

lay to provide Monies for the Payment of Interest, and against your Misapplication of the Wheat Tax of 1782; and we were well justified in doing so, from your Acknowledgement, that you had Tobacco on Hand of the Tax in 1782, and that the Whole Collection of the Wheat Tax for 1782, so far as it reached your Knowledge, was ordered to be sold for the Maryland Line; this was a clear Misapplication of the Wheat Tax, and a very improper Assumption of Power; because the Specific Tax was appropriated, in the first Instance, for the Payment of Interest; because other and sufficient Property was appropriated for the Maryland Line; and because this Misapplication of the Tax defeated the Designs of the General Assembly with regard to the Restoration of public Credit, and perverted a System founded on Principles of the most enlightened Wisdom and Policy.

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It is true Sir, our Laws are not penned with that Accuracy and perspicuity it were to be wished; but it requires no great Abilities to ascertain and distinguish the Intentions of the Legislature, especially on the Subject in Question. But admitting some Inaccuracy of Expression; did not the Law direct you to take the Advice of the Executive? Were there not among them Men of legal Abilities, and was not their Opinion most seriously expressed to you, long before your Assumption of Power and Misapplication of the Tax? Was not the Justice, Policy & Wisdom of the Legislature, in giving Interest the Preference of Payment in all Demands on the Public, urged and enforced by all the Arguments we could possibly suggest? But altho' you state the present Case as a doubtful one, and requiring legal abilities to comprehend it, and altho' the Law directed you to report to the Executive to take Advice, and altho' that Advice was repeatedly expressed and given you, yet, regardless of all these Circumstances, the Specific Tax in 1782 has been most improperly applied, for other Purposes than the Law directed.

You mistake Sir, the Powers of your Office: you had no Right to question the System which the General Assembly had adopted; both you and we, were bound by it: Nor have you any Reason to doubt the Zeal and Liberality of our fellow Citizens, were just Grounds given them to believe that Public Faith would be preserved, and the Resources of the State fairly applied to reimburse them; and after the Examples on a late interesting Occasion, when our Citizens of Annapolis and Baltimore freely opened their Purses for the Public; it is not generous in you to insinuate that they are so sordidly devoted to accumulating Interest on their Monies, as not to feel the Flame of Public Virtue.

Whether the Sale of 800 or 900 Hogsheads of Tobacco at 12/6, would have prevented the Calamities which have lately fallen on this State, was a Matter not submitted to your Judgment; and here again Sir, you mistake the Powers of your Office. The Legislature had provided a Defence for the State, according to their Circumstances: they had directed a Barge Equipment, and persuaded of the happiest