

ty, who, in an Attempt to cross the Bay in their Way thither, were drove back from *Patapsco*, by a violent Storm, into *Chester* River, their Vessels forced ashore, great Quantities of their Provisions lost, and the Men exposed to the most extreme Hardships. This we thought our indispensable Duty at our last Meeting; but, though we look'd upon it as a Matter of a very interesting Nature, yet we gave a Bill for his Majesty's Service, and the Security of our Frontiers, the Preference in our Proceedings, and thereby (to our great Surprise and Concern) made Way for your Excellency's sudden Prorogation (soon after the Upper House had passed a flat Negative on that Bill) calculated, as we are afraid the World will judge, to deprive us of an Opportunity of laying before your Excellency what we had determined, not only upon that, but on several other Subjects; in order, as much as in us lay; to put a Stop to those Hardships, so ruinous to the Properties, and to avert the Consequences, so destructive to the Liberties of the People, which naturally must flow from a Pursuit of Measures in the Administration of Government, which seem at present too much to prevail.

As our several Addresses, requesting your Excellency would be pleased to inform us explicitly by what Law or Authority, the Two Companies of Militia from *Kent* and *Queen-Anne's* Counties were ordered to march, have proved ineffectual, we must proceed upon a Presumption that your Excellency gave your Orders for that Purpose, by Virtue of the Law for the Ordering and Regulating the Militia of this Province, for the better Defence and Security thereof, which possibly you may be of Opinion is in Force; but by your Excellency's saying so much, in your several Messages on this Subject about the Conduct of the late Lower House, we think ourselves laid under a Necessity, in the first Place, to recapitulate the Affair relative to the Marching and Service of the Militia, or rather those who have gone out as Volunteers under that Denomination, at different Times, since the Commencement of Hostilities with his Majesty's Enemies; and to represent, how widely different the Circumstances of our unhappy Frontier People were, when those Volunteers went out (for the March of Part whereof your Excellency applied for and had the Approbation of that House) from what they were under when the Militia of *Queen-Anne's* and *Kent* Counties were lately marched.

Some Time about the latter End of *August*, 1756, a Party of the Enemy, supposed to be about Sixty or Seventy, made an Incurfion in several Divisions, fell on the Settlement of *Conococheague* within this Province, and killed and captivated, as it was reported, near Twenty Persons; on the Second Day after they made their Retreat. As they were returning, a Prisoner, who understood some *French*, escaped from them, and informed the People, that the Enemy had determined in a Council of War, to return immediately to *Fort Duquesne*, and then to make another Incurfion into *Conococheague* Settlement, in about Twenty Days.

About the same Time, *Fort Granville* in *Pennsylvania*, we are informed, was taken and destroyed by the Enemy, and the Garrison, which consisted of about Thirty Men, mostly, if not all, killed or captivated.

At the Opening of the Session in *September* 1756, your Excellency was pleased to lay before the then House, a Letter from the Earl of *Loudoun*, then Commander in Chief of all his Majesty's Forces in *North-America*, informing you of the "Loss of *Oswego*, with all it's Stores and Ammunition, and the Train placed there; and that the Garrison was made Prisoners of War, and our Naval Power on the Lake destroyed." And his Lordship was pleased, on that Occasion, to shew his Sense of the imminent Danger hanging over this Province, by expressing himself in the following Words: "I must put you on your Guard, against every ill Consequence of such an unhappy Event; and as you may now expect the Weight of the *French Indian* Power on your Back, I must caution you to put your Frontiers immediately in the best Posture of Defence you are able; as from the Condition and Number of Troops left to me, when I came to my Command, I can scarce hope to do more than to resist the *French* Power in these Quarters." The House, deeply affected, no Doubt, by the melancholy Situation of their Fellow-Subjects on the Frontiers, were moved to approve a Measure, which they little thought at that Time (tho' they might even then esteem it a Stretch of Power) would be drawn into Precedent for the future, much less at a Time when there should be an armed Force in the Pay of this Province on the Frontiers, more than sufficient, were they compelled to do their Duty, not only to protect the Inhabitants, but to make them easy and quiet. And abstracted from all Considerations, whether there be any Law in Force to compel the Militia to march or not, the Gentlemen that were of that House, who are now of This, are now more unanimous in disapproving your Excellency's Orders for the March of the Militia from *Queen-Anne's*, *Kent*, and *Calvert* Counties, than they were in approving those relative to the March of the Companies from *Baltimore* and *Prince-George's*. And it is not without great Concern they reflect, that what was done at a Time when they believed the Frontiers were under imminent Danger, from several concurrent Circumstances (besides your Excellency's telling them in your Message of the 25th of *September* 1756, "Nothing less than ordering Detachments from the Militia of *Baltimore* and *Prince-George's* County thither, to cover the Inhabitants, and encourage them to remain on their Plantations, would prevent the fine Settlement of *Conococheague* being intirely broke up, and all