

**1780, 19 Abril. Petição apresentada ao Congresso Continental por James Wilson e William Lewis a respeito da protecção aos bens de Aaron Lopez**

(*Papers of the Continental Congress*, n.º 78, vol. 24, p. 199 in Herbert Friedenwald, “Memorials presented to the Continental Congress”, *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, n.º 2, 1894, pp. 126-127)

Sir

Permit us to Address your Excellency and the other Representatives of the United States on behalf of Aaron Lopez Esqr. a Merchant residing in the State of Massachusetts Bay.

The Gentleman before the commencement of the present war had property to a very large amount in the Island of Jamaica. He was withdrawn part; but has still a great proportion of it remaining in bonds, judgements & protested bills; which debts cannot possibly be received in any other manner, than in the produce of the island. Capn. Benjamin Wright, his factor in Jamaica, has lately returned to Rhode Island, where he has some real estate, and a family consisting of a wife and children. In the attempts which Mr. Lopez has made to draw his Effects from Jamaica, his vessels have been captured by private armed vessels, belonging to inhabitants of the United States, and he has been involved in suits in the courts of admiralty and appeals, which though finally determined in his favor, have been tedious, troublesome & expensive. In order to avoid similar inconveniences in future, he has desired and empowered us to apply to the Honorable Body in his behalf, for a protection for his property, and that of his factor.

The character of Mr. Lopez, as a friend to the liberties and independence of the United States, is clear & unimpeached, as will be testified by some honorable members of this house. The method by which he proposes to bring off his property is, to send Capn. Wright and a trusty navigator, an inhabitant of this country, by way of some neutral port to Jamaica, from whence Capn. Wright is to dispatch the Property received in a Vessel, under the command of such navigator, to some port of the United States. The Navigator whom he has in view for this purpose is Capn. Daniel Gardner, a man, as we are informed by Mr. Lopez, of reputation, and remarkably attached to the cause of America. Mr. Lopez wishes for separate protections; one for himself, the other for Capn. Wright.

When these circumstances (the truth of most of which appears upon the records of the court of appeals) are considered, we hope that Congress will be pleased to grant to

Mr. Lopez and Capn. Wright the protection for which we apply on their behalf. Indulgencies of the same kind, have been already granted, as we have been informed, by Congress, to others on similar occasions. Few, we believe, have better reason to expect them than Mr. Lopez has. He is a merchant of extensive business, is active, enterprising, and public spirited.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your Excellency's

Very obedient & most hum. servants

James Wilson

Wm. Lewis

Philada. 19<sup>th</sup> April 1780

[Addressed] "His Excellency Samuel Huntington Esquire President of Congress"

[Endorsed] "Letter from James Wilson and Wm. Lewis Esqrs.

April 19<sup>th</sup> 1780. Read same day"