Anti-war Senator

WORTHINGTON left Chillicothe on December 29, 1810, and after traveling nine days on horseback through the rain, sleet, snow, and mud of winter, arrived in Washington on January 7. The next day he took his seat in the Senate. His second term, which extended until December, 1814, was to be overshadowed by the threat of war with England and by the conflict itself.

During this term, however, an important part of his work was concerned with internal affairs. He served almost continuously, most of the time as chairman, on the Committee on Public Lands. He had not been present a week before he made a motion for the appointment of a committee to investigate the measures necessary to provide for the sale of the public domain. As chairman of the Senate committee he helped secure the adoption of an act which provided for the sale of certain reserved sections of land. His committee pushed through another act which permitted a three-year extension of time for payment in default on lands purchased before 1808. The need for the bill illustrates the fact that the situation of the land buyer in the Old Northwest was still very bad; usually he was able to make only the first payment, depending on the sale of his produce to meet future ones. Since buyers were continually in trouble, the area's representatives were constantly petitioned for aid. The Ohio legislature and the Indiana territorial legislature often petitioned Congress for relief. Worthington was most attentive to these appeals, and did his best to get legislation for his constituents. At each session, new enactments were needed, and either he or Jeremiah Morrow, chairman of the House Committee on Public Lands, introduced bills to ease the land

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1 Annals, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., 169, 170, 182, 193, 198, 199, 2275. See also Annals, 11th Cong., 3rd Sess., 96, 107, 294, 329, 981, 1009.
2 See the Annals, ibid., 104, for the petition from the Ohio legislature presented by Worthington, January 28, 1811. For the Indiana Territory, see the Annals, 100, 672, and 12th Cong., 1st Sess., 332, 1493, 1513.
3 An example is the petition of Jacob Smith of Greene County, dated September 20, 1811, for inhabitants "between the great and little Mimmia . . . to have a law passed to give them a little longer to pay for their land. Many of them have paid three payments and some two . . . it must be considered grievous when the land with all the improvements may be sold for one fourth of the original purchase money." In WM.
buyers' difficulties. In July of 1812, Worthington and Morrow succeeded in having a bill enacted which amended the earlier act so that the original purchaser of lands might reenter them even though they had reverted to the government through default. This bill was applicable not only to purchasers northwest of the Ohio but to the entire country.\textsuperscript{4} Senator Worthington had maintained for some time that land should be sold in smaller pieces by the government, and had realized, at least since 1806, that a discontinuance of credit would be beneficial. Long before the Land Law of 1820, Worthington advocated the sale of eighty-acre tracts at one dollar an acre and a discontinuance of credit but supported extension of credit to those already obligated. These changes, rejected at the time (February, 1812), were later adopted with slight modifications as necessary and wise.\textsuperscript{5}

Perhaps Worthington's most important contribution to the management of the public domain was his introduction of a bill in 1812 which resulted in the establishment of the General Land Office. The bill as adopted provided for a commissioner and a chief clerk to take charge of all records concerning the public lands of the United States, to make a plat of all surveys, to record all warrants and patents issued, and to furnish the Secretary of the Treasury with an annual fiscal report.\textsuperscript{6} Through the influence of Worthington, Edward Tiffin was appointed the first commissioner by President Madison.\textsuperscript{7}

After Worthington's break with the Republican party over the declaration of war, he resigned the chairmanship of the Senate Committee on Public Lands and was succeeded by Allen B. Magruder of the new state of Louisiana, and in 1813 by Jeremiah Morrow, his new colleague from Ohio. He was second on the committee under Morrow. His support of the Administration restored him to any esteem he had forfeited; by the end of his term he was more active than ever, serving on many more committees than did the very able Morrow.

During the period of the war, little was done in the way of internal improvements. However, Worthington was able to push through two appropriation bills for the completion of the first section of the Cum-

\textsuperscript{7} See some twenty documents relating thereto in the McKell Collection, RCHS.
berland Road. With Senator Alexander Campbell, he also sponsored a bill which authorized a sixty-foot road from the mouth of the Maumee River to Cleveland and another from Sandusky south to the Greene Ville Treaty line. He was chairman of a committee which secured legislation to establish many post roads in the Northwest for military communications. He also reported a bill for the extension of the Georgetown and Alexandria toll road and served on the Potomac Canal committee.

