

In Council May 20th 1793

Sir,

We had the honour of receiving your letter of the 7th Instant, and take the earliest opportunity of returning you our answer. - However desirous we might be of interfering officially on the subject of your communication, we consider ourselves incompetent in point of authority to such an Interposition. - If the vessel captured was taken contrary to the Laws of a Nation, we imagine that the Judiciary of the United States or perhaps of this State has power to award and enforce restitution of her while within the limits of their Jurisdiction - and also to give recompence in Damages for the Injury sustained if the aggressors can be brought within the reach of Justice. - We do not suppose that it is practicable for the Captors to obtain a valid condemnation of their prize in Maryland; and if it was practicable to do so in a regular course of Judicial proceeding, the attempt would not be liable to our control - We request you however to be assured that every violation of the Neutrality professed by America in the present war shall be discouraged by us as far as we have power and that we shall cheerfully afford every aid,

(Signed)