

No. 8.

Paris 13 Jan 1795

To the Secretary of State (Edmund Randolph)

I have the pleasure to inform you that upon the report of the United Committees of Public Safety, Legislation, Commerce and Finances, a decree has passed the Convention since my last, whereby it is resolved to carry into strict execution the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the United States and this Republic. I beg leave to congratulate you upon this event, and particularly the unanimity with which it passed the Convention, since it demonstrates the good disposition of that body, and of the nation generally towards us. I was always satisfied, as heretofore intimated, that if I could have brought the subject in the first instance before the Convention, I should have succeeded immediately in the object in view: but as the Committee was the department organized for such business, this was impossible, without commencing

John A. B. [unclear]

No. 1

The Secretary of War

I have the pleasure to inform you that the report of the Chief Committee of Public Affairs, Commerce and Finance, a decree has passed the Convention this day last, whereby the subject is carried into that of certain the treaty of Amity and Commerce between the United States and the Republic. They have to congratulate you upon the great and particularly the unanimity with which it passed the Convention, since it demonstrates the good disposition that they are of the nation generally towards us. I was always satisfied, as a matter of course, that it could have brought the subject in the first instance before the Convention, I should have succeeded immediately in the first in order: but as the Committee was the department organized for such business, this was inevitable, without comment.

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a species of warfare upon it, and which was equally im-
 -proper, as it might tend to increase their own dissensions, and
 embark one afloat upon the fortune of those dissensions. Happ-
 -pily, by pursuing the object patiently with the Committee, re-
 -moving doubts and obviating objections, aided by occasional
 changes of the members, this has not only been avoided, but
 I have the additional pleasure to assure you, that it was
 finally accomplished, without the least difficulty, and with-
 -out exciting the animosity of any one.

After my late communications to the Committee of
 Public Safety, in which were exposed freely the object of
 Mr. Jay's mission to England, and the real situation of
 the United States with Britain and Spain, I had reason to
 believe that all apprehension on those points was done away,
 and that the utmost cordiality had now ^{likewise} taken place in
 that body towards us. I considered the report above recited
 and upon which the decree was founded, as the unequivocal
 proof of that change of sentiment, and flattered myself
 that in every respect we had now the best prospect of the

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a species of imperfectness of mind which was equally in-
-ferior, as it might tend to increase their own difficulties and
-embark me of late upon the future of these affairs. But
-this, by pursuing the object I abhor with the Committee, re-
-solves me to do and observing the same, will be necessary
-change of the members, this has not only been necessary, but
-I have the additional pleasure to assure you, that I have
-readily acquiesced, without the least difficulty, and with-
-out exciting the animosity of any one.

After my late communication to the Committee of
-Public Affairs, in which I have expressed freely the extent of
-the pain which I feel, and the great interest of
-the United States with Britain and Spain, that I have
-believe that the apprehension on these points was some way
-and that the utmost vigilance has been taken ^{to} place in
-that body forward. I conceived the report above recited
-and upon which the House was formed, as the unopposed
-proof of that change of sentiment, and I flatter myself
-that in every respect we have now the best prospect of the

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most perfect and permanent harmony between the two Re-
-publics. I am very sorry however to add that latterly this
prospect has been somewhat clouded by accounts from England, that
Mr Jay had not only adjusted the points in controversy, but conclu-
-ded a Treaty of commerce with that government: some of those
accounts state that he had also concluded a treaty of alliance
offensive and defensive. As I knew the baneful effect which
these reports would produce, I deemed it my duty, by repeating
what I had said before of his powers, to use my utmost en-
-deavours informally to discredit them. This however did
not arrest the progress of the report, nor remove the disquietude
it had created: for I was finally applied to directly by the Com-
-mittee, in a letter which stated what had been heard, and re-
-quested information of what I knew in regard to it. As I had
just before received one from Mr Jay, announcing that he
had concluded a treaty, and which contained a declaration
that our previous treaties should not be affected by it, I
thought fit to make his letter the basis of my reply. And as
it is necessary, that you should be apprised of whatever
has passed here on this subject, I now transmit to you, copies

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of these several papers, and which comprise a full statement thereof up to the present time.

I cannot admit for a moment that Mr Jay has exceeded his powers or that any thing has been done, which will give just cause of complaint to this Republic. I lament however that he has not thought himself at liberty to give me correct information on that subject, for until it is known that their interest has not been wounded, the report will certainly keep alive suspicion, and which always weakens the bonds of friendships. It must therefore you will deem it expedient to advise me on this head as soon as possible.

I apprized you in my two last letters of an informal communication between the diplomatic members of the Committee and myself, upon an interrogatory of theirs, whether it would be possible for France to obtain aid from, or within the United States, for the purchase of supplies; and of my effort upon that occasion to interest this government in support of our claims with Britain

and

of these several papers, as a whole comprises a full statement
attached up to the present time.

I cannot account for a moment that Mr. Fox has
- ever been in or that any thing has been said about
you not being a constant attendant at the House. I must know
that he has not thought himself at liberty to give me any
information on that subject, for until this time he has
not been in any way connected, the report with certain
and suspicious, and which always creates the
friendship. I trust therefore you will deem it prudent to
me on this head as now as possible.

I proposed you in my two last letters of an
informal communication between the different members
of the Committee was myself - upon an investigation of
them, whether it would be possible for France to obtain
aid for, or whether the British should be the purchasers
of it. and of my effort upon that occasion to protect
the government in support of our claims with Britain

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and Spain; and to which I was stimulated by intelligence that Mr Say's negotiation had failed; and that we were on the point of war or actually engaged in it with Britain, as likewise by the knowledge that Spain was covetly seeking a separate peace. I was satisfied that if France would embark in our cause, in the present state of things, and which I found her well disposed to do, and without the prospect of much aid in return, that the object in each instance would be secure. I therefore thought it eligible in that state of things and with that view, to leave the door open for a communication on the subject with you. But as soon as I understood that Mr Say had adjusted the points in controversy with that nation, the object on my part was at an end. I was aware that if the adjustment was approved we could render no such service; indeed I doubted whether in peace the government possessed the power to render it. I called therefore immediately upon those members with whom the previous communication had been, and suggested the same to them. They had anticipated the idea, and were prepared to answer it by a peremptory assurance, that it was not their wish to create embarrassments in

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Mr Say's
 negotiation
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 that we were
 on the point
 of war or
 actually
 engaged in
 it with
 Britain

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and I have done so in such a manner that I have not
lost sight of any of the points which I have
mentioned in my former communications. I have
also been very anxious to give you a full
and complete account of the progress of the
cause in every respect. I have also been
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1797
London
Mr. Fox

1797