



**THE WORKS OF  
THOMAS  
JEFFERSON  
VOLUME 11**

# The Works of Thomas Jefferson

Volume 11

THOMAS JEFFERSON

*The Works of Thomas Jefferson, Volume 11*  
*Jazzybee Verlag Jürgen Beck*  
*86450 Altenmünster, Loschberg 9*  
*Deutschland*

*ISBN: 9783849653965*

*[www.jazzybee-verlag.de](http://www.jazzybee-verlag.de)*  
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# ITINERARY AND CHRONOLOGY OF THOMAS JEFFERSON

1808-1816

At Washington.

- 1808.—Jan. 3. Spain issues decree concerning neutral commerce.
10. Sends reply to assembly of North Carolina.
20. Sends message on Wilkinson.
23. Refuses to recommend Fast-Day.
30. Sends message on Choctaws.
- Sends message on Detroit and Mackinac.
- Feb. 2. Sends message on Neutrals.
4. Sends supplementary message on Wilkinson.
9. Sends message on Algiers.
15. Sends supplementary message on Algiers.
19. Sends message on Cumberland Road.
25. Sends message on Militia.
29. Sends reply to New York Society of St. Tammany.
- Mar. 7. Sends Batture message.
17. Sends message on Commercial Decrees.
18. Sends message on West Point.
22. Sends special message on British Negotiations.
- Sends message on Public Defence.
30. Drafts supplementary bill for Embargo.
- Apr. 19. Issues proclamation on Embargo.
- 1808.—May 6. Sends circular letter to State governors.
- Leaves Washington.
12. Arrives at Monticello.
25. Sends reply to Democrats of

Philadelphia.

Asks Dearborn to remain in office.

June  
11. Leaves Monticello.  
Arrives at Washington.

18. Sends reply to government of New Orleans.

July  
24. Leaves Washington.  
Arrives at Monticello.

Aug. 2. Sends reply to Legislature of New Hampshire.

4. Sends reply to Legislature of South Carolina.

29. Writes Emperor of Russia.  
Appoints William Short Minister to Russia.

Oct. Leaves Monticello.  
Arrives at Washington.

17. Sends reply to Baptist Association.

18. Sends reply to Baptist Association.

Nov. 8. Sends Eighth Annual Message.

9. Has interview with Erskine.

21. Sends reply to Baptist Association.  
Sends reply to Connecticut republicans.

Dec. 2. Sends reply to Pittsburg republicans.

30. Sends message on Alabama Tribe.

1809.—Jan. 6. Sends message on Defence.

17. Drafts circular letter on Embargo.  
Forced to borrow money.

Feb. 3. Sends reply to Legislature of Georgia.

6. Virginia Assembly passes resolutions of thanks.

16. Sends reply to Assembly of Virginia.

24. Sends reply to Legislature of New York.

28. Refuses public reception by citizens of Albemarle County.

Mar. 1. Signs repeal of Embargo.

4. Sends reply to citizens of Washington.  
Retires from Presidency.  
Issues circular letter on Public Appointments.
17. Arrives at Monticello.
- 1809.—Apr. 3. Sends reply to citizens of Albemarle County.
12. Sends reply to Legislature of New York.
- July Visits Poplar Forest (Bedford plantation) for a fortnight.
- Oct. 20. At Richmond.
30. At Monticello.
- Nov. 30. Has interview with Monroe.
- 1810.—May 25. Writes Madison concerning Supreme Court.
- Oct. 15. Writes Madison concerning vacancy in Supreme Court.  
Asks Federal appointment for relative.
- Dec. Visits Poplar Forest.  
Returns to Monticello.
- 1811.—Jan. Urges seizure of the Floridas.  
Becomes a great-grandfather.  
Drafts scheme for a system of Agricultural Societies.
- Mar. 28. Endeavors to assist Duane.
- Aug. 14-23. At Poplar Forest.
25. At Monticello.
- Dec. 5. At Poplar Forest.
- 1812.—Jan. 21. Renews friendship with John Adams.  
Prints Batture pamphlet.
- Apr. 12. Sends Wirt his recollections of Patrick Henry.
- May 10-19. At Poplar Forest.
23. At Monticello.
- June 18. War declared.
- Sept. 2-12. At Poplar Forest.
16. At Monticello.

Nov. 11.	Writes observations on common law in U. S.
Nov. 15-Dec. 14.	At Poplar Forest.
Dec. 17.	At Monticello.
	Writes sketch of Meriwether Lewis.
1813.—Apr. 30- May 10.	At Poplar Forest.
May 15.	At Monticello.
July	Sells Mazzei's property in Richmond and borrows purchase money.
Aug. 28-Sept. 11.	At Poplar Forest.
Sept. 14.	At Monticello
Nov. 25-Dec. 8.	At Poplar Forest.
Dec. 13.	At Monticello.
1814.—May 28- June 25.	At Poplar Forest.
June 26.	At Monticello.
Sept. 21.	Offers library to Congress.
Oct.	Senate debates purchase of library.
Nov. 3-11.	At Poplar Forest.
21.	At Monticello.
	Resigns Presidency of American Philosophical Society.
1815.—Jan.	Congress passes bill to purchase library.
	Outlines University of Virginia.
May 19-June 1.	At Poplar Forest.
June 4.	At Monticello.
Aug. 29-Sept. 29.	At Poplar Forest.
Oct. 3.	At Monticello
Nov. 2-12.	At Poplar Forest.
Dec. 16.	At Monticello.
1816.—Apr. 17- 30.	At Poplar Forest.
May 3.	At Monticello.
June 29.	At Poplar Forest.



## CORRESPONDENCE AND OFFICIAL PAPERS

1808

**TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR** Ref. 002  
**(HENRY DEARBORN.)**

*j. mss.*

Washington, January 8, 1808

Dear Sir,

—Your letter of Dec. 29 brings to my mind a subject which never has presented itself but with great pain, that of your withdrawing from the administration, before I withdraw myself. It would have been to me the greatest of consolations to have gone thro my term with the same coadjutors, and to have shared with them the merit, or demerit, of whatever good or evil we may have done. The integrity, attention, skill, & economy with which you have conducted your department, have given me the most compleat and unqualified satisfaction, and this testimony I bear to it with all the sincerity of truth and friendship; and should a war come on, there is no person in the U.S. to whose management and care I could commit it with equal confidence. That you as well as myself, & all our brethren, have maligners, who from ill-temper, or disappointment, seek opportunities of venting their angry passions against us, is well known, & too well understood by our constituents to be regarded. No man who can succeed you will have fewer, nor will any one enjoy a more extensive confidence thro the nation. Finding that I could not retain you to the end of my term, I had wished to protract your stay, till I could with propriety devolve on another the naming of your successor. But this probably could not be

done till about the time of our separation in July. Your continuance however, till after the end of the session, will relieve me from the necessity of any nomination during the session, & will leave me only a chasm of 2 or 3 months over which I must hobble as well as I can. My greatest difficulty will arise from the carrying on the system of defensive works we propose to erect. That these should have been fairly under way, and in a course of execution, under your direction, would have peculiarly relieved me; because we concur so exactly in the scale on which they are to be executed. Unacquainted with the details myself, I fear that when you are gone, aided only by your chief clerk, I shall be assailed with schemes of improvement and alterations which I shall be embarrassed to pronounce on, or withstand, and incur augmentations of expense, which I shall not know how to control. I speak of the interval between the close of this session, when you propose to retire, & the commencement of our usual recess in July. Because during that recess, we are in the habit of leaving things to the chief clerks; and, by the end of it, my successor may be pretty well known, and prevailed on to name yours. However, I am so much relieved by your eeking out your continuance to the end of the session, that I feel myself bound to consult your inclinations then, & to take on myself the difficulties of the short period then ensuing. In public or private, and in all situations, I shall retain for you the most cordial esteem, and satisfactory recollections of the harmony & friendship with which we have run our race together; and I pray you now to accept sincere assurances of it, & of my great respect & attachment.