He was chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs for a time. On March 11, 1814, he submitted to President Madison a plan signed by the Congressional delegations from Ohio and the Indiana Territory for moving the Ohio Indians to an area west of the Wabash River. He reasoned that all the Ohio Indians except the Wyandots, the Shawnees, and the Delawares had forfeited whatever rights they had hitherto had to the lands they occupied by joining the British. The three tribes excepted numbered no more than 3,000, owned little land, and could be suitably compensated for both their land and their loyalty. Although Congress did not accede to the committee's proposals at the time, the plan helped lay the groundwork for later removal of the Indians to lands beyond the Mississippi River.

Worthington's stand on several other measures of a nonmilitary nature which came before the Senate during his second term should be noted. He supported the Louisiana Enabling Act, which was so violently attacked by Josiah Quincy, spokesman for the Federalists, in his famous "Secession Speech" of January 14, 1811. He voted against Senator Dana's proposal for the admission of trans-Mississippi states by amendment only. He voted in favor of an annuity for Arthur St. Clair, in favor of the districting of states for Presidential electors, and against the recharter of the United States Bank. His vote against the bank had surprising and far-reaching consequences because the measure tied in the Senate, 17 to 17; Vice-President Clinton then cast the deciding vote against it.

Worthington's vote against one of the pet fiscal projects of his excellent friend Gallatin can be explained only by his desire to stick with his party and by the influence of the provincial "wildcat" philosophy in Ohio which held, with some cause, that the monopolistic character of the United States Bank made it a menace to the American people.

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9 The draft of the plan is in the McKell Collection.
His action is all the more surprising in view of the fact that throughout his life he was a bank official and a heavy investor in bank stocks—especially those of the United States Bank—and was usually regarded as a sound-money man. It is interesting that three years later (1814) Worthington worked with Gallatin and John Jacob Astor for the reestablishment of the Bank.\textsuperscript{10} Stephen Girard, David Parish, and Astor, who like Gallatin were all foreign-born, had taken five-eighths of the $16,000,000 federal bond issue of 1813 at $88 for each $100 share, and were anxious to establish a sound bank. The financial condition of the country was wretched, and it was believed that a national bank would have a stabilizing effect. Moreover, the average interest paid by the first bank during its twenty years of life was 8\% per cent, an excellent return on such a secure investment. Gallatin's wisdom was amply borne out by the fiscal debacle in which the country became involved before the war was over, but Congress arrived at the tardy decision to recharter the bank only after a long and bitter fight.

When Worthington returned to Washington in the fall of 1811, he drove his own carriage and team of bays as far as Shepherdstown, Virginia. He was accompanied by Mrs. Worthington and the children—Mary, aged fourteen, Sally Anne (Sarah) eleven, Thomas four, Eleanor two and a half, and the three-month-old baby, Margaret (James, nine, and Albert, seven, were left in school at Chillicothe). Mary and Sally Anne were to enter Mrs. Hayward's school in Baltimore in November, but meantime they were to have a good visit at Shepherdstown with their maternal great-aunts, Eleanor Shepherd and Rachel Bedinger. The Senator took various members of the family for rides on the rather good roads of the Great Valley and told them stories of his early life in the vicinity. He found his birthplace strangely shrunken and changed but still occupied by his brother Ephraim's widow, Mrs. Thomas Breckinridge. He noted with sadness that his old property at Prospect Hill, and St. George's Chapel, where he had worshiped, had deteriorated badly.\textsuperscript{11}

Mrs. Worthington and the children joined him in Washington on November 23, but Eleanor (Ellen) was not well all winter, and they returned to Shepherdstown in March. However, despairing of an early

\textsuperscript{10} Astor to Worthington, April 26, May 16, September 18 and 20, November 23, 1814, in WM. See also the letters of Astor to Worthington, March 11 and February 26, 1814, in the King Manuscripts, II, 93, HPSO.

\textsuperscript{11} Worthington's diary, October, 1811.
adjournment of Congress, the mother and children set out for Chillicothe on April 19.

