

There is nothing appears more reasonable to us, than the Tax on that Part of the Proprietor's Revenue which arises from his Quit-Rents, and it is by no Means the less just, because it has not been before attempted in this Province, or established in any other Colony: If it is just and right in itself, it ought to be done, whether the Governor is at large, or is restricted; but we shall never presume, that our Lord Proprietary would give any Instructions for preventing a Tax on his Estate here, so as to obstruct Grants for his Majesty's Service, and the Security of his own Estate, as well as ours; but, on the contrary, would, on all such Occasions, freely contribute equally with his Tenants, towards the Protection of his own and their Property, and to the Support of the Common Cause against his Majesty's Enemies.

L. H. J.  
Liber No. 50  
April 26

We have understood that it is the general, nay, almost the universal Opinion of the neighbouring Colony, that the Proprietary Estate ought to be Taxed, and whatever Situation the Disputes on this Head may be in at Home, if they are carried thither, we know, that by a late Bill there, which we have Reason to believe will at length be passed, the Proprietary Estate is Taxed. The Quit-Rent, together with the Caution or Purchase-Money, was no doubt originally thought to be a Render proportionate to the Value of the Land: And it is sufficiently oppressive, that after our Ancestors were enticed by moderate Terms of taking up Lands, to transport Themselves, Families and Fortunes hither, their Children should have new Terms imposed upon them, both as to the Purchase-Money and Quit-Rent.

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As it is not expressed in our Grants, that we should undertake the Burthen of Defending Ourselves, we cannot see how it can arise from the Nature of them, or be a Consideration in them: And if the undertaking the sole Burthen to defend, not only our own, but the Proprietary's Property, was a Consideration in our original Grants, why did the Proprietor alter the Condition of Taking up Lands from Two Shillings p Hundred Acres to Four Shillings, and, from That to Ten Shillings? And why, the Purchase Money from Forty Shillings to Five Pounds p Hundred Acres? While in his Majesty's Colony of Virginia, the Terms, we are informed, have always remained the Same: But admitting that in all Cases of Self-Defence, the People alone should bear the Expence, and that the Proprietor should not be any way Burthened, should he, for that Reason, be exempt from Contributing with the rest of the King's Subjects, in a Grant of a Sum of Money to be applied chiefly for his Majesty's Service in the Common Cause of Liberty? We hope not. The Laws which you mention being long since Repealed, we shall not at present take any Notice of them.

We cannot entertain the least Suspicion, should the Passage of this Bill not be obstructed by a Disagreement here, the Proprietor would be Advised (had he Power) to Dissent to a Bill for Granting so