**TO CHARLES THOMSON** Ref. 003

Washington, Jan. 11, 08

My dear and antient Friend,

—I see by the newspapers your translation of the Septuagint is now to be printed, and I write this to pray to be admitted as a subscriber. I wish it may not be too late for you to reconsider the size in which it is to be published. Folios and quartos are now laid aside because of their inconvenience. Everything is now printed in 8vo, 12mo or *petit format*. The English booksellers print their first editions indeed in 4to, because they can assess a larger price on account of the novelty; but the bulk of readers generally wait for the 2d edition, which is for the most part in 8vo. This is what I have long practised myself. Johnson, of Philadelphia, set the example of printing handsome edition of the Bible in 4v., 8vo. I wish yours were in the same form. I have learnt from time to time with great satisfaction that you retain your health, spirits and activity of mind and body. Mr. Dickinson too is nearly in the same way; he exchanges a letter with me now and then. The principal effect of age of which I am sensible is an indisposition to be goaded by business from morning to night, from laboring in an Augean stable, which cleared out at night presents an equal task the next morning. I want to have some time to turn to subjects more congenial to my mind. Mr. Rose still stays on board his ship at Hampton, we know not why. If he is seeking time we may indulge time. Time prepares us for defence; time may produce peace in Europe that removes the ground of difference with England until another European war, and that may find our revenues liberated by the discharge of our national debt, our wealth and numbers increased, our friendship and our enmity more important to every nation. God bless you and give you years and health to your own wishes. Remember me respectfully to Mrs. Thomson and accept yourself my affectionate salutation.

**TO REV. SAMUEL MILLER**

*j. mss.*

Washington, Jan. 23, 08

Sir,

—I have duly received your favor of the 18th and am thankful to you for having written it, because it is more agreeable to prevent than to refuse what I do not think myself authorized to comply with. I consider the government of the US. as interdicted by the Constitution from intermeddling with religious institutions, their doctrines, discipline, or exercises. This results not only from the provision that no law shall be made respecting the establishment, or free exercise, of religion, but from that also which reserves to the states the powers not delegated to the U. S. Certainly no power to prescribe any religious exercise, or to assume authority in religious discipline, has been delegated to the general government. It must then rest with the states, as far as it can be in any human authority. But it is only proposed that I should *recommend*, not prescribe a day of fasting & prayer. That is, that I should *indirectly* assume to the U. S. an authority over religious exercises which the Constitution has directly precluded them from. It must be meant too that this recommendation is to carry some authority, and to be sanctioned by some penalty on those who disregard it; not indeed of fine and imprisonment, but of some degree of proscription perhaps in public opinion. And does the change in the nature of the penalty make the recommendation the less a *law* of conduct for those to whom it is directed? I do not believe it is for the interest of religion to invite the civil magistrate to direct it's exercises, it's discipline, or it's doctrines; nor of the religious societies that the general government should be invested with the power of effecting any uniformity of time or matter among them. Fasting & prayer are religious exercises. The

enjoining them an act of discipline. Every religious society has a right to determine for itself the times for these exercises, & the objects proper for them, according to their own particular tenets; and this right can never be safer than in their own hands, where the constitution has deposited it.

I am aware that the practice of my predecessors may be quoted. But I have ever believed that the example of state executives led to the assumption of that authority by the general government, without due examination, which would have discovered that what might be a right in a state government, was a violation of that right when assumed by another. Be this as it may, every one must act according to the dictates of his own reason, & mine tells me that civil powers alone have been given to the President of the US. and no authority to direct the religious exercises of his constituents.

I again express my satisfaction that you have been so good as to give me an opportunity of explaining myself in a private letter, in which I could give my reasons more in detail than might have been done in a public answer: and I pray you to accept the assurances of my high esteem & respect.

## **SPECIAL MESSAGE ON NEUTRALS**

February 2, 1808

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:—*

Having received an official communication of certain orders of the British government against the maritime rights of neutrals, bearing date the 11th of November, 1807, I transmit it to Congress, as a further proof of the increasing dangers to our navigation and commerce which led to the provident measures of the present session, laying an embargo on our own vessels.

## TO JAMES MONROE

*j. mss.*

Washington, Feb. 18, '08

My dear Sir,

—You informed me that the instruments you had been so kind as to bring for me from England, would arrive at Richmond with your baggage, and you wished to know what was to be done with them there. I will ask the favor of you to deliver them to Mr. Jefferson, who will forward them to Monticello in the way I shall advise him. And I must entreat you to send me either a note of their amount, or the bills, that I may be enabled to reimburse you. There can be no pecuniary matter between us, against which this can be any set-off. But if, contrary to my recollection or knowledge, there were anything, I pray that that may be left to be settled by itself. If I could have known the amount beforehand, I should have remitted it, and asked the advance only under the idea that it should be the same as ready money to you on your arrival. I must again, therefore, beseech you to let me know its amount.