In Washington, the Senator found himself in a Congress that was impregnated with a new spirit. The rest of his term was to prove a period of storm and stress in the life of the young republic, and he was to witness the most critical situation in which the United States had been involved since the adoption of the Constitution. The cautious Jefferson had met the threat of war by compromise. His embargo was intended to be the crowning event of his administration; instead, it had divided the country. Although Jefferson signed the bill for its repeal in 1809, his action appeared to be one of deathbed repentance, and he retired from office under a cloud. When his Secretary of State, James Madison, became President, the situation seemed to improve. Although the embargo was replaced by a nonintercourse act, it appeared for a time that amicable relations were to be reestablished with Great Britain and perhaps with France. The repudiation of the Erskine agreement, the recalcitrance of the Canning ministry, and the unfortunate embassy of Francis James Jackson, however, left Madison as far from a settlement as ever. The Macon Bill No. 2, which removed all restrictions on trade, pleased the shipping interests, but Napoleon tricked the Administration into restoring nonintercourse with Great Britain and made a bad situation worse. Madison, who realized the significance of the election in 1810 of a group of congressmen who were soon to be called War Hawks, stiffened his attitude toward England. Lord Wellesley, Canning's successor, recognized this change. A new minister was sent to the United States, reparation was made for the Chesapeake affair, and Pinckney was requested to remain in England, but the revocation of the Orders in Council was flatly refused. As a result, Congress began to anticipate war.

Such was the situation when the Congress convened on November 3, 1811. The election of Henry Clay as Speaker made the new course immediately apparent. Randolph and the “old republicans” were to be curbed; party leadership had fallen to “the Boys” from the West. Madison's message practically recognized the inevitability of war, and the attitude of the whole Administration was one of paralysis and passive acquiescence. Worthington made this notation in his diary on November 5: “Received the message of the President which is strong and leaves little doubt but war must ultimately [be] adopted against England.” War had been contemplated so often that it seemed to have no terrors, and no serious effort was made to avoid it. The seventy new members of Congress under the leadership of the young radicals swept all before them. They had never undergone a war, but
THOMAS WORTHINGTON

they had experienced an inglorious peace. So, disregarding the Federalists, the commercial wing of their own party, and public opinion, they began the drive for war. Worthington noted on December 16 that "both branches of the Legislature [are] discussing propositions to raise a large army preparatory to war with England. No reflection of my life has given me so much concern; blessed with peace, liberty and plenty, beyond the control of any earthly power yet [we are] insensible of the blessings we enjoy and do not consider the things which belong to our peace." The press took up the war cry and sought to popularize issues which for ten years had been deemed insufficient cause for war; almost everywhere except in New England the favorite topic of newspaper discussion was the conquest of Canada. The Virginia General Assembly pledged the support of its state to whatever policy Congress and the President should approve, holding that precious as was peace, war for honor was preferable.

Despite the comparatively favorable trend which negotiations with England were taking, by April Madison and his counselors had decided that her refusal to repeal the Orders in Council left no alternative but an immediate embargo and preparations for war. Disregarding the enormous peacetime gains in Louisiana and Florida, the lack of preparation for hostilities, and the disapproval of a majority of the people, the Administration drifted toward war at the command of a group of young legislators who "cried out against the cowardice of further submission." The threat of Clay's coterie to disrupt the party and alienate all support from Madison in the coming Presidential election helped the President reach a decision to recommend war; thus a needless conflict was made inevitable.

The Federalists in Congress were solidly for peace, but, since they were impotent politically, many of them decided to support the Republican preparedness measures even at the cost of a short disastrous war. They reasoned that a brief, abortive, and expensive war would discredit the War Hawks, pave the way for a political victory in November, and lead to an immediate peace and the restoration of commercial relations with Britain. They proposed a coalition of all the peace advocates of both parties to back the moderate Republican, DeWitt Clinton, for the presidency. Peace and prosperity could be secured if Madison were defeated and Clinton installed as chief executive.

