

Mr. Addington to Mr. Adams.

WASHINGTON, 19th February, 1825.

SIR: On the 8th and 21st of September last, I had the honor of receiving from the Department of State, two letters in which, my good offices were requested, in behalf of certain individuals of the state of Maine, engaged in the fishing trade, who desired redress and reparation for injury done them, by the seizure of their vessels by His Majesty's Sloop Dotterel, while employed in cruising on the coasts of His Majesty's North American possessions.

I informed you, sir, in reply to these communications, that I should forthwith, address an application to the British Naval Commander in Chief, on the North American station, recommending that a full and impartial investigation should be instituted, into the various cases which formed the grounds of complaint on the part of the American Government.

I have the honor to transmit to you herewith, copies of a correspondence which took place, in consequence of my application, between Captain Hoare, commanding His Majesty's Sloop Dotterel, and Rear Admiral Lake, in reference to the cases set forth in your letters, above mentioned. The depositions of the officers and men, concerned in the capture of the Rebecca, Ruby, Reindeer, William, Galeon, Pilgrim, Hero, vessels therein enumerated, are also annexed.

By a perusal of these documents it will, I trust, sir, most conclusively appear to you that, the complainants have no just ground of accusation, against the officers of the Dotterel, nor are entitled to reparation for the loss they have sustained. That, on the contrary, they rendered themselves, by the wilful irregularity of their own conduct, justly obnoxious to the severity exercised against them, having been taken, some *flagrante delicto*, and others in such a position and under such circumstances as rendered it absolutely impossible, that they could have had any other intention than that of pursuing their avocations as fishermen, within the lines laid down by treaty, as forming the boundaries, within which such pursuit was interdicted to them.

With regard to the charge preferred against Captain Hoare, of his having converted detained American vessels, prior to their adjudication in the courts, into tenders for assisting him in his operations against the vessels of the same country, I have only to observe that that officer broadly and in the most explicit terms, denies ever having committed or authorized one such act. And in respect to the other accusation, adduced by the complainants, of maltreatment by the British officers, of those persons whose vessels had been detained. I trust, that a perusal of the inclosed papers will make it equally clear to you, that that charge is entirely unfounded.

I cannot but apprehend, sir, that the acrimony with which the proceedings of Captain Hoare have been viewed by the citizens of the state of Maine, employed in the fishing trade, on the British North