I see with infinite grief a contest arising between yourself and another, who have been very dear to each other, and equally so to me. I sincerely pray that these dispositions may not be affected between you; with me I confidently trust they will not. For independently of the dictates of public duty, which prescribe neutrality to me, my sincere friendship for you both will ensure it's sacred observance. I suffer no one to converse with me on the subject. I already perceive my old friend Clinton, estranging himself from me. No doubt lies are carried to him, as they will be to the other two candidates, under forms which however false, he can scarcely question. Yet I have been equally careful as to him also, never to say a word on this subject. The object of

the contest is a fair & honorable one, equally open to you all; and I have no doubt the personal conduct of all will be so chaste, as to offer no ground of dissatisfaction with each other. But your friends will not be as delicate. I know too well from experience the progress of political controversy, and the exacerbation of spirit into which it degenerates, not to fear for the continuance of your mutual esteem. One piquing thing said draws on another, that a third, and always with increasing acrimony, until all restraint is thrown off, and it becomes difficult for yourselves to keep clear of the toils in which your friends will endeavor to interlace you, and to avoid the participation in their passions which they will endeavor to produce. A candid recollection of what you know of each other will be the true corrective. With respect to myself, I hope they will spare me. My longings for retirement are so strong, that I with difficulty encounter the daily drudgeries of my duty. But my wish for retirement itself is not stronger than that of carrying into it the affections of all my friends. I have ever viewed Mr. Madison and yourself as two principal pillars of my happiness. Were either to be withdrawn, I should consider it as among the greatest calamities which could assail my future peace of mind. I have great confidence that the candor & high understanding of both will guard me against this misfortune, the bare possibility of which has so far weighed on my mind, that I could not be easy without unburthening it.

Accept my respectful salutations for yourself and Mrs. Monroe, & be assured of my constant & sincere friendship.

Ref. 004

**TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
(JAMES MADISON.)**

*j. mss.*

Mar. 11, 08I suppose we must dispatch another packet by the 1st of Apr. at farthest. I take it to be an universal opinion that war will become preferable to a continuance of the embargo after a certain time. Should we not then avail ourselves of the intervening period to procure a retraction of the obnoxious decrees peaceably, if possible? An opening is given us by both parties, sufficient to form a basis for such a proposition.

I wish you to consider, therefore, the following course of proceeding, to wit:

To instruct our ministers at Paris & London, by the next packet, to propose immediately to both these powers a declaration on both sides that these decrees & orders shall no longer be extended to vessels of the United States, in which case we shall remain faithfully neutral; but, without assuming the air of menace, to let them both perceive that if they do not withdraw these orders & decrees, there will arrive a time when our interests will render war preferable to a continuance of the embargo; that when that time arrives, if one has withdrawn & the other not, we must declare war against that other; if neither shall have withdrawn, we must take our choice of enemies between them. This it will certainly be our duty to have ascertained by the time Congress shall meet in the fall or beginning of winter; so that taking off the embargo, they may decide whether war must be declared, & against whom. Affectionate salutations.

## **SPECIAL MESSAGE ON COMMERCIAL DECREES**

March 17, 1808

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:—*

I have heretofore communicated to Congress the decrees of the government of France of November 21st, 1806, and



of Spain, February 19th, 1807, with the orders of the British government, of January and November, 1807.

I now transmit a decree of the Emperor of France, of December 17th, 1807, and a similar decree of the 3d January last, by his Catholic Majesty. Although the decree of France has not been received by official communication, yet the different channels of promulgation through which the public are possessed of it, with the formal testimony furnished by the government of Spain, in their decree, leave us without a doubt that such a one has been issued. These decrees and orders, taken together, want little of amounting to a declaration that every neutral vessel found on the high seas, whatsoever be her cargo, and whatsoever foreign port be that of her departure or destination, shall be deemed lawful prize; and they prove, more and more, the expediency of retaining our vessels, our seamen, and property, within our own harbors, until the dangers to which they are exposed can be removed or lessened.

## **SPECIAL MESSAGE ON BRITISH NEGOTIATION**

March 22, 1808

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:—*

At the opening of the present session I informed the legislature that the measures which had been taken with the government of Great Britain for the settlement of our neutral and national rights, and of the conditions of commercial intercourse with that nation, had resulted in articles of a treaty which could not be acceded to on our part; that instructions had consequently been sent to our ministers there to resume the negotiations, and to endeavor to obtain certain alterations; and that this was interrupted by the transaction which took place between the frigates *Leopard* and *Chesapeake*. To call on that government for reparation of this wrong produced, as

Congress have already been informed, the mission of a special minister to this country, and the occasion is now arrived when the public interest permits and requires that the whole of these proceedings should be made known to you.

