

and where there is no reasonable suspicion or assignable motive why the publications I offer should misrepresent the transactions I allude to, the probability is in favor of their accuracy; especially when the printers of them are severely punishable for wilful misrepresentation or gross mistake in detailing the public acts of government.

JUDGE PETERS. I admit a great many things from Mr. Cooper, who is without counsel, which I would not admit from others.

JUDGE CHASE. You may read anything and everything you please.

(*Mr. Cooper* went on to argue at length, from a copious collection from the public documents of the day, that the policy of the President had been to saddle upon the country a permanent navy and army, and to keep down the liberties of the citizens by his arbitrary interference in the case of Jonathan Robbins.)

Gentlemen, I have gone through all the charges, and I am satisfied that I have brought in support of my assertions the best evidence the nature of my case would admit of. It is true, by resorting to Danbury for depositions and to Charlestown for records, I might have made the evidence in the last charge more complete; but I did not and do not think them necessary to produce further conviction on your minds than you feel on the subject already. This is an important point under the law in question. If such strictness of testimony is required, there is an end at once of all political conversation in promiscuous society. The time, the labor, the difficulty, the expense, the harassment and fatigue of minds as well as of body, which such doctrine would occasion to every citizen whom a corrupt administration might determine to ruin, would be an engine of oppression of itself sufficiently powerful to establish a perfect despotism over the press; and would be a punishment for innocence before trial, too severe to be inflicted on sedition itself. I think you must feel the truth of these remarks. The proceedings on this trial irresistibly suggest them.