

Annals 28th May 1777

May it please your Excellency

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I humbly Beg leave to lay before your Excellency a grievance
 and hope you will ^{Please} take it into consideration it is ^{Sir} that Not for Intending or taking
 away any mans Servant without his Consent - I had but one Servant and this Servant
 I had ever found to be faithfull and Honest a few weeks ago my Businiss Call'd
 me abroad and at my return found that my Servant incouraged by this Act
 of freedom (as I have heard them term it) was Intised and gon off and that I
 was Allow'd ten pounds for this time which I would not have taken fifty pound
 for this Sir I think is at once flying in the face of the very Liberty which we
 are so Warmly and Justly Contending for - This Sir is not only taking my property
 without my Consent but without Even my Knowledge and giving me not my
 price for it but their own price by the Same Authority Sir they may go into
 my House and take all that I have got in the World and then Allow me one
 fifth its value or what they please - This Servant might have had one
 and taken this opportunity of getting off - I was told at my return that my
 Servant said if He was taken off He would go again, He might well say so
 when the very Law which formerly Obliged Servants to Stay with
 their Masters now protects them in leaving their Masters - Suppose my
 Sole Dependance was upon this man and I had not a Mouthful of Victuals
 but what was the produce of this Mans Labour then I would consequently
 Starve - at this Rate Sir where is the Liberty which we have to boast
 of. Since my property may be taken from me at pleasure, it makes no
 Material Difference to me who takes it, whether a Stranger or my Brother

APPROVED
 OF THE STATE OF
 MARYLAND

I am Sir with the greatest Submission
 your Excellencys Most Obedt^t
 and Most Hble. Ser.^t

Arch. Shisholm

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