I therefore now communicate the instructions given to our minister resident at London, and his communications to that government on the subject of the *Chesapeake*, with the correspondence which has taken place here between the Secretary of State and Mr. Rose, the special minister charged with the adjustment of that difference; the instructions to our ministers for the formation of a treaty; their correspondence with the British commissioners and with their own government on that subject; the treaty itself, and written declaration of the British commissioners accompanying it, and the instructions given by us for resuming the negotiations, with the proceedings and correspondence subsequent thereto. To these I have added a letter lately addressed to the Secretary of State from one of our late ministers, which, though not strictly written in an official character, I think it my duty to communicate, in order that his views of the proposed treaty and its several articles may be fairly presented and understood.

Although I have heretofore and from time to time made such communications to Congress as to keep them possessed of a general and just view of the proceedings and dispositions of the government of France toward this country, yet, in our present critical situation, when we find no conduct on our part, however impartial and friendly, has been sufficient to insure from either belligerent a just respect for our rights, I am desirous that nothing shall be omitted on my part which may add to your information on this subject, or contribute to the correctness of the views which should be formed. The papers which for these reasons I now lay before you embrace all the communications, official or verbal, from the French

government, respecting the general relations between the two countries which have been transmitted through our minister there, or through any other accredited channel, since the last session of Congress, to which time all information of the same kind had from time to time been given them. Some of these papers have already been submitted to Congress; but it is thought better to offer them again, in order that the chain of communications, of which they make a part, may be presented unbroken.

When, on the 26th of February, I communicated to both houses the letter of General Armstrong to M. Champagny, I desired it might not be published, because of the tendency of that practice to restrain injuriously the freedom of our foreign correspondence. But perceiving that this caution, proceeding purely from a regard for the public good, has furnished occasion for disseminating unfounded suspicions and insinuations, I am induced to believe that the good which will now result from its publication, by confirming the confidence and union of our fellow citizens, will more than countervail the ordinary objection to such publications. It is my wish therefore, that it may be now published.

## **MESSAGE ON PUBLIC DEFENCE** Ref. 005

[Mar. ? 1808.]

In proceeding to carry into exn the act &c. it is found that the sites most advantageous for the defense of our harbors and rivers, and sometimes the only sites competent to that defense are in some cases the property of minors incapable of giving a valid consent to their alienation, in others belong to persons who on no terms will alienate, and in others the proprietors demand such exaggerated compensn as, however liberally the public ought to compensate in such cases, would exceed all bounds of justice or liberality.

From this cause the defense of our seaboard, so necessary to be pressed during the present season will in various parts be defeated, unless the national legislature can apply a constitutional remedy. The power of repelg invasions, and making laws necessary for carrying that power into execution seems to include that of occupyg those sites which are necessary to repel an enemy; observing only the amendment to the constitution which provides that private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation. I submit therefore to the consideration of Congress, where the necessary sites cannot be obtained by the joint & valid consent of parties, whether provision should be made by a process of *ad quod damnum*, or any other more eligible means for authorizing the sites which are necessary for the public defence to be appropriated to that purpose.

I am aware that as the consent of the legislature of the state to the purchase of the site may not, in some instances have been previously obtained, exclusive legislation cannot be exercised therein by Congress until that consent is given. But in the meantime it will be held under the same laws which protect the property of individuals in that state and other property of the U. S. and the legislatures at their next meetings will have opportunities of doing what will be so evidently called for by the interest of their own state.

**TO THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY  
(ALBERT GALLATIN.)**

*j. mss.*

Mar. 31, 08

If, on considering the doubts I shall suggest, you shall still think your draught of a supplementary embargo law sufficient, in its present form, I shall be satisfied it is so, for I have but one hour in the morning in which I am capable

of thinking, and that is too much crowded with business to give me time to think. Ref. 006

1. Is not the first paragraph against the Constitution, which says no preference shall be given to the ports of one State over those of another? You might put down those ports as ports of entry, if that could be made to do.

2. Could not your 2d paragraph be made to answer by making it say that no clearance shall be furnished to any vessel laden with *provisions* or *lumber*, to go from one port to another of the U S, without special permission, &c.? In that case we might lay down rules for the necessary removal of provisions and lumber, inland, which should give no trouble to the citizens, but refuse licenses for all coasting transportation of those articles but on such applications from a Governor as may ensure us against any exportation but for the consumption of his State. Portsmouth, Boston, Charleston, & Savannah, are the only ports which cannot be supplied inland. I should like to prohibit *collections*, also, made evidently for clandestine importation.

3. I would rather strike out the words "in conformity with treaty" in order to avoid any express recognition at this day of that article of the British treaty. It has been so flagrantly abused to excite the Indians to war against us, that I should have no hesitation in declaring it null, as soon as we see means of supplying the Indians ourselves.

I should have no objections to extend the exception to the Indian furs purchased by our traders & sent into Canada. Affectionate salutns.

**TO CORNELIA JEFFERSON RANDOLPH** Ref. 007

Washington, April 3, '08

My Dear Cornelia,

—I have owed you a letter two months, but have had nothing to write about, till last night I found in a newspaper the four lines which I now inclose to you: and as you are learning to write, they would be a good lesson to convince you of the importance of minding your stops in writing. I allow you a day to find out yourself how to read these lines, so far as to make them true. If you cannot do it in that time, you may call in assistance. At the same time, I will give you four other lines, which I learnt when I was but a little older than you, and I still remember.

“I ’ve seen the sea all in a blaze of fire  
I ’ve seen a house as high as the moon and higher  
I ’ve seen the sun at twelve o’clock at night  
I ’ve seen the man who saw this wondrous sight.”

All this is true whatever you may think of it at first reading. I mentioned in my letter of last week to Ellen, that I was under an attack of periodical headache. This is the 10th day. It has been very moderate, and yesterday did not last more than three hours. Tell your mamma that I fear I shall not get away as soon as I expected. Congress has spent the last five days without employing a single hour in the business necessary to be finished. Kiss her for me, and all the sisterhood. To Jefferson I give my hand, to your papa my affectionate salutations. You have always my love.

*Th. Jefferson.*

P.S.—April 5. I have kept my letter open till to-day, and am able to say now, that my headache for the last two days has been scarcely sensible. <sup>Ref. 008</sup>

**TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE U. S. <sup>Ref. 009</sup>**  
**(CÆSER RODNEY.)**

April 24, 1808

Th. Jefferson returns the endorsed to Mr. Rodney with thanks for the communication. It is very evident that our

embargo, added to the exclusions from the continent will be most easily felt in England and Ireland. Liverpool is remonstrating & endeavoring to get the other ports into motion. Yet the bill confirming the orders of Council is ordered to a 3d reading, which shews it will pass. Congress has just passed an additional embargo law, on which if we act as boldly as I am disposed to do, we can make it effectual. I think the material parts of the enclosed should be published. It will show our people that while the embargo gives no double rations it is starving our enemies. This six months session has drawn me down to a state of almost total incapacity for business. Congress will certainly rise tomorrow night, and I shall leave this for Monticello on the 5th of May to be here again on the 8th of June.

I salute you with constant affection & respect

**TO THE U. S. MINISTER TO FRANCE  
(JOHN ARMSTRONG.)**

*j. mss.*

Washington, May 2, 08

Dear General,

—A safe conveyance offering by a special messenger to Paris, I avail myself of it to bring up my arrears to my foreign correspondents. I give them the protection of your cover, but to save the trouble of your attention to their distribution, I give them an inner cover to Mr. Warden, whose attentions heretofore have encouraged me to ask this favor of him. But should he not be with you, I must pray you to open my packages to him, & have them distributed, as it is of importance that some of them should be delivered without delay. I shall say nothing to you on the subject of our foreign relations, because you will get what is official on that subject from Mr. Madison.

During the present paroxysm of the insanity of Europe, we have thought it wisest to break off all intercourse with her. We shall, in the course of this year, have all our seaports, of any note, put into a state of defence against naval attack. Against great land armies we cannot attempt it but by equal armies. For these we must depend on a classified militia, which will give us the service of the class from 20 to 26, in the nature of conscripts, composing a body of about 250,000, to be specially trained. This measure, attempted at a former session, was pressed at the last, and might, I think, have been carried by a small majority. But considering that great innovations should not be forced on a slender majority, and seeing that the general opinion is sensibly rallying to it, it was thought better to let it lie over to the next session, when, I trust, it will be passed. Another measure has now twice failed, which I have warmly urged, the immediate settlement by donation of lands, of such a body of militia in the territories of Orleans & Mississippi, as will be adequate to the defence of New Orleans. We are raising some regulars in addition to our present force, for garrisoning our seaports, & forming a nucleus for the militia to gather to. There will be no question who is to be my successor. Of this be assured, whatever may be said by newspapers and private correspondences. Local considerations have been silenced by those dictated by the continued difficulties of the times. One word of friendly request: be more frequent & full in your communications with us. I salute you with great friendship and respect.

