It is a matter of the highest moment to us all to know on which grounds we stand with G.B., and by what circumstances we have suddenly been brought into this situation. The Treaty of 1794 contained mutual engagements, that the two countries would negotiate on the questions arising out of their commercial relations. Have such negotiations been attempted? When? By whom? What has been the result? The administration must reply to these questions, before they adopt hostile or irritating measures.

In respect to commercial statements, I will try to procure the best and send to you. But it will perhaps be most impressive to say as you may with truth;- that almost all the maritime commerce of the World is in the hands of G.B. and the United States. The French, Spaniards, Dutch, Portuguese and Italians, have scarcely a sail afloat. In the exercise of trying which can do the other the greatest harm, it is certain that Great Britian and the United States may ruin each other and reduce the commerce of all Nations to the state in which it was in the 5th Century. This mischief ought not surely to be done to mankind, unless negotiations have been sincerely attempted and have failed on grounds, which forbid the hope of pacific explanations.

You will do infinite good if you will investigate this subject to the bottom, and if you can bring about a negotiation and commit it to the man who is best qualified, the man who knows circumstances, is pointed out as the only one who is likely to succeed.

My respects as usual to your good lady,

Your Friend,

OLIVER WOLCOTT.

Mr. Quincy.