

Letter Bk. III time the Garrison of Fort Frederick has been too weak to spare Convoys, the men therefore at Fort Cumberland have suffered much & M^r Ross may probably have his Bond put in Suit for not complying with the Terms of his Contract, which Risk surely he would not run if his Deputy at Fort Cumberland was not well satisfied of the Justness of the Return that Lieut^t Linn & Doctor Mearnes made. But here perhaps it might not be unnecessary to observe to you tho I think I did it when we were at Phil^a that I have less to do with victualling the Troops that are in the pay of this Province than by y^r Lett^r you seem to imagine. By the Act of Assembly which I lately assented to as well as by that which was before made for His Majesty's Service & the more immediate Defence of this Province Agents were appointed who are not dependant on me nor to receive my Directions about victualling our Troops otherwise than to see them properly supplied. The method they take is this, by an Advertisement they invite all Persons that are inclined to contract for furnishing the Troops with Provisions to deliver in their proposals on a certain Day. the Offer that is most advantageous for the Country is accepted & no questions are asked whether the Person that makes it is agreeable or obnoxious to the Govern^r Articles are drawn up & Security given for due performance, the Agents are to pay at a certain Rate p Diem for victualling every man that is borne on the Muster Roll & the Contractor is to take Care that the Soldiers have no just cause to complain. This being the Case Can you desire M^r Ross to pay for such Provisions as the Soldiers whom he is bound to satisfy will on no Account touch or for any thing that was left at the Fort for which he has no Demand or occasion or can he be at all affected by Capt Dagworthy's passing such a general Receipt as you mention. If you are not convinced that the Return is just Nothing remains but to desire Colo Stanwix (who has taken our Men under his immediate Command) to order some Officers or People To Fort Cumberland to review the Provisions & if they pronounce it wholesome he will no doubt order the Commissary to serve it out. M^r Ross will be secure & will no longer hesitate or refuse to comply with Your Requisition, untill some such Step has been taken I cannot desire him to do so, neither can I do any thing farther in the Affair. I am glad to learn that you are likely to succeed so well with Your Assembly, when the Act is passed I shall be much obliged to you for a Copy of it. As I am sensible that a Refusal to supply such Indian Allies as may come into this Province with provisions might be productive of very ill Consequences I have given orders for supplying them & hope the Assembly will be prevailed on to defray so necessary an Ex-