**TO GENERAL BENJAMIN SMITH**

*j. mss.*

Monticello, May 20, 08  
Sir,



—I return you my thanks for the communication by your letter of Apr 19, of the resolutions of the Grand jury of Brunswick, approving of the embargo. Could the alternative of war or the embargo have been presented to the whole nation, as it occurred to their representatives, there could have been but the one opinion that it was better to take the chance of one year by the embargo, within which the orders & decrees producing it may be repealed, or peace take place in Europe, which may secure peace to us. How long the continuance of the embargo may be preferable to war, is a question we shall have to meet, if the decrees & orders & war continues. I am sorry that in some places, chiefly on our northern frontier, a disposition even to oppose the law by force has been manifested. In no country on earth is this so impracticable as in one where every man feels a vital interest in maintaining the authority of the laws, and instantly engages in it as in his own personal cause. Accordingly, we have experienced this spontaneous aid of our good citizens in the neighborhoods where there has been occasion, as I am persuaded we ever shall on such occasions. Through the body of our country generally our citizens appear heartily to approve & support the embargo. I am also to thank you for the communication of the Wilmington proceedings, and I add my salutations & assurances of great respect.

**TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
(JAMES MADISON.)**

*j. mss.*

Monticello, May 24, 08

Dear Sir,

—What has been already said on the subject of Casa Calvo, Yrujo, Miranda, is sufficient, and that these should be seriously brought up again argues extreme weakness in

Cavallos, or a plan to keep things unsettled with us. But I think it would not be amiss to take him down from his high airs as to the right of the sovereign to hinder the upper inhabitants from the use of the Mobile, by observing, 1, that we claim to be the sovereign, although we give time for discussion. But 2, that the upper inhabitants of a navigable water have always a right of innocent passage along it. I think Cavallos will not probably be the minister when the letter arrives at Madrid, and that an eye to that circumstance may perhaps have some proper influence on the style of the letter, in which, if meant for himself, his hyperbolic airs might merit less respect. I think too that the truth as to Pike's mission might be so simply stated as to need no argument to show that (even during the suspension of our claims to the eastern border of the Rio Norte) his getting on it was mere error, which ought to have called for the setting him right, instead of forcing him through the interior country.

Sullivan's letter. His view of things for some time past has been entirely distempered.

## **TO DOCTOR THOMAS LEIB**

*j. mss.*

Washington, June 23, 08

Sir,

—I have duly received your favor covering a copy of the talk to the Tammany society, for which I thank you, and particularly for the favorable sentiments expressed towards myself. Certainly, nothing will so much sweeten the tranquillity and comfort of retirement, as the knowledge that I carry with me the good will & approbation of my republican fellow citizens, and especially of the individuals in unison with whom I have so long acted. With respect to the federalists, I believe we think alike; for when speaking

of them, we never mean to include a worthy portion of our fellow citizens, who consider themselves as in duty bound to support the constituted authorities of every branch, and to reserve their opposition to the period of election. These having acquired the appellation of federalists, while a federal administration was in place, have not cared about throwing off their name, but adhering to their principle, are the supporters of the present order of things. The other branch of the federalists, those who are so in principle as well as in name, disapprove of the republican principles & features of our Constitution, and would, I believe, welcome any public calamity (war with England excepted) which might lessen the confidence of our country in those principles & forms. I have generally considered them rather as subjects for a mad-house. But they are now playing a game of the most mischievous tendency, without perhaps being themselves aware of it. They are endeavoring to convince England that we suffer more by the embargo than they do, & that if they will but hold out awhile, we must abandon it. It is true, the time will come when we must abandon it. But if this is before the repeal of the orders of council, we must abandon it only for a state of war. The day is not distant, when that will be preferable to a longer continuance of the embargo. But we can never remove that, & let our vessels go out & be taken under these orders, without making reprisal. Yet this is the very state of things which these federal monarchists are endeavoring to bring about; and in this it is but too possible they may succeed. But the fact is, that if we have war with England, it will be solely produced by their manœuvres. I think that in two or three months we shall know what will be the issue.

