar case ; for all American property seized in any Spanish colony which had been permitted to be imported therein by the government of the colony for all detentions of American vessels in Spanish ports or colonies, and freights and demurrages lost by any interference or prohibition of the colonial or local government ; for all impressments of American citizens under any unjust pretence whatsoever.

That your memorialists in common with their governments and fellow citizens feel their force, and confess the fact and sincerity of the declaration, that " no nation can too highly prize the value and preservation of peace, but that one object should be still dearer to us our national independence," that heavily as your memorialists have felt the hand which has invaded it, they rely on the wisdom and firmness of the government of the U. States to obtain them adequate redress, so long and so cruelly delayed, pledging themselves that if negotiations fail for that purpose , they will, with their lives and fortunes, support whatever measures the government in the United States may adopt, to maintain its honor, independence and future security, and to obtain satisfaction and suitable redress for those aggravated wrongs.