12 Annals, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., 112-14.
Gallatin wrote Jefferson that he blamed the Administration's inability to maintain the peace on "domestic faction . . . ambitious intriguers, and internal enemies" who aimed at disunity. John Randolph, Republican gadfly, saw the direction our foreign policy was taking and denounced as spurious the radical Republicans' arguments for a war of conquest, without money, leaders, army, or navy:

We had by our own wise measures, so increased the trade and wealth of Montreal and Quebec that at last we began to cast a wistful eye at Canada. . . . Suppose it ours, are we any nearer to our point? . . . Go! march on Canada! leave the broad bosom of the Chesapeake and her hundred tributary rivers—the line of seacoast from Machias to St. Mary's unprotected! You have taken Quebec—have you conquered England? Will you seek for the deep foundations of her power in the frozen deserts of Labrador? . . . Will you call upon her to leave your ports and harbors untouched only just till you can return from Canada, to defend them? The coast is to be left defenseless, whilst men of the interior are revelling in conquest and spoil. But grant for a moment . . . that in Canada you touched the sinews of her strength. . . . In what situation would you then place some of the best men of the nation? As Chatham and Burke and the whole band of her patriots prayed for her defeat in 1776, so must some of the truest friends to their country depurate the success of our arms against the only Power that holds in check the arch-enemy of mankind.

Worthington mirrored the confused sentiments of the patriotic enthusiasts of Ohio who resented the insults of England but feared an Indian uprising against a practically defenseless frontier. Moreover, the western country was prosperous, and, although its citizens coveted the Indian and Canadian lands, war meant destruction and bloodshed. Since over half of our foreign trade was with England, war "would be a very unprofitable business." Worthington had consistently supported the neutrality of Jefferson and Madison but resented bitterly the New England shippers' policy of appeasement. He also deplored the growth of war sentiment in the West16 and knew that so far as Ohio was concerned, the chief motivation toward war was the wish, born of fear, to destroy the Indians,17 who were showing increased unrest under the urging of Tecumseh, of the Prophet, and, perhaps, of the British in Canada. Many Ohioans believed that once war was

14 March 10, 1812, quoted in Adams, Life of Gallatin, 455.
15 Congressional Reporter, 78, 80-85 (House of Representatives, December 10, 1811).
16 See Julius W. Pratt, "Western Aims in the War of 1812," in the Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XII (1925-26), 35-50, for the best discussion of the situation in the West, especially on this subject. See also Pratt's Expansionists of 1812 (New York, 1925).
17 Adjutant General Van Home wrote Worthington, December 12, 1811, that Ohio regarded war as inevitable. Letter in WMOSL. See also Tiffin to Worthington, April 16, 1812, in WMOSL.
declared, prompt and effective action by the regulars and the militia would make it possible to wipe out the Indians before British aid could arrive.

Worthington heard with alarm of Harrison’s ill-advised march and the battle at Tippecanoe in October, 1811. “I am convinced,” he wrote, “that this might have been prevented & all matters settled without loss of blood.”\textsuperscript{18} He foresaw the reign of terror which war would cause on every frontier and threw his whole energy into preparation for a conflict which he nevertheless did his utmost to delay.

In Congress there was a very serious division of sentiment among Worthington’s Republican friends. Gallatin, Giles, Madison, and Clay were all leaders whom he sought to support, but there was little agreement among them. At one extreme, Gallatin was unreservedly opposed to resorting to war; at the other extreme, was Clay, the War Hawk; Giles considered war talk a Madisonian political stratagem, while Madison himself followed the dictates of the party majority. Worthington had many friends among the Federalists also. As a businessman he was interested in exports, sound banking, internal improvements, and the maintenance of peace. Hence he had a better appreciation of their point of view than most Republicans. However, he regarded himself as a true patriot and resented the long-accumulated insults suffered at the hands of the British. He was proud of his country, and approved of expansion, but expansion by peaceful means only. Purchase was preferable to war. Certainly, he had no sympathy with the constant attacks Quincy, Morris, and their Federalist colleagues made in Congress on slave representation and the need for New England secession if expansion and the admission of new states did not cease. His only wish was to support the Administration and to help legislate wisely, but how could he decide rightly when the Chief Executive had no policy but to please the dominant faction of his party? One thing he did know, that he would exert his influence against war to the very end unless there was at least a possibility of ensuring the safety of the frontiers and of winning ultimate success.

