

**James Madison to Edmund Randolph, June 4, 1782.
Partly in Cipher. Transcription: The Writings of James
Madison, ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's
Sons, 1900-1910.**

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH1

1 From the Madison Papers (1840).

Philadelphia, June 4, 1782.

Dear Sir, —According to your request, I send an authenticated extract from the Journals of the vote of Congress on the clause which interdicts British manufactures. It has, however, been for some time in print, and will probably be at Richmond before you receive the manuscript copy. The arguments urged against the measure appear to me in the same light in which you describe them. The policy of Great Britain in the capture of St. Eustatia has been constantly reprobated by some of the wisest statesmen. But whatever her policy might at that period be, it is manifest that a very different one is now pursued. British goods are issued from the enemy's line with greater industry than they have ever been, and, as is universally believed, with the knowledge, if not at the instigation, of those in power. Indeed, they would counteract their new system in doing otherwise. The sense of the Eastern States will appear from the ayes and noes on the question. Mr. Adams, in his last despatches, ascribes much of the late pacific symptoms in the British nation, and of the facilities which begin to attend the mission in Holland, to our proscription of the British merchandize.

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You have not sufficiently designated the papers from Mr. R. Morris, from which you wish an extract. I do not recollect, nor can I find, any letter which contains a state of the finances, except his circular letters, which may be found either among the Legislative or Executive archives. If you should be disappointed in these researches, I will, on a renewal of your demands, renew my researches. My charity, I own, cannot invent an excuse for the preense malice with which the character and services of this gentleman are murdered. I am persuaded that he accepted his office from motives which were honorable and patriotic. I have seen no proof of misfeasance. I have heard of many charges which were palpably erroneous. I have known others, somewhat suspicious, vanish on examination. Every member in Congress must be sensible of the benefit which has accrued to the public from his administration; no intelligent man out of Congress can be altogether insensible of it. The Court of France has testified its satisfaction at his appointment, which I really believe lessened its repugnance to lend us money. These considerations will make me cautious in lending an ear to the suggestions even of the impartial; to those of known and vindictive enemies, very incredulous. The same fidelity to the public interest which obliges those who are its appointed guardians, to pursue with every rigor a

perfidious or dishonest servant of the public, requires them to confront the imputations of malice against the good and faithful one. I have, in the conduct of my colleague here, a sure index of the sentiments and objects of one of my colleagues who is absent, relative to the Department of Finance.

The Chevalier de la Luzerne tells us he has written to the General on the subject of the transaction between them, and has no doubt that the difficulties which attended it will be removed.