

I should have sent the prisoners on to Philadelphia on their Ar- March 10
rival here, but could not procure a Guard for that purpose. If you
choose to send these prisoners through the Continental line of ex-
change, please to direct me where to apply for a Guard. I understand
that three of the prisoners made their escape last night from the
Goal, the Mate you desier to be delivered to Coll Stewart is one of
them, There is sixteen Seamen prisoners of war Now in Goal

[Robert Purviance, Matt. Ridley, and Wm Patterson, Baltimore, March 10
to Gov. Lee.] Red Book
No. 28

We have the honor to inclose you the copy of a Letter from Mr
James McHenry relative to the Troops there at the Head of Elk, and
destin'd on a particular expedition. In consequence of what is therein
set forth a meeting of the Merchants of this Town was held yester-
day, when it was unanimously determined to afford every assistance
in their power; and Mr McHenry has been notified of it. A copy of
the Letter to him You have inclosed as also a notice of the Sign'd
Agreement. (See page 113)

Letter 57

We beg leave to assure your Excellency we are actuated solely by
the warmth of our attachment to the common cause and zeal for the
honor of the State. We do not mean to weaken the natural exer-
tions of Government; or by pledging ourselves on the present occa-
sion derive any credit, individually to which the State at large is not
entitled. Mr McHenry's Letter is pressing. We have adapted such
measures as appear'd most expedient; if thought in the least inter-
fering with the authority or power of Government, we can for our
constituents sincerely assure you, that any other effectual measure
will most readily be acquiesced in and conformed to.

If the proceedings meet your approbation we cannot doubt of your
pursuing such steps as will secure us from injury. Preparatory
thereto it will be necessary to receive Your approbation & that you
give us Your assurance on behalf of the State, to confirm such agree-
ments as may be enter'd into for the Service and that if advances are
made they shall be reimbursed in their full value, with interest at
some short stated period.

To lessen your difficulties on this head, we think with submissions
it will be proper to furnish us with an order on the Collector of this
Town and County, to receive such collections as he may make so far
as the same may become necessary for reimbursements or compli-
ance with contracts. This we deem extremely necessary if we are to
proceed that individual embarrassments may be avoided.

We flatter ourselves the conduct adopted in this instance will be
approv'd by your honourable board

A Letter dated Elk the 6^m March 1781 from Mr James McHenry
to the Merchants of Baltimore having been received, stating the pecu-
liar situation of Major General the Marquis de la Fayette then at
Ibid.
Letter 58