In the spring of 1811, Worthington voted to empower the President to seize and occupy the Floridas, partly because he believed the country needed the territory and could probably get it without a war, but more particularly because he understood the threat to the frontier from the Indians and from any power which might land forces there. Yet his concern for the safety of the Florida frontier was much less than that which he felt at that time for the northwest frontier. His first

\textsuperscript{18} Worthington’s diary, November 28, 1811.
and immediate responsibility was to Ohio. As the belief in the inevitability of war grew stronger, his apprehension for the safety of Ohio's people increased. Frequent letters came to him imploring provisions for defense and denouncing the warmongers, who did not have to live under the threat of Indians passing daily by their doors. The reports from the governor of the Indiana Territory during the years 1810-11 left no doubt that Harrison was sure the Indians were ready to take up the hatchet.

To meet this danger, Worthington introduced a bill, December 16, 1811, for the organization of six companies of rangers to protect the frontier, and secured its passage. Although in defense of the United States frontiers the 452 men and officers were only a corporal's guard, they constituted at least a beginning. Tiffin later said that without them "a great part of the frontiers would have been depopulated." While the bill was being debated in Congress, Worthington secured a promise from Madison and Secretary of War Eustis that they would authorize Governor Meigs by letter to prepare for the use of rangers on the Ohio frontier. He was disheartened three weeks later to discover that they had taken no action, but he saw them again and secured a renewal of their promise. On January 8, 1812, he wrote as follows to Governor Meigs:

> Mr. Eustis has just told me the officers of our company would be immediately appointed and that the Gen'l direction of it would be given to you. . . . Knowing as I do Tecumse personally . . . unless measures are taken to prevent it . . . in the spring we may expect an Indian War, and especially in event of war with England which is now almost certain . . . I have not ceased to press upon the President the necessity of availing himself of the favorable opportunity . . . to quiet the Indians.

More warlike was a bill introduced by Giles which provided for ten regiments of infantry, two of artillery, and one of light dragoons—a total of 25,000 regulars added to the authorized establishment of 10,000—for a five-year tour of duty; Madison signed the bill on January 11, 1812. Martial, too, were bills Madison signed on February 6 enrolling 50,000 militia for one year, and on April 10 authorizing a militia of 100,000 to be raised by the states and held in readiness

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21 An eight-page letter from Sol Sibley (Detroit), dated February 26, 1812, is an excellent example. It portrays the terribly exposed condition of the Michigan frontier. In WMOSL.
21 Tiffin to Worthington, March 15, 1812, in WM.
25 Worthington to Meigs, January 8, 1812, RCHS.
for instant service. Most discouraging, however, was the word from Governor Meigs on March 1 that he had been unable to get the legislature to authorize preparedness measures and that there were insufficient arms for the militia. Ohio seemed scarcely willing even to defend herself.

Worthington was distressed by the report of the Inspector General’s office, which placed the strength of the regular army as of May 1 at 6,744 men scattered among twenty-two posts throughout the United States. Of these men, 1,125 had been recruited between January 1 and May 1; the Inspector General estimated that another thousand had volunteered during May. Worthington calculated that 5,000 volunteers would be secured as soon as war was declared, but he regarded an army of 13,000 as pitifully inadequate to meet the commencement of hostilities, especially since almost 8,000 of them would be garrisoning important posts. These posts needed to be reinforced rather than to have their troops put in the field. New Orleans was garrisoned with only 143 men; Charleston Harbor had 175; New York Harbor, 901; Newport, 193; Boston, 131; Detroit, 119, with 430 more ordered there; Michilimackinac, 88; Fort Wayne, 85; and Fort Dearborn, 53.  

