

[Sharpe to Board of Trade.]

Letter Bk. III

To The Lords of Trade. Annapolis the 18th of Oct^r 1764
My Lords

Having received Your Lordships Letter bearing Date the 10th of July last also the Plan for the future Management of Indian Affairs & Copies of Letters which were therewith transmitted I now do myself the honour to inform Your Lordships that the plan in general is in my Opinion well calculated to preserve the peace which has been lately made with the Indian Nations & Tribes in North America & at the same time secure to His Majesty's Subjects the Advantages which they may reasonably expect to receive from entering into Commerce with those people, & tho it should be thought inconsistent with the free Spirit of Trade for the Commissaries to be vested with a power of settling Tariffs of Trade or in any degree to fix or regulate the Prices of the Commodities which may be sold to or bought of the Indians I apprehend that as the Trade will be confined to particular places under the Eye of a Commissary impowered to take Cognizance of fraudulent Proceedings the Indians will not be liable to Impositions & that every Trader will find it his Interest to use them well & trade with them on as low Terms as he can afford. As I am of Opinion that if the Duties which it might be thought proper to impose on the Trade towards defraying the Expence of the Plan were directed to be paid on the Exportation of the Skins & Furs considerable quantities might be shipped off clandestinely & that by reason of a heavy Duty on the Exportation of such Articles the Manufactures of Peltry & Furs in these Colonies would have Advantage which Your Lordships may not intend them I should think the Duties may be collected after this manner. Let the Bond to be given by Persons obtaining Lycence to trade be recorded with the Lycence & a Transcript of such Record be made Evidence in any Court of Law throughout America; then by one of the Regulations to be established the Trader might be forbid to bring away from the Truck house or place where he shall have traded any Furs or Peltry untill he shall have given upon Oath to the Commissary there residing an Account of the quantity of peltry & of Fur by him purchased during the Season, upon rendering which Account the Commissary should give him a Certificate thereof & also send a Copy to the Governor or His Majesty's Receiver General residing in the Province where the Traders Lycence was obtained & Bond given & by this means the Duties might be secured & recovered under such Bonds. I am also of Opinion that it might be an advantage to the Traders if a Clause was