

c. s. c. sons to learn the process & from thence be sent abroad to teach those who have not opportunity of learning from these public works; for it is thought an object of the greatest concern that private families should be induced to make it; the inconsiderable expense attending the making it in families, when the method is once understood, & the quantities that each family may make, should remove all objections to their putting it in immediate practise. When we consider the great consumption of Salt petre, used in medicine, in preserving meat, & in gunpowder, even in times of peace, it should seem a sufficient inducement to private families to learn & practice this art, but most of all when so large quantities are wanted for our necessary defence, & when it will in a great measure supply the want of Salt which the rage of our enemies may render scarce, it should not reasonably be supposed, that any true American will neglect it, as there can be no doubt but that every colony may produce Saltpetre enough at least for their own consumption, it is necessary that powder mills be erected & skillful persons provided to manufacture gunpowder & proper regulations established for preventing their explosion. it is supposed that sulphur may be found in many colonies, & it is necessary that it should be collected, trials may be made at places supposed to contain it at no great expence: it must afford great pleasure to find that some colonies have already in a measure anticipated the design of these resolves, from the good effects of which it is clearly evinced, that we can never want the most abundant supply of ammunition from our own manufacture, but through inattention and neglect: We doubt not you will consider these proceedings as designed to promote the best welfare of the colonies, & that you will as soon as may be & from time to time inform the congress of the state of these manufactures in your colony, of the quantity of Salt petre already made, the preparation for & prospects of encreasing it, what quantity of gunpowder is already made, & the state of your powder mills, & also what discovery is made of sulphur mines & the progress in working them: supposing the most approved method of making Salt petre may not have reached you, we have inclosed such as experience in some colonies has recommended: the laying together suitable composts either in fences or beds in order to collect nitrous matter, seems necessary to be immediately attended to, as the earth from under old buildings may soon be exhausted: it is hoped this effort of the congress will have the desired effect, without which we have reason to fear, it will ere long be said of us, that we are become slaves because we were not industrious enough to be free by order of the Committee I subscribe Your humble Servant

Phil^a March 28th 1776.

Rob^t Treat Paine: