

**Thomas Jefferson to Albert Gallatin, July 12, 1803, from  
The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes.  
Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester  
Ford.**

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

July 12, 1803.

\* \* \* It is difficult to see what Mr. Bond would be at. I suppose he aims at our citizen laws. There is a distinction which we ought to make ourselves, and with which the belligerent powers ought to be content. Where, after the commencement of a war, a merchant of either comes here and is naturalized, the purpose is probably fraudulent against the other, and intended to cloak their commerce under our flag. This we should honestly discountenance, and never reclaim their property when captured. But merchants from either, settled and made citizens before a war, are citizens to every purpose of commerce, and not to be distinguished in our proceedings from natives. Every attempt of Great Britain to enforce her principle of "once a subject and always a subject" beyond the case of *her own subjects* ought to be repelled. A copy of General Muhlenberg's letter, stating the fact of citizenship accurately, ought to satisfy Mr. Bond, unless he can disprove the fact: or unless, admitting the fact, he at once attacks our principle: on that ground we will meet his government.

As to the patronage of the Republican Bank at Providence, I am decidedly in favor of making all the banks Republican, by sharing deposits among them in proportion to the dispositions they show; if the law now forbids it, we should not permit another session of Congress to pass without amending it. It is material to the safety of Republicanism to detach the mercantile interests from its enemies and incorporate them into the body of its

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friends. A merchant is naturally a Republican, and can be otherwise only from a vitiated state of things. Affectionate salutations.