The state of affairs was not improved when Secretary Eustis reported to Worthington on June 6 that the scattered returns from the forty-eight recruiting districts of the nation did not permit the Secretary of War or the Inspector General to make an estimate of the number of volunteers secured since March or to evaluate the state of their discipline. He reported that 3,500 militia and volunteers had been ordered to the most exposed posts of the nation but did not indicate where they were to come from. Meanwhile, Worthington voted for every preparedness measure, since as early as March he had considered war to be inevitable. “The frightful exhibition by Gallatin of War taxes” necessary for the contemplated conflict added to his trepidation, but he favored the greatest possible preparation. He even approved the Giles bill authorizing twice as many regulars as Madison had asked for, could use, or could arm. He favored Madison’s appeal for a temporary embargo and helped to extend it to ninety days. He then fought for an adjournment. Congress was doing nothing except wait for England’s next move, and he believed an adjournment would be a good thing—the evil day might be postponed. Barely a quorum

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23 Report to Worthington, dated June 6, 1812, RCHS.
was present in each house, and all members needed a rest. The motion for adjournment passed the Senate on April 29, but the House refused to concur. Thus his attempt to alleviate the situation failed.

It is noteworthy that by May 8 Worthington was in favor of lifting the embargo which he had helped establish in April. Madison had meant it as a war measure, and the House had adopted it as such. The Senate, by extending it from sixty to ninety days, had changed its purpose to that of a negotiating measure. The embargo, together with the operation of Macon's bill pursuant to Madison's proclamation of November 2, 1810, and the act of Congress of March 2, 1811, was strangling the resources of the country and widening the schism with the shipping interests. The nation needed to marshal every resource of money, goods, and shipping before it could embark on war, but the attempt at repeal failed in both houses. Worthington and Pope of Kentucky were the only Republicans who voted with the six Federalist Senators in support of it.\(^25\)

Despite Castlereagh's attitude of conciliation, during April and May the Administration moved steadily toward war. Madison had been badgered on both sides of the Atlantic until he was desperate. Nevertheless, a rump caucus of eighty-two members of the party had unanimously endorsed him for a second term. The country was little better prepared than in 1811 and much worse prepared than in 1807, but it was hoped that war would consolidate it by concentrating its animosities on the ancient foe. Worthington felt the ominous and irresistible drift of opinion and on May 12 confided to his diary:

> I have heretofore made no memo of my opinions of publick proceedings. I have been—and every day confirms me—in the opinion convinced that the govt are pursuing an improper course as to the powers of europe. It will be folly & madness to get into the war for abstract principles when we have not the power to enforce them. To withdraw would be wisdom but I fear she has fled our councils.

Madison seized upon Castlereagh's definition of retaliation in his note of April 10 as sufficient cause for defining the issue. On June 1, he sent his war message to both houses of Congress. Friday, June 5, by a vote of 79 to 49, the House of Representatives passed and sent to the Senate a declaration of war. Worthington joined with the Federalists and anti-Administration senators in attempting to change the House

\(^{25}\) *Annals*, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., 237, 239, 1533, 1535-46.
bill from a war to a reprisal measure which would be applicable to France as well as Great Britain. On June 14, he called on Madison to protest the trend of affairs:

Conversed near an hour and a half with the president on Indian affairs and the subject of war. My objections candidly stated to him to wit, that we are unprepared—that 3 months must elapse before any invasion can be undertaken. That in the meantime the administration will be exposed to the attacks of its enemies the people disheartened . . . That although I may differ with my friends on this question or with him I will be the very last to agree to a disgraceful peace, will rise or sink with my political associates. That I believe the war is unavoidable but as we have it completely in our power to choose our own time to make it I cannot take the responsibility on me of entering into it in an unprepared [state].

Attempts at delay and adjournment failed, and on June 15 the original bill was passed to the third reading. The next three days were spent by the opposition in debating amendments and urging delay. On June 17, Giles made a last effort, which Worthington supported, to make the declaration one of reprisal rather than of general war; but again the attempt failed. On the question, Shall the bill pass?, the vote was aye 19, nay 13, Worthington voting nay. The President signed the bill the next day. Worthington wrote this comment to his wife:

I have done my duty and satisfied my conscience. Thousands of the innocent will suffer, but I have borne my testimony against it, and thank God, my mind is tranquil. . . . Now that the step is taken, I am bound to submit to the will of the majority, and use my best exertions to save my country from ruin.