I salute you with esteem & respect.

**TO GENERAL JAMES WILKINSON**

*j. mss.*

June 24. 08

Thomas Jefferson presents his compliments to Genl Wilkinson, and in answer to his letters of yesterday observes that during the course of the Burr conspiracy, the voluminous communications he received were generally read but once & then committed to the Attorney General, and were never returned to him. It is not in his power, therefore, to say that General Wilkinson did or did not denounce eminent persons to him, & still less who they were. It was unavoidable that he should from time to time mention persons known or supposed to be accomplices of Burr, and it is recollected that some of these suspicions were corrected afterwards on better information. Whether the undefined term *denunciation* goes to cases of this kind or not Th J does not know, nor could he now name from recollection the persons suspected at different times. He salutes General Wilkinson respectfully.

## **TO THOMAS MANN RANDOLPH**

*j. mss.*

Washington, June 28th, 08

Dear Sir,

—I enclose you a mercantile advertiser for the sake of the extraordinary fabrication in it's Postscript by an arrival from Cork with London dates to the 9th of May. The arrival of the *Osage* in England (which had been detained in France by Armstrong himself) furnishes the occasion of amusing that nation with the forgeries of fact which I have included in an inked line on the margin, within which line every word is false. Yet this lie will run through all the papers. Few readers will think of asking themselves how this London (or Cork) printer should know all the

particulars he states, & for which he quotes no authority. The fact is that there never has been a proposition or intimation to us from France to join them in the war, unless Champagny's letter be so considered: nor has there ever been the slightest disrespect to Armstrong, as far as we have a right to conclude from his silence and from that of Turreau. So from England we have in like manner had no such intimation except in Holland & Auckland's note subjoined to the treaty. We have nothing from Armstrong or Pinckney. Indeed we can have nothing interesting from France while the Emperor is absent. I continue to send you the *Public Advertiser & citizen* of N. Y. while their fire is kept up on the presidential election. The papers of the other states are almost entirely silent on the subject. It seems understood that De Witt Clinton sinks with his tool Cheetham. We have proof on the oath of a credible man that he set Burr on board the last British packet in the evening of her departure. He was disguised in a sailor's habit, as were two other gentlemen unknown to the person, but one of whom Burr called *Ogden* at taking leave. He was met at N. York by Mrs. Alston, whose child babbled out in his play with another that "Grandpapa was come."

I charged Bacon very strictly to keep the water of the canal always running over the waste, as Shoemaker has made the want of water the ground of insisting on a suspension of rent, and will probably continue to do it. Present my tender love to Martha & the family and be assured yourself of my affectionate attachment & respect.

**TO MERIWETHER LEWIS**

*j. mss.*

Washington, July 17, 08

Dear Sir,

—Since I parted with you in Albemarle in Sep. last, I have never had a line from you, nor I believe has the Secretary at War with whom you have much connection through the Indian department. The misfortune which attended the effort to send the Mandane chief home, became known to us before you had reached St. Louis. We took no step on the occasion, counting on receiving your advice so soon as you should be in place, and knowing that your knowledge of the whole subject & presence on the spot would enable you to judge better than we could what ought to be done. The constant persuasion that something from you must be on its way to us, has as constantly prevented our writing to you on the subject. The present letter, however, is written to put an end at length to this mutual silence, and to ask from you a communication of what you think best to be done to get the chief & his family back. We consider the good faith, and the reputation of the nation, as pledged to accomplish this. We would wish indeed not to be obliged to undertake any considerable military expedition in the present uncertain state of our foreign concerns & especially not till the new body of troops shall be raised. But if it can be effected in any other way & at any reasonable expense, we are disposed to meet it.

A powerful company is at length forming for taking up the Indian commerce on a large scale. They will employ a capital the first year of 300,000 D. and raise it afterwards to a million. The English Mackinac company will probably withdraw from the competition. It will be under the direction of a most excellent man, a Mr. Astor, merch't of New York, long engaged in the business, & perfectly master of it. He has some hope of seeing you at St. Louis, in which case I recommend him to your particular attention. Nothing but the exclusive possession of the Indian commerce can secure us their peace.

Our foreign affairs do not seem to clear up at all. Should they continue as at present, the moment will come when it