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R E P O R T S

OF

C O M M I T T E E S,

ON THE

P E T I T I O N S

OF SUNDRY

R E F U G E E S

FROM

Canada and Nova-Scotia.

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12th December 1796,

Committed to a committee of the whole House, on  
Thursday next.

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PUBLISHED by ORDER of the HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES.

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19th February 1793,  
Referred to a committee of the whole House, on Saturday next.

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28th January 1796,  
Referred to Mr. Gilman,  
Mr. Hathorn, and  
Mr. Preston.

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15th February 1796,  
Reported on.

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17th February, 1796,  
Committed to a committee of the whole House, on Monday next.

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REPORT on the petition of John Blake, Joseph Bindon, John D. Mercier and Benjamin Thompson, Canadian refugees.

*The COMMITTEE to whom was referred the petition of John Blake, Joseph Bindon, John D. Mercier and Benjamin Thompson, in behalf of themselves and others, Canadian refugees,*

REPORT—

**T**HAT the prayer of the petitioners is, that compensation be made to them for their loss of property and sufferings in the cause of American liberty.

In detailing the reasons in justification and support of their application, they alledge that, “in consequence of their espousal of the American cause, they were driven to the necessity of flying from Canada, and of taking refuge within these United States, and that finding themselves at the close of the late American war, in very distressed circumstances, especially as they seemed precluded from all hope of returning to Canada, to recover their property and effects, no notice having been taken of their interests, nor any provision made for them in the treaties of peace between the United States and Great-

Britain, they did, in behalf of themselves and others, refugees from Canada, in the month of April 1783, present a memorial to Congress, praying that honorable body to take their unhappy case into consideration, and to grant them such relief as should be deemed just and proper.—That accordingly, on the 23d of the same month, Congress were pleased to pass several resolves in their favour, to which they beg to refer, and which they were then given to understand, fully included themselves and their fellow-sufferers.—That, with unlimited faith in the justice of Congress, and satisfied with the assurances given to them by the resolves before referred to, they have patiently waited the convenience of the public to fulfil the promised relief, 'till the present day." The resolutions of Congress of the 23d of April, are in the following words, viz.

"That the memorialists be informed that Congress retain a lively sense of the services the Canadian officers and men have rendered the United States, and that they are seriously disposed to reward them for their virtuous sufferings in the cause of liberty.

"That they be further informed, that whenever Congress can consistently make grants of land, they will reward, in this way, as far as may be consistent, the officers, men and other refugees from Canada."

These resolutions unequivocally acknowledge the meritorious services and sufferings of that description of men whose case is referred, and contain a promise that they shall be rewarded by grants of land, whenever it may consistently be done. Although there may not exist a doubt of the merit of those in whose favour the petition has been made, and of the justice of their claim upon the United States for the stipulated retribution, yet the resolutions above recited, and the petition itself, which directly refers to them, neither render it proper, nor indeed leave the committee at liberty to report in favour of a compensation in any other species of property than lands. Under this impression and restriction, the committee have sought for that kind of information which might as far as possible, enable them to form a

right judgment as to the number of acres, and the situation and value of the land which ought to be set apart for that purpose, or at least what value in specie should be established as the measure of the donation. In this enquiry, they confess that they have not received as full satisfaction as they had hoped for from the undertaking. Altho' estimates of the actual losses and sacrifices of some individuals have been made out and laid before the committee, they are however so few in number, and bear so small a proportion to the whole, that they afford no satisfactory rule by which a tolerably accurate decision may be made as to the aggregate of the losses sustained. From the best information which the committee have obtained, there appear to have been about 229 refugees from Canada (some with and others without families) 22 of whom are suggested to have been the principal sufferers, and the rest to be sufferers in a small degree. Of both descriptions, some, as has been suggested, and is believed, have been already compensated, either wholly or in part, and not a few returned to Canada, both before and since the peace, to possess their property or to pursue their business; neither the names nor numbers of whom have been exactly ascertained. It appears from returns, the originals of which are in the war office, that 292 men, women and children, were victualled at Albany and Fishkill, from the public stores in 1784, and that in the following year, rations were drawn for 93 only. It also appears from another voucher in the same office, that 205 were returned for, and entitled to lands in the state of New-York, pursuant to an act of the legislature thereof, of the 11th of May 1784. In this state of uncertainty, not only as to the extent of the losses or sufferings of the Canadian refugees, but as to the number of those who remain uncompensated, or whose compensation was inadequate, it is not easy for the committee to decide with satisfactory precision, what specie value the lands to be distributed among them, should bear; and still more difficult to ascertain the number of acres which

ought to be allotted to them, because this must altogether depend upon their goodness and situation. Having thus acknowledged the insufficiency of the materials upon which they are to found an important part of their report, they propose, with a diffidence which arises from that circumstance, the following resolutions, viz.

*Resolved*, That provision ought to be made by law, for donations of land to the Canadian refugees, in conformity with the resolutions of Congress, of the 23d of April 1783, promising the same.

