

of commissioners from each colony to attend a conference to be held at Albany for the purpose of renewing the Covenant Chain with the Six Nations of Indians, at which presents were to be presented to the Indians with a view to assuring their firmer adherence to the British cause. With this communication from the Lords were also presented letters to Sharpe from James DeLancey, Governor of New York, enclosing one from the officer commanding at Oswego, one from William Shirley, Governor of New England, and one of even more interest to Marylanders from Governor Robert Dinwiddie of Virginia, asking that Maryland at once send men and supplies to join the Virginia troops at Will's Creek, their rendezvous at the head of the Potomac, with a view to protecting the fort on the Ohio and thus preventing the French from building additional fortifications on that river. With his letter, Dinwiddie enclosed to Sharpe the letter from Legardeur de St. Pierre, the French commandant of the Fort de la Rivière au Beuf on the Ohio, brought back by Colonel George Washington in reply to Dinwiddie's letter ordering the French to withdraw at once from what he declared to be British territory, in which St. Pierre politely, but firmly, refused to abandon the fort. The St. Pierre letter appears in the official proceedings of the Lower House only in its English translation, but from the fact that under the head of "Assembly Affairs" in the *Maryland Gazette* for March 7, 1754, it appears both in French and in translation, it is certain that Dinwiddie transmitted to Sharpe the French version. As far as can be learned this letter is now reproduced in its French form for the first time since it appeared in the contemporary colonial newspapers. It does not appear in French in either the Williamsburg or London editions of Washington's *Journal* which were published soon after his return, nor is the original letter to be found among the Dinwiddie Papers in the Virginia State Library.

Numerous messages then passed between the Governor and the Lower House in which Sharpe urged that provision be made to send commissioners to the Albany Conference with the Iroquois Indians, and that steps be taken to dispatch an expedition to the Ohio to help the Virginians. In one of these messages the Governor states that the report declaring that the Virginians had delayed making a grant was untrue, as ten thousand pounds had just been voted for that purpose. Much to Sharpe's disgust the Lower House, while agreeing to provide for the Albany Conference, refused to make an appropriation for the Ohio expedition, not only on the grounds of its great expense but because they chose to construe the instructions from the Earl of Holderness, received not long since, as forbidding the use of force against the French except in case of actual invasion. A bill was then introduced in the Lower House and passed by it, entitled, "An Act for His Majesty's Service," providing that five hundred pounds be appropriated for the Albany Conference,