After the declaration of war, which came just five days before the Liverpool ministry repealed the odious Orders in Council, Worthington directed his efforts toward making the best of a bad situation and uniformly supported the Administration in all of its many financial and military measures.

He continued to act as chairman of the Committee on Military Appointments for the Indiana Territory and as a member of other military committees. It is important to note that he voted against the appointment of Generals Hull and Wilkinson, both of whom he regarded as incompetent. Although Worthington lost favor with his colleagues for a time as the result of his opposition to the war, his

26 Worthington’s diary, June 14, 1812.
27 Annals, 12th Cong., 1st Sess., 297.
28 Private Memoir, 60-61. Worthington confided to his diary, June 17, 1812: “The peace of the country is gone but who can tell when it will return. Alas poor man, how little dost thou know what is for thy peace. Oh any country if you but knew the horrors of war and the slavery it entails too often, pride would be repressed.”
unswerving devotion to duty was rewarded when he was made chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs in December, 1813, and chairman of the Committee on Militia in 1814. In the latter capacity he sponsored unsuccessfully a conscription bill for a uniform system of militia throughout the United States, proposing that every able-bodied white male from sixteen to fifty years of age be enrolled in a local militia unit and armed and equipped for service. He was particularly solicitous for the welfare of the Ohio troops, and did his best to ensure their pay and to secure compensation for property and equipment destroyed by the enemy.

In 1813, Worthington introduced a bill to appropriate $75,000 for establishing a second military academy at Pittsburgh. He won the approval of Secretary of War Armstrong, but the chief engineer, Colonel J. G. Swift, estimated that both time and money could be saved by enlarging West Point, and so the plan was shelved by Congress. The object of another bill which Worthington introduced and unsuccessfully supported was "to produce exact uniformity in the Army, viz., in the calibre, bayonets, locks & parts thereof so as to make any separate part of the gun fit any other, thereby saving a great expense to the public." Worthington upheld the Administration in its proposal to occupy the Floridas and Canada and opposed any limitation of the authority given the President, for he claimed that with the country at war it was unwise to restrict the Executive. He supported a resolution authorizing the President to issue an address to the Canadas promising them peace, security, and liberty if they came under the control of the United States. He voted for a bill to establish a government in any conquered territory and endorsed the many measures which were introduced to provide for the occupation and government of the Floridas. In 1813, he used his influence in favor of a bill calling for the forcible occupation of east as well as west Florida, which, after lengthy debate, was defeated. To General Jackson's extreme anger, Congress, on February 12, authorized occupation eastward only as far as the Perdido.

Worthington's last two years in the Senate, then, were a period of arduous experience. A man of peace, he had had to study seriously the
cost of war in men, money, and property. He was certain that war was evil, but he was also firmly convinced that since periodic wars were seemingly inescapable, the country needed a better militia system and service of supply. He never ceased to maintain that a well-outfitted and well-disciplined militia was an indispensable part of the nation’s peacetime equipment.

In concluding this sketch of Worthington’s second term in the Senate, it should be observed that the Senator continued to spend a large portion of his time and energy in transacting business for his constituents. Ten to fifty letters came to him by every post from Ohio. Samuel Finley expressed fear for his health, and Worthington himself wrote, “The business I have to go through is more than anyone ought to bear.” Everything from purchasing “5 doz. buttons & 4 stars” for General Cass’s uniform to securing deposits of United States money in Ohio banks to pay war expenses fell to his charge. He found relaxation in attending church every week and visiting the stock farms of his acquaintances near Washington.

Worthington missed the company of his boys; in 1813, James was eleven, Albert nine, and Thomas six. James and Albert attended the private school of a young premedical student, Samuel C. Lewis, at Chillicothe during the years 1813-15. A letter Worthington wrote Lewis in January, 1814, reflects his solicitude for their welfare and some of his ideas concerning education:

I wish him [Albert] first to be a perfect master of the Geography of his native state . . . knowing every river, creek, Bay, county, their relative distances &c. Next the adjoining states & Terrys & so on & then such a Knowledge of the great geographical divisions of the different countries of the world as will fit him . . . to understand something of history as he reads . . . give him some general understanding of Chronology.