*Resolved*, That the lands, so as aforesaid to be given, ought not to exceed in their specie value, at a reasonable estimate, the sum of                      dollars.

1st of April 1794,

Committed to a committee of the whole House, on Thursday next.

17th February 1796,

Committed to a committee of the whole House, on Monday next.

REPORT on the petitions of Thomas and Edward Faulkner, Simeon Chester, and William Lawrence, refugees from Nova-Scotia; and of Joseph Green, and others, refugees from Canada.

*The COMMITTEE to whom was referred the report of the Secretary of War, on the petitions of Thomas Faulkner, Edward Faulkner and Simeon Chester, refugees from the British province of Nova-Scotia; Joseph Green, Presque Trepagne, Augustine Trepagne, and Gregoire Trahan, Mary, the widow of Francois des Jardins, and Francois Rabutaille, refugees from the province of Canada;—and also, on the petition of William Lawrence, from the said province of Nova-Scotia,*

#### REPORT—

**T**HAT your committee have examined the resolution of Congress, of the 23d of April 1783, on the memorial of brigadier general Hazen, promising,

that " whenever Congress can consistently make grants of land, they will reward in this way, as far as may be consistent, the officers, men, and others, refugees from Canada," as recited by the Secretary in his report, but which does not apply to the petitioners from that province; who, as they set forth in their petition, do not claim as refugees, but for services rendered in Canada, by the orders of general Schuyler and col. Livingston, for which they say they were promised pay, and some a bounty in lands. From all the enquiry your committee could make, they cannot find, that those officers had any authority to promise a bounty in lands, to be paid by the United States to the petitioners; nor are there returns or vouchers filed, by which the pay claimed can be ascertained.

Your committee also find a resolution of Congress, of the 13th of April 1785, (which has been omitted by the Secretary) in the following words, viz. "*Resolved*, That Jonathan Eddy, and other refugees from Nova-Scotia, on account of their attachment to the interest of the United States, be recommended to the humanity and particular attention of the several states in which they respectively reside, and that they be informed, that whenever Congress can, consistently, make grants of land, they will reward, in this way, as far as may be consistent, such refugees from Nova-Scotia, 'as may be disposed to live in the western country.'"

That the petitioners, Thomas Faulkner, Edward Faulkner and Simeon Chester, were inserted in the list returned by the said Jonathan Eddy, as refugees from the British province of Nova-Scotia, and had abandoned their property there, on account of their attachment to the cause of America. That William Lawrence has produced sufficient proof, that he is also a refugee from the said province, and has abandoned his property there, from the same cause.

That in the ordinance passed by Congress, the 20th day of May 1785, it is ordained, " That three townships adjacent to lake Erie, be reserved, to be hereafter

disposed of by Congress, for the use of the officers, men and others, refugees from Canada, and the refugees from Nova-Scotia, who are or may be entitled to grants of land under resolutions of Congress now existing, or which may hereafter be made respecting them, and for such other purposes as Congress may hereafter direct."

From the exposed situation of those townships, a grant there, at present, would afford but little relief to the petitioners; but, from the best information the committee could obtain, the United States possess no lands adjacent to lake Erie, which they can now grant or dispose of.

On consideration whereof, your committee submit the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That the prayer of the petitioners Joseph Green and others, from Canada, praying a bounty in lands and other pay, for services rendered in the late war with Great-Britain, ought not to be granted.

*Resolved*, That a tract of land, not exceeding acres, be laid off north-west of the Ohio river, beginning at the mouth of the Great Miami, and extending down the Ohio, not exceeding three times the breadth in length, be immediately appropriated to compensate the refugees from the British provinces of Canada and Nova-Scotia, pursuant to the resolves of Congress of the 23d of April 1783, and the 13th of April 1785.

*Resolved*, That each refugee be entitled to five hundred acres of land.

*Resolved*, That the following conditions and restrictions ought to be observed, to entitle the applicants to a grant of lands:

1st. That the applicant shall make proof, before some court of record, of his actual residence in one of the provinces aforesaid, previous to the day of

2d. That he was compelled to abandon his residence aforesaid, in consequence of his attachment to the American cause.

3d. That all such applications be made and lodged with the Secretary for the department of war, within years.

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15th February 1796,

Ordered to lie on the table.

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17th February 1796,

Referred, together with the reports of the 19th February 1793, and the 1st of April 1794, to a committee of the whole House, on Monday next.

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**REPORT** on the report of a committee, made the 19th of February 1793, to whom was referred the petition of John Blake, Joseph Bindon, John D. Mercier and Benjamin Thompson, Canadian refugees.

*The COMMITTEE, to whom was referred the petition of sundry Canadian refugees, beg leave to present to the view of the House, the report of a committee to whom the said petition was referred, made February 19th 1793, which has not been decided on ; and, with a view to the preservation of consistency in the decisions of the House on subjects of a similar nature, and that equal justice may be extended to all who have claims against the government,*

**REPORT—**

**A**S their opinion, that the petition, with the papers accompanying it, should be referred to the Committee of Claims.