

9. Copy of Enclosure to 4574

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Mr. Adams, Dr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, Mr. Laurens, and Mr. Jefferson are the Commissioners in Europe to treat for Peace.

Their powers are to treat and conclude with the Ambassadors, Plenipotentiaries, or Commissioners of the States with whom it may concern. Each of them are vested with equal powers relative to the Establishment of Peace, and a Majority of them or any one (the others not being able to attend) can treat and conclude.

Mr. Adams cannot speak to any proposition of a direct tendency to Force or Peace from England without consulting his Colleagues, and from them it must be expected to go to the French Ministers, the other Belligerent Powers having as yet no right to expect information about any Propositions for Peace.

There may however questions be asked Mr. Adams and his Colleagues that they may not think essentially necessary to communicate to the French Court. And any proper Messengers sent to ask such questions will be answered with confidential Secrecy.

Mr. Digges read over Mr. Adams's Commission, it is dated the 15. June 1781. and his Powers (which are exactly the same as the other four) are as full as possible, and go to conclude as well as treat for Peace.

Mr. Adams's first Commission appointed him to the Court of Great Britain, and this was in force untill about the beginning of 1781. when the above Commission jointly with the other four was received in Europe; and it was recalled by Congress for no other reason than

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Mr. Digges's Account of
what passed between him
and Mr. Adams

March 30. 1782.

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some ill treatment of the Americans by the British Army in South Carolina, and from the unfavourable treatment shown Mr. Laurens in the Tower.

Mr. Digges has Mr. Adams's assurance that any questions put to him as to further consulting upon the mode of opening a Parley or entering into a treaty shall be confidentially and secretly answered. And although his Mr. Adams's name stands first in the Commission any direct propositions made to Dr. Franklin will be equally attended to.

Mr. Digges leaves these Memorandums with Lord Shelburne for the purpose of his Lordship's communicating them to any others of the present Administration whom Mr. Digges has not the honor to know.