[As to] the morals & manners of my poor boys . . . I am convinced that nothing of the frippery of this world will satisfy the soul. Religion alone, pure religion can only do so and the youth who believes and acts on this belief will never fail in after life to feel the greatest consolation from it.32

The presence of Worthington’s daughters, Mary and Sally Anne, who were in school in Georgetown during the winter of 1812-13, was a great comfort to him. After school was dismissed, Sally Anne spent the summer with her father and participated in the gay social life of the capital. She was one of the many beautiful young ladies who flocked about the dashing young Elbridge Gerry, Jr., son of the Vice-President. This young man, a cousin of the President’s wife, had a

32 Worthington to Samuel C. Lewis, January 12, 1814, RCHS.
delightful time with the girls in Washington that summer. The nearness of the British seems to have disturbed him little or not at all. Observations in his diary do not indicate that anyone else was particularly worried. Worthington took Sally Anne home with him when he departed from the city on August 1.

In reality, the capital was greatly disturbed by the depredations of Admiral Warren's sailors and soldiers in Chesapeake Bay and by the ineffectiveness of the American gunboats and batteries at Norfolk in defending that area against them. When the British entered the Potomac in early July, Washington and all the towns within fifty miles of the river were panic-stricken. Every able-bodied male was called to the colors, but John Armstrong, who had succeeded William Eustis as Secretary of War in January, had no organizing ability. In view of this, it was fortunate that Warren's action was only a feint and that for the next year he was content to maintain the blockade by cruising in the lower bay.

Worthington had little respect for Eustis' ability as Secretary of War, and he regarded his successors, Armstrong and Monroe, as almost equally incompetent. His fears for the outcome of the war stemmed primarily from his intimate knowledge of the men in Washington who were responsible for its conduct.

When in November, 1813, he returned to Washington for the next session of Congress, he took Mrs. Worthington and Sally Anne with him in the family carriage. They were accompanied by Nathaniel Massie Kerr, son of General Joseph Kerr, and General Duncan McArthur's daughter, Margaret, who was in school at Georgetown with Sally Anne. In the mountains east of Washington, Pennsylvania, their carriage was overturned and damaged, but after the loss of a day they managed to get on to Shepherdstown, where they stayed with Mrs. Worthington's aunt, Mrs. Abraham Shepherd. Worthington pushed on by stage the next day with Sally Anne, Margaret McArthur, Mrs. Shepherd's daughter, and young Kerr. On the second day of their journey, the stage suffered the same fate as the carriage, but no one was hurt, and they reached Georgetown that evening.

The next fall Worthington made the trip east by horseback. Since the public buildings at Washington had just been burned by the British and the enemy was still operating in Chesapeake Bay and all along the Atlantic coast, he did not venture to take any of the family with him.

He was mortified—though scarcely surprised—to discover how in-

33 Townsend and Bowers, eds., The Diary of Elbridge Gerry, Jr., 151-206.
competently the defense of the nation's capital had been handled. President Madison, well intentioned though he was, had been unable to discover military or executive leadership adequate to the occasion, and Congress—now sitting at the old Blodgett Hotel, recently the Patent Office—seemed to be unable to lift itself out of the lethargy into which the whole Administration had sunk. The treasury was empty, and banks everywhere were suspending specie payments; Gallatin was in Europe, and it was weeks before his successor, George W. Campbell, presented a tax plan. Before it could be debated, Campbell had resigned and had been succeeded by Alexander J. Dallas, who in due time proposed another tax schedule.

The military situation was equally desperate. The Maine coast was occupied by the enemy; 20,000 British were poised at Kingston to invade New York; a military and naval expedition was on its way to the Floridas. Even the timid Monroe saw the necessity for an immediate conscription of all available manpower, and the Giles and Worthington bills were introduced into Congress. Fought every inch of the way by the Federalists, the bills failed of adoption, and the Executive was left to fight in a seemingly hopeless cause with a regular army of 32,000 men supplemented by the state militias and whatever volunteers could be found.

Senator Worthington, Ohio's governor-elect, left Washington in late November, 1814, with his country on the brink of financial, military, and diplomatic ruin.